

Northwest Neighborhood Code Update: Discussing the Draft Code



March 9, 2017

A collage of overlapping documents and images related to the Northwest Neighborhood Form-Based Code. The documents include:

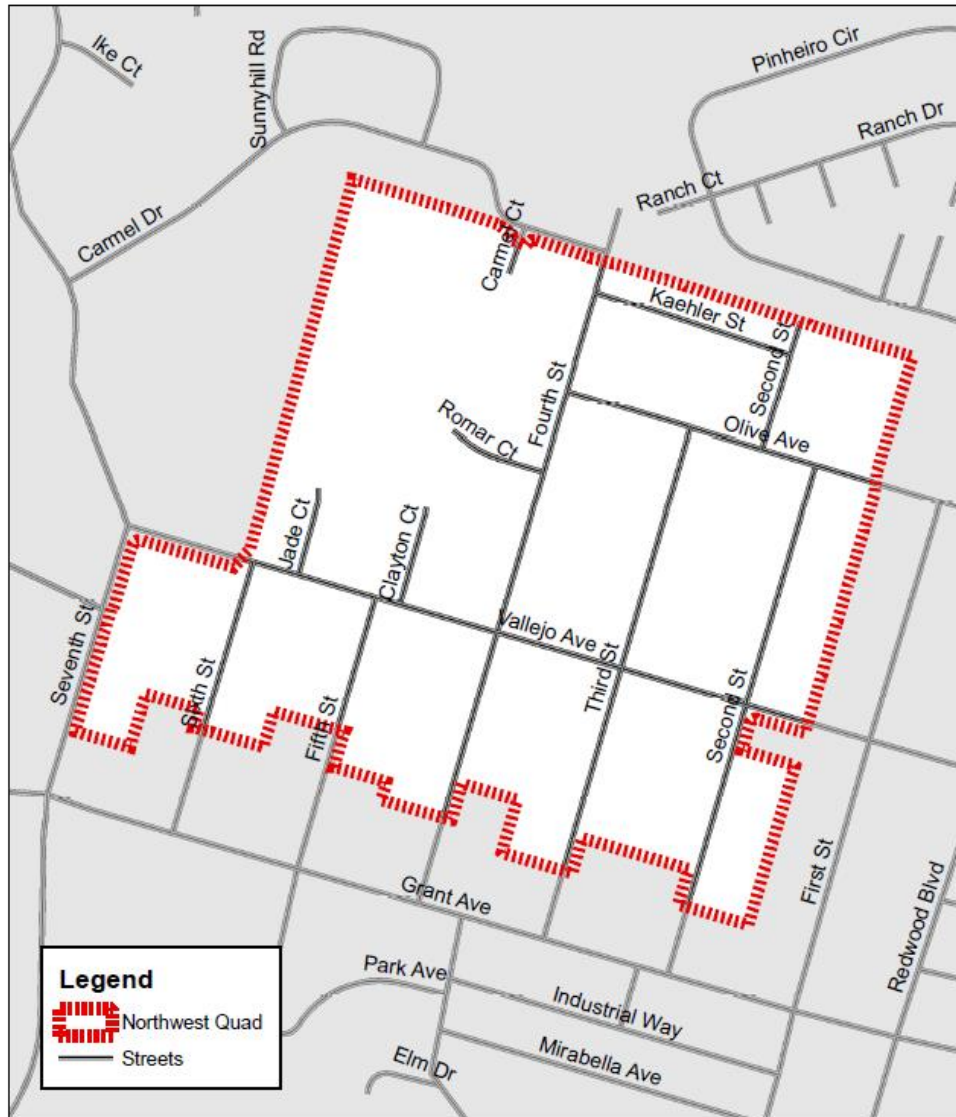
- A page titled "19.10.100.D Zoning District Standards" with a header "Northwest Neighborhood" and a sub-header "19.10.100.D Zoning District Standards". It features several images of residential buildings and a section titled "1. Intent" which describes a walkable neighborhood with to-medium-footprint, lower density housing choices.
- A page titled "Northwest Neighborhood Form-Based Code" with the subtitle "City of Novato, CA". It includes a "WORKING DRAFT March 2017" notice and the OPTICOS logo.
- Other pages showing various residential building styles, including multi-story townhomes, smaller cottages, and houses with porches.
- Images of people dining at a restaurant and a street scene with a car.

City of Novato
Opticos Design Inc.



Where we've been...

Northwest Quadrant Neighborhood Plan Update





Highway 101

SMART Station

SMART Station

Bus Facility

Downtown

Existing Development



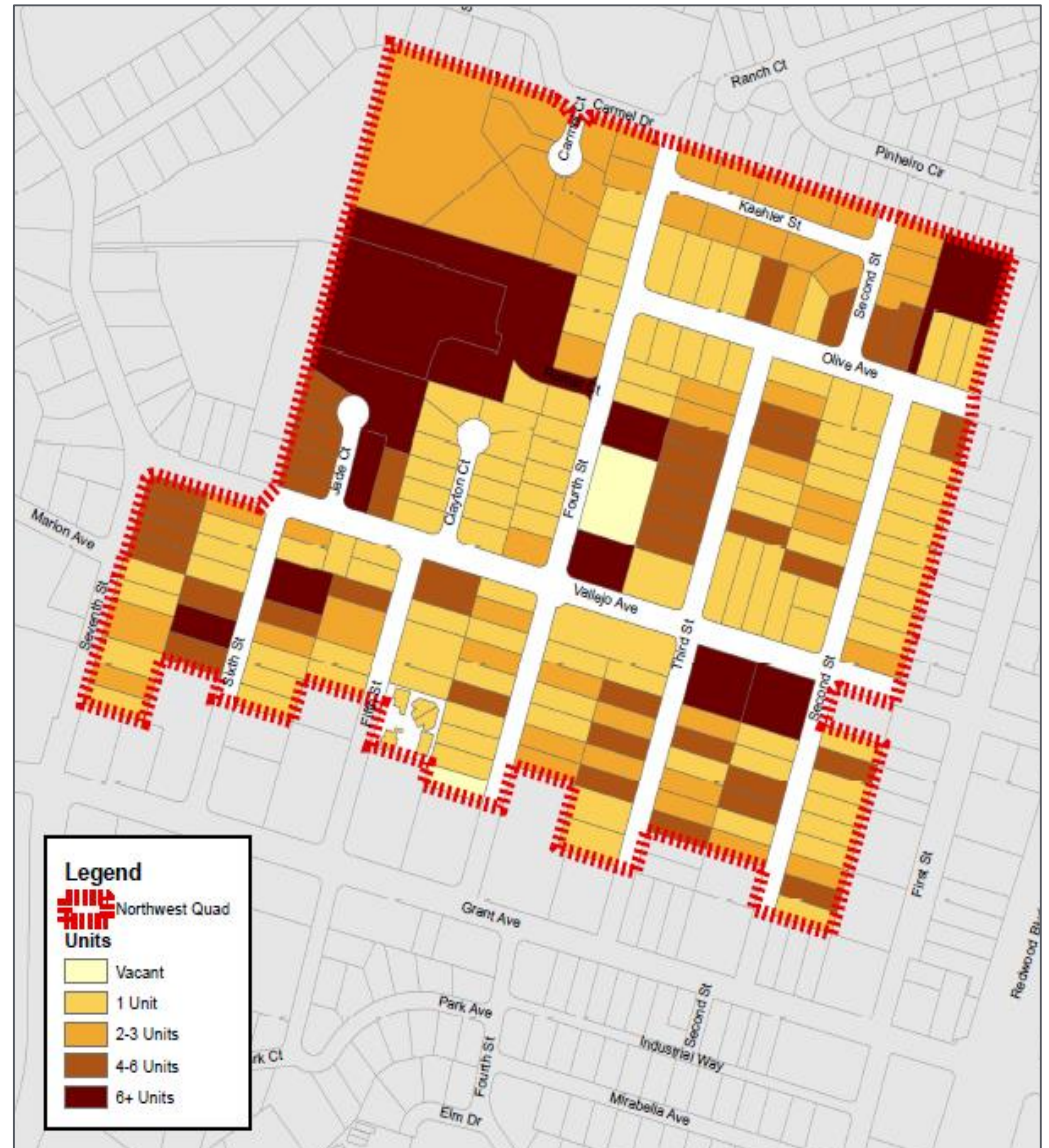
Existing Development



Existing Development

Density range: 6-39
du/acre

Average density: 13.5
du/acre



Walking Tour Debrief



What does the study area look and feel like today?

- “Hodgepodge” of styles, growth patterns, and property maintenance
- “Old and tired and in need of rejuvenation”
- “Need for code enforcement”
- “Not walker friendly”
- “Apartment development is unsightly”/traffic impacts

Walking Tour Debrief



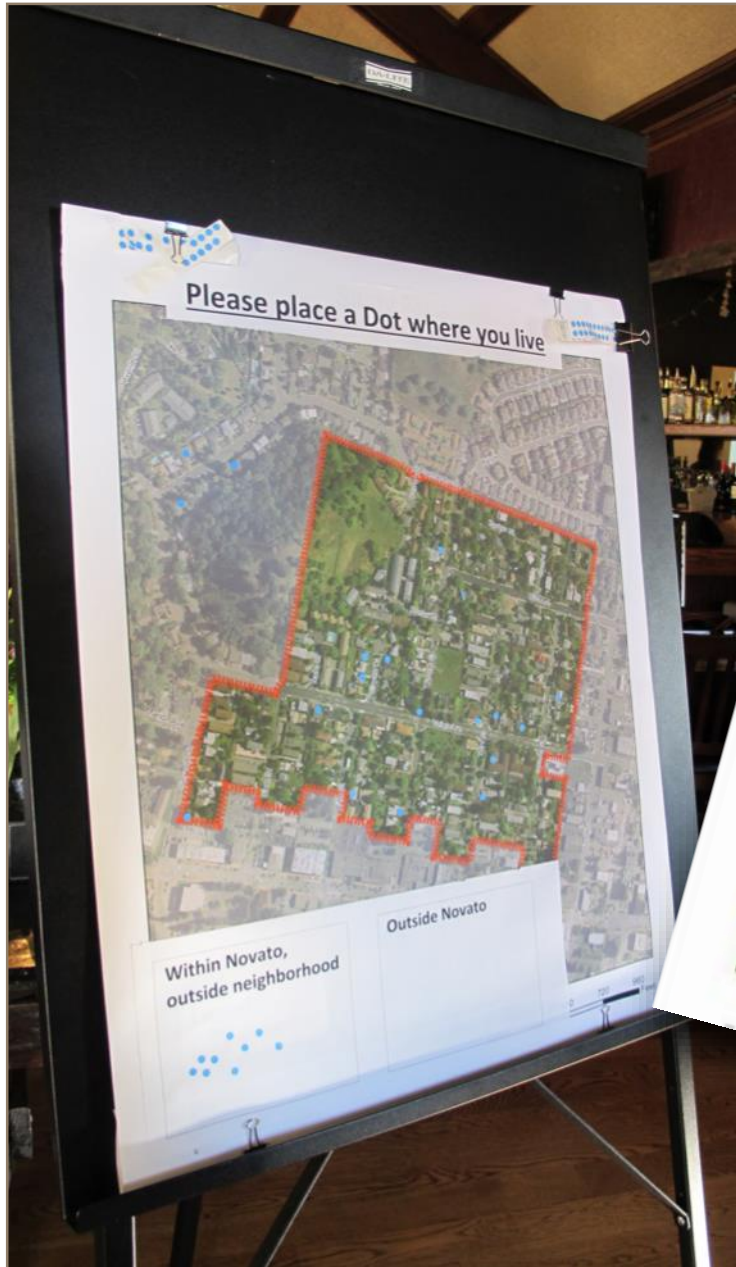
What are some important opportunities this area offers?

- “Well located to downtown”
- “Help create more of a community”
- “Allow smaller lots more density to encourage growth and rejuvenation”
- “Create homes with less lawns, more communal space”
- “Create something that is truly walkable”
- “High density means more absentee landlords”

Thank You for Participating in Workshops!



Compiled responses from workshops to inform new zoning standards



Results of Preference Survey

Summary of Visual Preference Survey – March 14, 2015 Workshop

Building Preference Survey

The buildings shown here can be found in walkable neighborhoods across California. Are they appropriate for Novato's Downtown Northwest neighborhood? When making your choice, be sure to consider:



Building Scale

Is the size of the building appropriate relative to existing buildings in the neighborhood?



Building Form

Is the roof flat or pitched? Is the front facade wide or narrow? How does the building relate to the street?



14 | 8

Explain any of your above choices:



24 | 2



4 | 20



18 | 4

Explain any of your above choices:



9 | 12



16 | 8



6 | 18

Explain any of your above choices:



16 | 4



13 | 7

Summary of Visual Preference Survey – March 14, 2015 Workshop



25 | 0

Explain any of your above choices:



12 | 12



7 | 18



9 | 11

Explain any of your above choices:



13 | 8



15 | 8



14 | 8

Explain any of your above choices:



20 | 2



4 | 17



21 | 4

Explain any of your above choices:



10 | 13



23 | 0

Note: Not every respondent voted on each image.

Project Webpage: www.novato.org/northwestquad

THE CITY OF
NOVATO
CALIFORNIA

ABOUT NOVATO GOVERNMENT COMMUNITY BUSINESS I WANT TO...

Community Development

- Building Division
- Code Enforcement & Resale Inspection
- Existing Affordable Housing and Services

Fee Schedule

General Plan Update

- Focus Areas
 - North Redwood Boulevard
 - North, North Redwood Boulevard
 - Northwest Quadrant Neighborhood
 - Hamilton

White Paper Topics

- 1996 General Plan Policy and Program Evaluation

Resources Used for the General Plan Update

- Existing Conditions Report

Housing Element Update

- Planning Division

Government » Community Development » General Plan Update » Focus Areas

NORTHWEST QUADRANT NEIGHBORHOOD

Font Size: + - + Share & Bookmark [+ Feedback] Print

Upcoming Meeting

Workshop 1: Zoning Possibilities for the NW Quad Neighborhood
Date & Time: Wednesday, October 26, 7-9pm
Location: Novato City Hall, 901 Sherman Avenue

What the Updated Neighborhood Plan Calls For:

- 1 Slow traffic through the neighborhood.
- 2 Improve pedestrian safety and walkability.
- 3 Strengthen neighborhood identity.
- 4 Explore potential for additional park space.
- 5 Prioritize code enforcement.
- 6 Consider designating sub-areas differently.
- 7 Refine zoning regulations to ensure compatible development

Workshop Feedback re: Form-Based Code

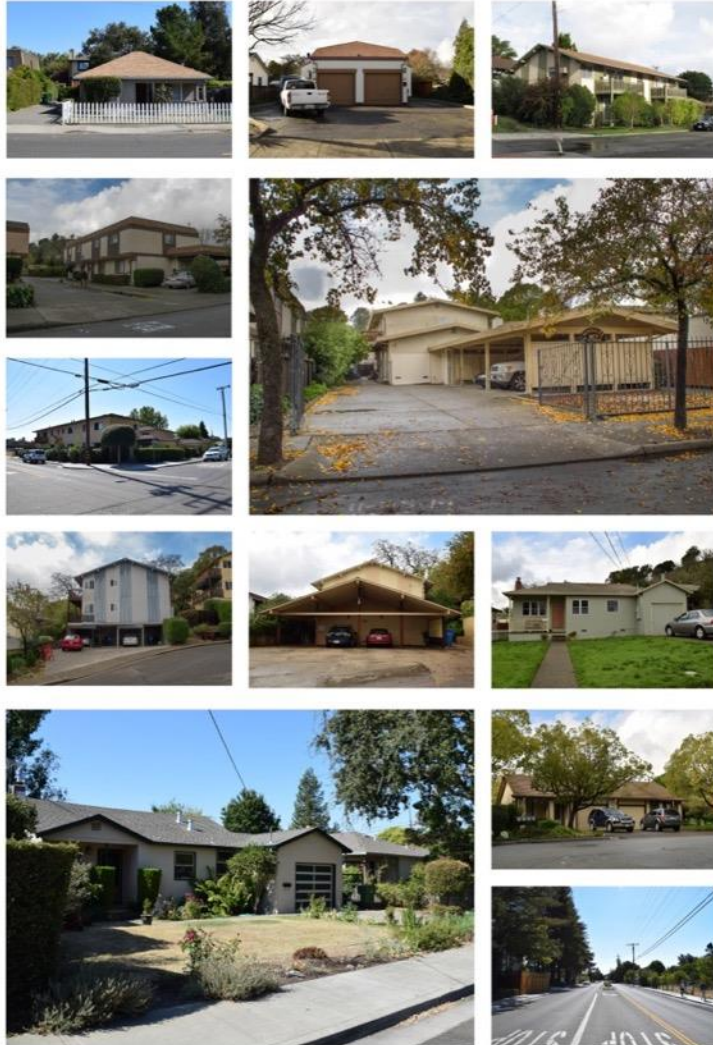
COMMENTS:

- Much needed.
- Desirable.
- Critical.
- Yes.
- Yes! Stop intentional blight!
- Single families can have granny units and street parking.
- Change zoning to prohibit anything over two stories or larger than four units.
- Maximum height 2 stories (2).
- As several people have indicated, multi-family dwellings should be prioritized.
- Parking at rear of site, not on street.
- Established code for required landscaping.
- Support lower height, courtyard type development.
- Limited density.
- Planning on redevelopment should include the present residents of the area and the need to enhance the presence of the Northwest Quadrant.
- Please do something to encourage removal of the 4-plex units if it means slightly more compatible units.
- Yes, 1 floor less for 2 more units.
- Keep density low. Encourage zoning that keeps existing single family residences as priority.
- Encourage redevelopment of apartments.
- Discourage apartments. How about condos?
- Not if you start by doubling the density maximum going to 10-20 units.
- Your efforts to plan are appreciated. This area definitely need love and nurturing. Start with low-hanging fruit and move up.

77% favorable responses

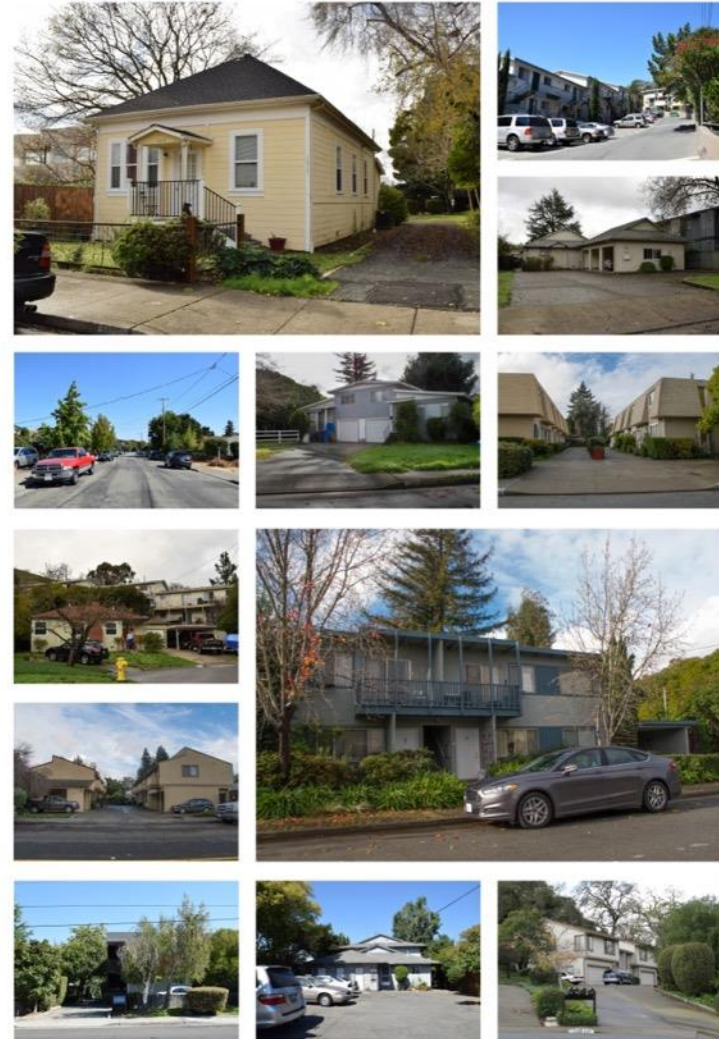
23% unfavorable

Capture and Understand Existing Character



Existing Neighborhood Character
Downtown Northwest Neighborhood Study

January 2015
Novato, California



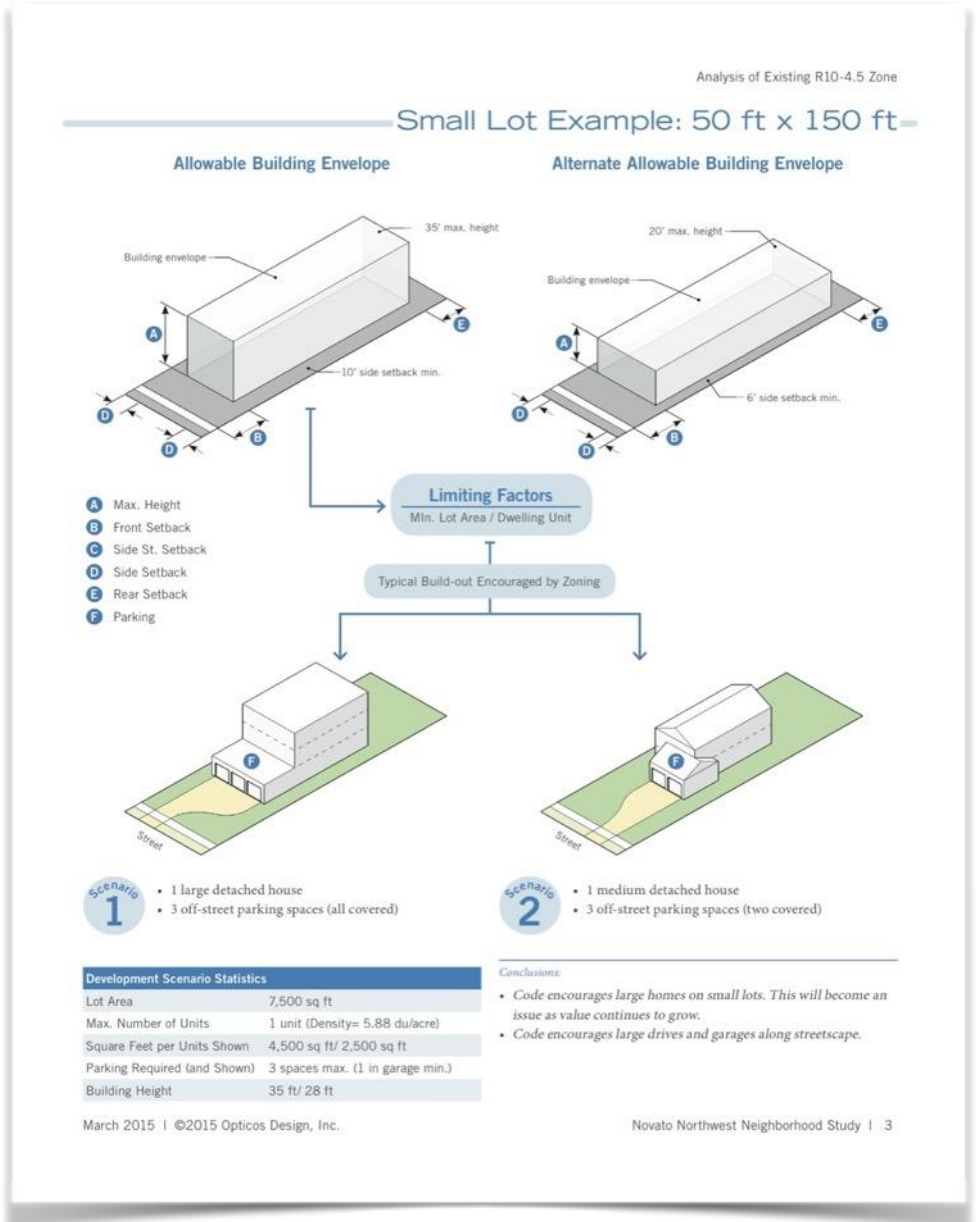
Existing Neighborhood Character
Downtown Northwest Neighborhood Study

January 2015
Novato, California



Analysis of Current Zoning

1. What does current zoning actually encourage vs. intent? (Often find there is a disconnect.)
2. Getting beyond the numbers (density, lot cover, etc.) and understanding form the zoning is encouraging.



Zoning Disconnect

- Existing General Plan has allowed Moderate Density Multi-Family at 20 units/acre for 60+ years
- Zoning allows multi-family up to 10 units/acre but not if existing “sound” single-family home exists.
- Neighborhood Plan policy of allowing a duplex or 2 single-family homes per parcel and commercial uses on “buffer” parcels was not implemented.



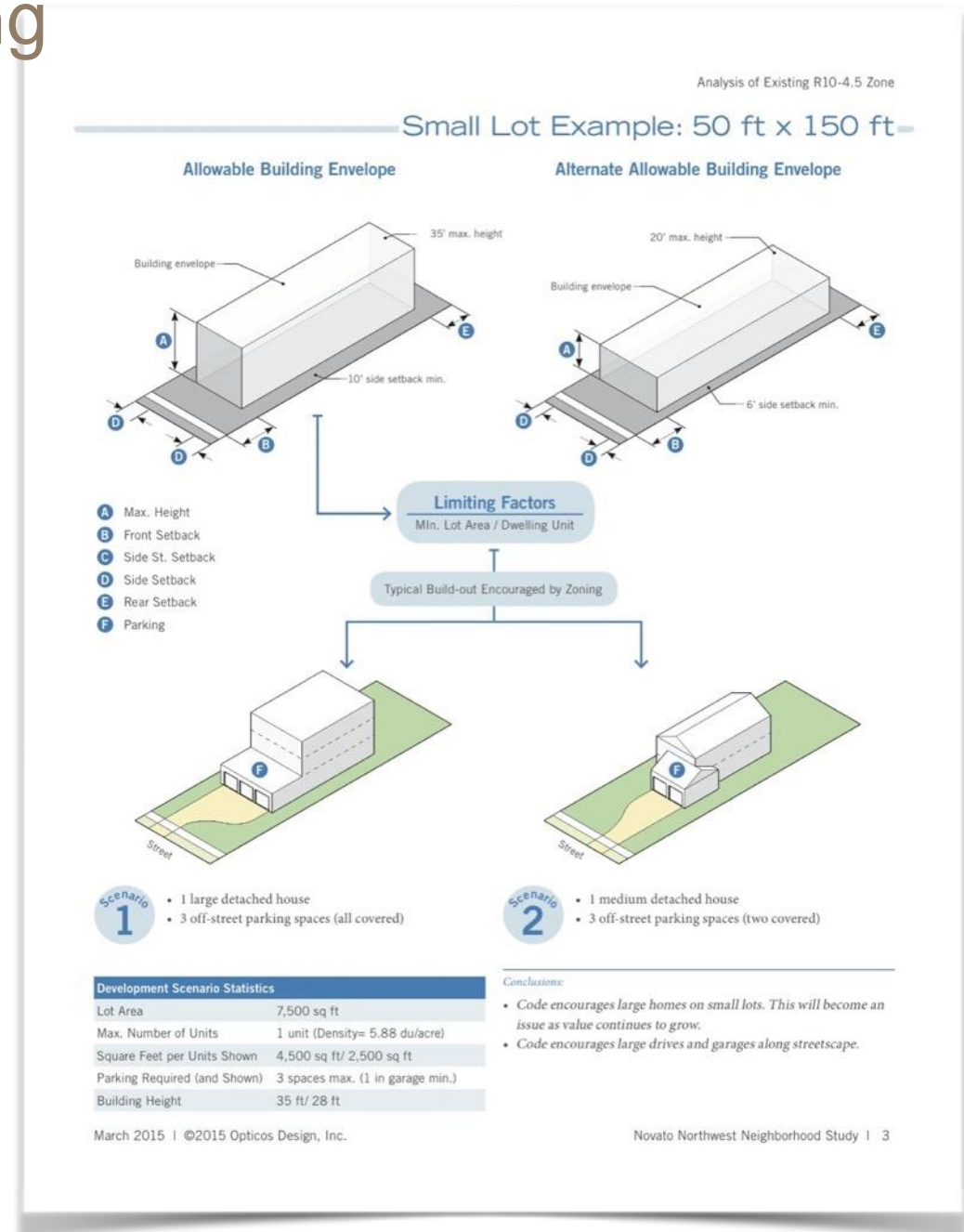
Unintended Consequences of Existing Zoning/ General Plan Policies

- Encourages allowing existing single-family homes to deteriorate to allow redevelopment
- Discourages replacement of existing, older apartment buildings since substantially fewer units would be allowed.

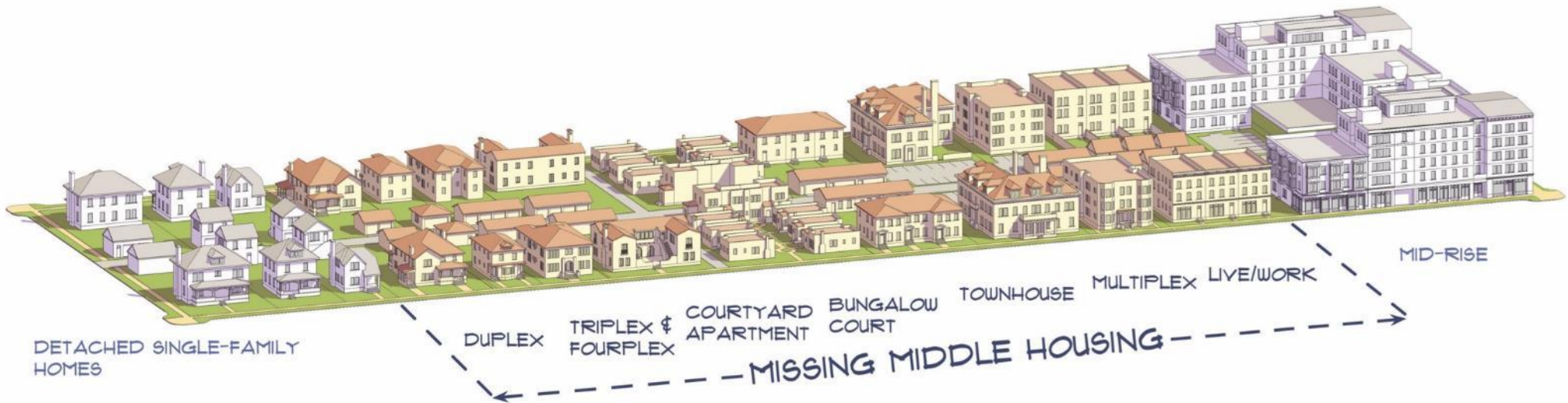


Analysis of Current Zoning

1. Relying only on height and setback regulations requires building location and form to be determined through Design Review
2. Results in little predictability of design and compatibility with better elements of neighborhood character



The “Missing Middle” Housing Solution



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The “Missing Middle” Housing Solution



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The “Missing Middle” Housing Solution



2

Objectives of the updated code

What the Form-Based Code Calls For

1 House-scale building size

2 Ability to achieve & not exceed General Plan Density

3 Building Height of 2 ½ stories

4 Building entries face street and are articulated

5 Provide minimum contiguous open space or courtyard

6 Parking located towards the rear of the lot

7 Provide adequate parking on-site

8 More prescriptive design standards for ADUs

3

What is new in the code update?

1 House-scale building sizes

Allowing more units at a compatible scale



Existing

This triplex extends most of the length of the lot.



Update

House-scale building size; no large attached building masses extending for much of the property length. Current standards do not address building size.

Allowing more units at a compatible scale



1 House-scale building sizes

With Prescriptive Design Standards for Multifamily Buildings



Existing

This triplex is not required to have entrances off the street or frontage on the main street.



Update

Required to front street with a frontage such as a stoop. Parking is required to be behind building. Building size is limited to a house-scale compatible with existing historic homes.

Prescriptive Design Standards for Multifamily Buildings



2 Ability to achieve & not exceed General Plan Density



Existing

Some lots exceed 20 du/ac and some are within the 20 du/ac. Many multifamily do not match historic fabric



Update

Ability to achieve and not exceed the General Plan density (up to 20 units/acre) with smaller unit sizes and building sizes

2 Ability to achieve & not exceed General Plan Density

Allow More, Smaller Units at a House Scale



Existing

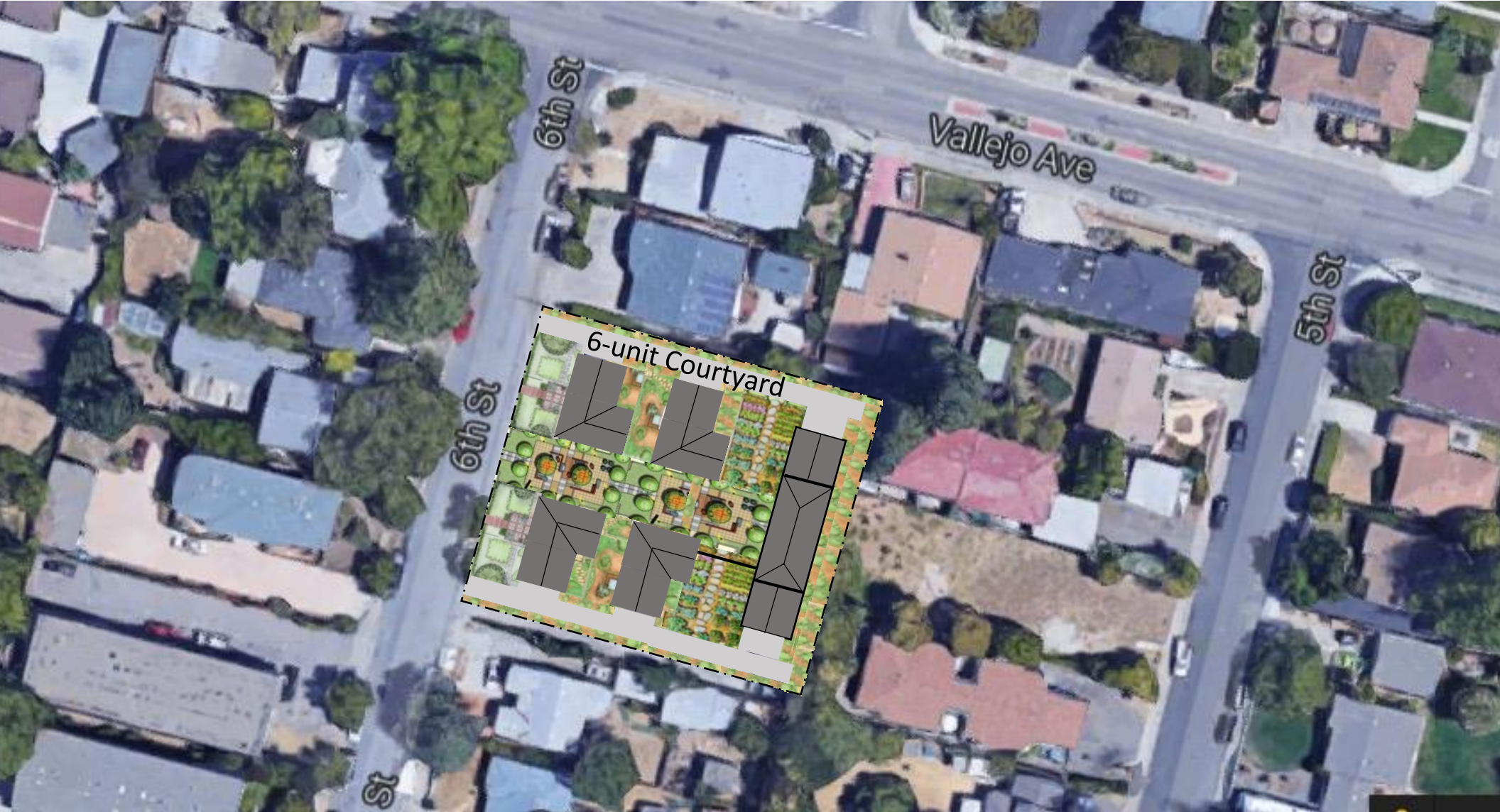
Courtyard Building



Update

Cottage Court: A group of small, detached homes, arranged to define a shared court visible and accessed from the street. The shared court is common open space thus becoming an important community-enhancing element.

Cottage Court: Allow More, Smaller Units at a House-scale



Courtyard Building: Allow More, Smaller Units at a House-scale

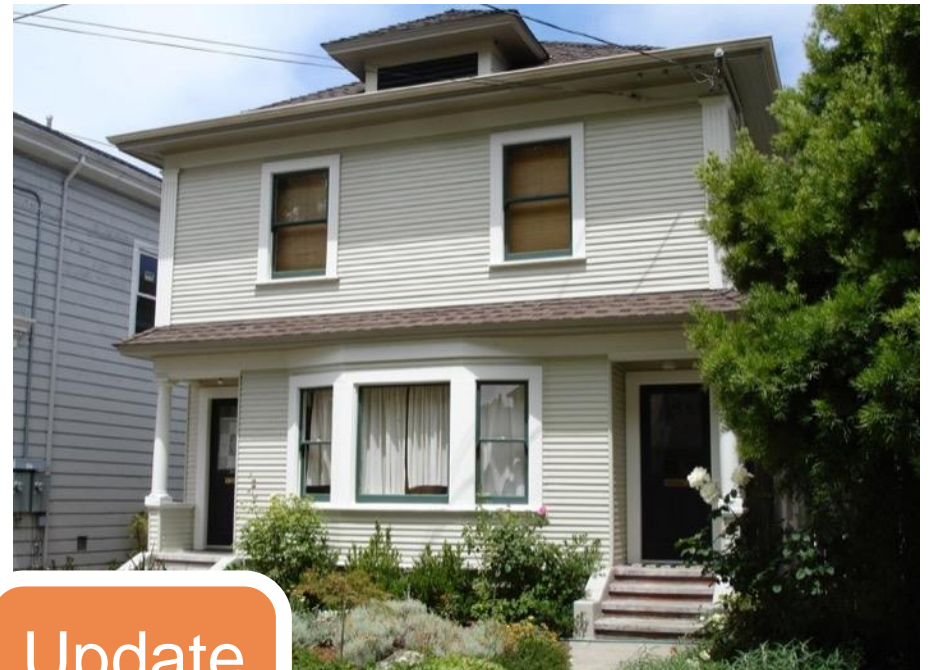


3 Building Height of 2½ stories



Existing

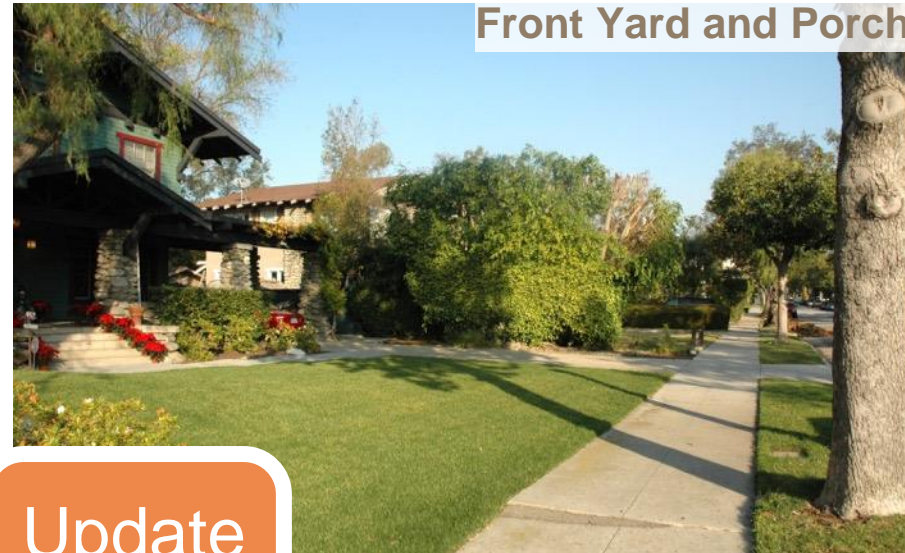
Buildings allowed up to 35' in height and 3 stories without description of form of building.



Update

Building height of 2½ stories (dormer windows in roofs allowed), and more prescriptive standards for floor-to-floor heights so the scale of the buildings is consistent with the historic neighborhood scale.

4 Building entries face street and are articulated



Existing

Update

Homes were not required to have any type of street frontage

Building entries face towards the street and are articulated by a stoop, porch or dooryard.

5 Provide minimum contiguous open space or courtyard



Existing

Update

Open space was required but there were no standards for where the open space is located.

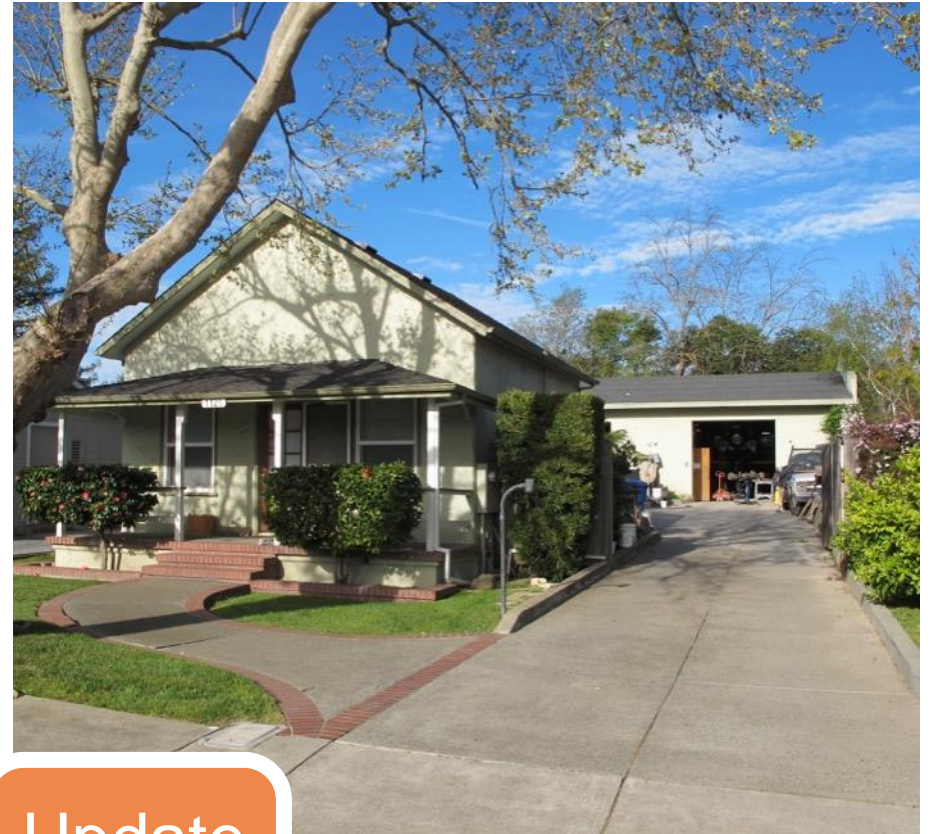
Provides minimum contiguous open space or courtyard. More prescriptive of nature and location of usable recreational space.

6 Parking located towards the rear of the lot



Existing

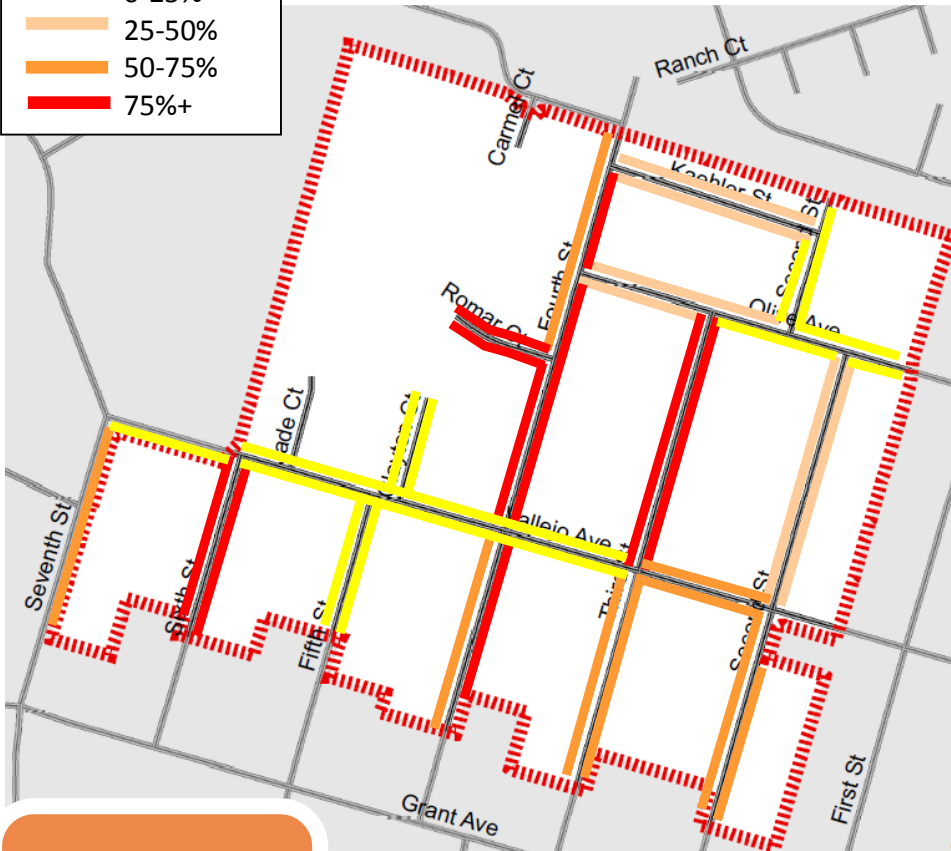
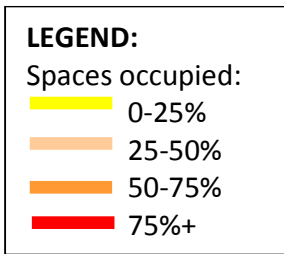
Parking location not specified in relation to main building



Update

Parking located towards the rear of the lot, behind building(s) so as not be visible from the street (at least 40' from street/10' from side street).

7 Provide adequate parking on-site



Existing

Some lots only provide 1 space per unit, others provide 2+. Lack of required parking.

Parking Requirements

Single Family Home:

2 spaces, 1 in a garage. 3 enclosed spaces max. unless approved through Design Review.

Multifamily Residential:

1-bedroom unit = 1 space/unit

2-bedroom unit = 1.5 spaces/unit

3-bedroom unit = 2 spaces/unit

Additional guest parking = 1 space for each 4 units.

Update

Provides adequate parking on site, based on the downtown parking requirements.

8 More prescriptive design standards for ADUs



Existing

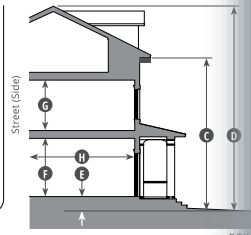
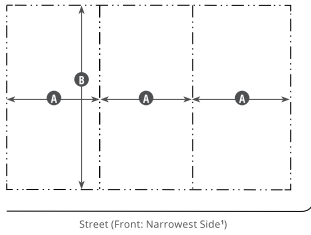
Update

Accessory Dwelling Units standards provided little direction on form and needed to comply with large setbacks,

More prescriptive design standards for accessory dwelling units meeting new state law.

Zone Standards

19.10.100.D | Zoning District Standards



Key
 --- ROW/ Design Site Line

Key
 --- ROW Line
 --- HTP (Highest Top Plate)

3. Building Types

Primary Building	Design Site		Standards
	Width A	Depth B	
Detached House:	40' min.	100' min. ²	19.10.110.E
Side-by-Side Duplex	40' min.; 75' max.	100' min. ²	19.10.110.F
Stacked Duplex	40' min.; 75' max.	100' min. ²	19.10.110.G
Multiplex: Small	50' min.; 100' max.	100' min.	19.10.110.H
Cottage Court	75' min.; 150' max.	100' min.	19.10.110.I
Courtyard	75' min.; 200' max.	100' min.	19.10.110.J

Accessory Building Type

Accessory Building Type	Width	Depth	Standards
Carriage House	N/A	N/A	19.10.110.D

¹ Narrowest side of lot is the front of the lot, except on lots fronting Kaehler St.
² Min. design site depth of 70' allowed on design sites fronting Kaehler St.

6 | Northwest Neighborhood Form-Based Code



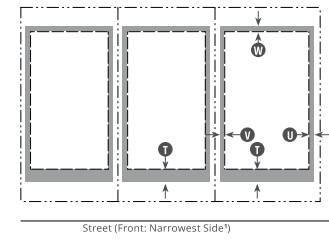
Key
 --- ROW/ Design Site Line
 --- Setback Line

5. Building Placement

Setback (Distance from ROW/ Design Site Line)		
Front (Facade Zone) ¹		I
Existing Parcels > 100' depth	20' min.; 25' max.	
Existing Parcels ≤ 100' depth	15' min.; 20' max.	
Side Street (Facade Zone)		J
Side		
Primary Building ≤ 2 Stories	6' min.	K
Primary Building > 2 Stories	10' min.	
Accessory Structure(s)	5' min.	L
Rear		
Primary Building, Design Site Depth ≤ 100'	15' min.	M
Primary Building, Design Site Depth > 100'	20' min.	
Accessory Structure(s)	5' min.	N
Percent of Facade Zone required to include building facade (measured from nearest street corner)		
Front	50% min.	
Side Street	25% min.	
¹ Narrowest side of lot is the front of the lot, except on lots fronting Kaehler St.		
² Buildings may be set in front of the minimum front setback to align with the existing facade of the front most immediately adjacent property.		

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19.10.100.D | Zoning District Standards



Key
 --- ROW/ Design Site Line
 --- Setback Line

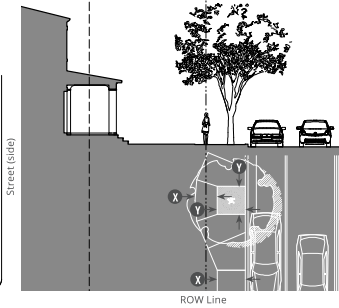
7. Allowed Projections into Setbacks

Projecting Feature	T	U	V	W
	Front	Side St.	Side	Rear
Frontage ⁴	8' max.	3' max.	X	X
Stairs to Building				
Entrance	5' max.	5' max.	X	X
Architectural Features	3' max.	3' max.	3' max.	3' max.
Awning	3' max.	3' max.	X	A
Fences or				
Freestanding Walls	A ²	A ²	A ³	A ³
Driveways, Walkways	A ⁴	A ⁴	A	NA
Utility Lines, Wires and Related Structures	A	A	A	A
Satellite Dish				
Antennas	X	X	A	A

Projecting features at grade are not allowed within a street ROW, alley ROW or across a Design Site Line.
¹ Narrowest side of lot is the front of the lot, except on lots fronting Kaehler St.
² 3' max. height
³ 6' max. height; max. 4' when at alley and other R.O.W.
⁴ See 19.10.120 (Frontage Types) for further refinement of allowed projection into setback for frontage elements.

Key A = Allowed X = Not Allowed

8 | Northwest Neighborhood Form-Based Code



Key
 --- ROW/ Design Site Line
 --- Setback Line

8. Frontages

Frontage Type	Front	Side St.	Standards
Front Yard	A	A	19.10.120.D
Porch: Projecting	A	A	19.10.120.E
Porch: Engaged	A	A	19.10.120.F
Stoop	X	A	19.10.120.G
Dooryard	X	A	19.10.120.H

9. Streetscape

Replace or Infill Street Trees for Addition, Renovation, New Building		
Building Size	Min. Trees	Standards
< 1,000 sf	1	Tree per city's
< 2,500 sf	2	approved tree
> 2,500 sf	all of design site	list.

frontage

Streetscape Standards⁵
 Sidewalk dimension 4' min **X**
 Tree planter dimension 4' min **Y**
⁵ In some circumstances, in order to achieve minimum sidewalk width standards, owner shall give a sidewalk maintenance easement to the City of Novato public frontage to allow the sidewalk to encroach into the front and/or side street setback.

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The standards generate/maintain a particular physical environment

Building Type Standards

19.10.110.G | Side-by-Side Duplex

19.10.110.G Side-by-Side Duplex



One-story Duplex side-by-side units, each with projecting porch.



One-story Duplex with stoop frontages for each unit.



1 1/2-story Duplex with both units accessed from the projecting porch.

18 | Northwest Neighborhood Form-Based Code

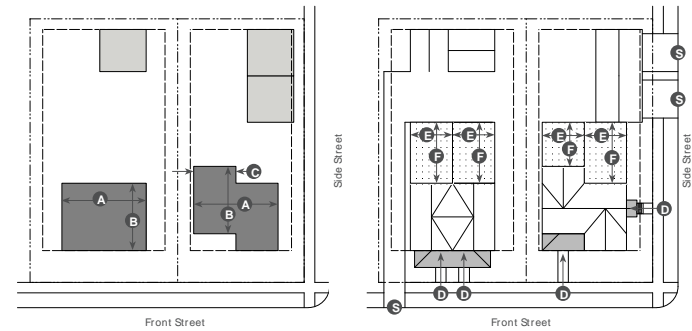
1. Description

A small- to medium-sized detached structure that consists of two side-by-side units with private open space, both facing the street and within a single building massing. This type has the appearance of a small-to-medium single-family home and is appropriately scaled to fit within lower-intensity residential walkable neighborhoods. This type enables appropriately-scaled, well-designed moderate intensities and is important for providing a broad choice of housing types and promoting walkability.

General Note: Photos on this page are illustrative, not regulatory.

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Side-by-Side Duplex | 19.10.110.G



Key

--- ROW / Design Site Line
 --- Building Setback Line
 ■ Building
 ■ Accessory Building

Key

--- ROW / Design Site Line
 --- Building Setback Line
 ■ Frontage
 □ Private Open Space

2. Number of Units

Units per Duplex	2 max.
Duplexes per Design Site	1 max.

3. Building Size and Massing

Height	
Max. Number of Stories	2½
Max. Height to Highest Top Plate	24'

Main Body

Width	48' max. (A)
Depth	36' max. (B)

Secondary Wing(s)¹

Width	24' max. (C)
-------	--------------

4. Allowed Frontage Types

Front Yard	19.10.120.D
Porch: Projecting	19.10.120.E
Porch: Engaged	19.10.120.F
Stoop ²	19.10.120.G
Dooryard ²	19.10.120.H

¹ Secondary wings limited to 1½ stories. Max. 14' to highest top plate

² Only on side street

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5. Pedestrian Access

Main Entrance Location	Front street ³	(D)
Each unit shall have an individual entry facing the street on or no more than 10' behind the front facade.		
³ On corner design sites, each unit shall front a different street.		

6. Vehicle Access and Parking

Driveway and parking location shall comply with zone standards in 19.10.100.D.6 (Parking).

7. Open Space

No common open space required.

Private Open Space Requirements

Width	15' per unit, min. (E)
Depth	15' per unit, min. (F)
Area	300 sf per unit, min.

Required street setbacks and driveways shall not be included in the private open space area calculation.

Required private open space shall be located behind the main body of the building.





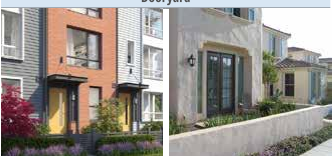
Northwest Neighborhood Form-Based Code | 19

The zone only allows the types that generate the intended physical environment

Frontage Type Standards

Frontage Overview | 19.10.120.C

Table 19.10.120.A: Frontage Types Overview

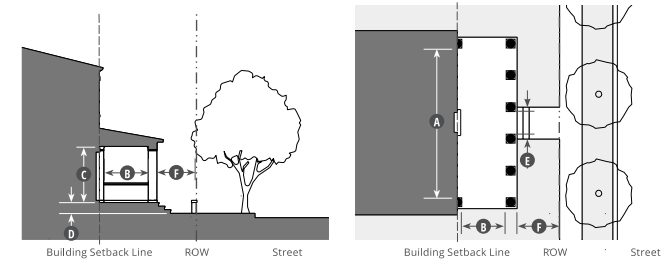
Front Yard	Porch: Projecting
 <p>The main facade of the building has a planted setback from the front design site line providing a buffer from the street. The yard may be fenced or unfenced to be visually continuous with adjacent yards, supporting a landscape that generates an open and green streetscape.</p>	 <p>The main facade of the building is set back from the front design site line. The resulting front yard is typically small and can be defined by a fence or hedge to spatially maintain the edge of the street. The porch may be single-story or two-stories, is open on three sides, and all habitable space is located behind the building setback line.</p>
Porch: Engaged	Stoop
 <p>The main facade of the building is set back from the front design site line. The resulting yard is typically small and can be defined by a fence or hedge to spatially maintain the edge of the street. The porch may be single-story or two-stories and has two adjacent sides that are engaged to the building, roofed, and the other two sides are open.</p>	 <p>The main facade of the building is near the side street design site line and the elevated stoop engages the sidewalk. The stoop is elevated above the sidewalk to provide privacy along the sidewalk-facing rooms. Stairs or ramps from the stoop may lead directly to the sidewalk or may be side-accessed. The stoop is appropriate for residential uses with small setbacks.</p>
Dooryard	
 <p>The main facade of the building is set back from the side street design site line, which is defined by a low wall, hedge, or other allowed screening creating a small dooryard. Each dooryard is separated from adjacent dooryards. The dooryard may be raised or at grade.</p>	

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Northwest Neighborhood Form-Based Code | 31

Porch: Projecting | 19.10.120.E

19.10.120.E Porch: Projecting



Key
 --- ROW / Design Site Line - - - Building Setback Line

1. Description

The main facade of the building is set back from the front design site line. The resulting front yard is typically small and can be defined by a fence or hedge to spatially maintain the edge of the street. The porch may be single-story or two-stories, is open on three sides, and all habitable space is located behind the building setback line.

2. Size

Width, Clear	8' min.	A
Depth, Clear	6' min.	B
Height, Clear	8' min.	C
Finish Level above Sidewalk	18" min.	D
Stories	2 max.	
Path of Travel	3' wide min.	E
Distance between Porch and Sidewalk	5' min.	F

3. Miscellaneous

Projecting porches shall be open on three sides and have a roof.

Where porches are allowed, a projecting porch is an allowable projection into setback.



A projecting porch that matches the symmetry of the house.



Wrap-around projecting porch on the front and side facades to create a nice seating space.

General Note: Photos on this page are illustrative, not regulatory.

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Northwest Neighborhood Form-Based Code | 33

How the front and side street facades connect to the sidewalk

4

Next steps...

Next Steps

- Design Review Commission workshop March 15
- Planning Commission workshop April
- City Council workshop and direction May/June
- Adoption of General Plan and zoning Sept/Oct

Thank you

Options for Parking Standards

Dwelling Type	Citywide	Downtown	State Density Bonus Law
Single Family Dwelling	2 spaces (1 covered)	2 spaces (1 covered)	
Duplex Dwelling	2 spaces/unit (1 covered)	1 space/unit (1 covered)	
Multi Family Dwellings			
Studio	1.5 spaces/unit	1.25 space/unit	1 space/unit
1 Bedroom	1.8 spaces/unit	1.25 space/unit	1 space/unit
2 Bedroom	2.3 spaces/unit	1.75 spaces/unit	2 spaces/unit
3 Bedroom	2.5 spaces/unit	2.25 spaces/unit	2 spaces/unit