

# Livable Places Action Committee

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Virtual Meeting, Mar 14, 2023

**Suvidha Bandi**  
Principal Planner



**PLANNING &  
DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT**

# SPEAKER RULES

**Mute to Listen;  
Unmute to Speak**



(For dialing in, \*6 to mute/unmute)

**Request to Speak**



Teams Chat window

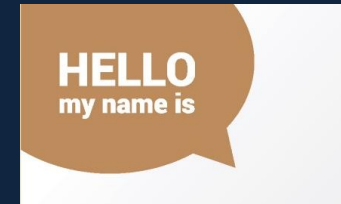


Call POD 832-393-6600

**Wait to be  
Recognized by Chair**



**State Full Name;  
Speak up Clearly**



**Public comments in the end**



**Planning Commission  
CHAIR  
MARTY STEIN**



**Livable Places Action  
Committee CO-CHAIR  
SONNY GARZA**



**Livable Places Action  
Committee CO-CHAIR  
LISA CLARK**



**DIRECTOR  
MARGARET  
WALLACE BROWN**



**DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
JENNIFER OSTLIND**



**PROJECT MANAGER  
SUVIDHA BANDI**

# Meeting Agenda

Welcome by Chairs

Director's report

**Housing Recommendations discussion**

Conservation Districts update

Homework activity & next steps

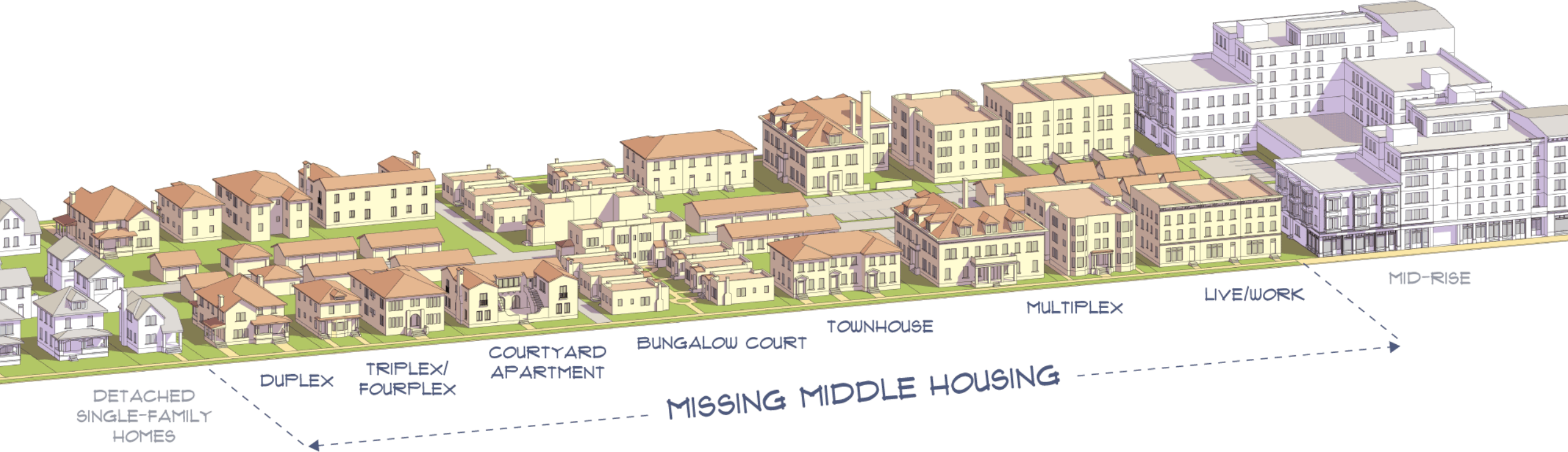
Public comments

The Livable Places Action Committee is **creating opportunities** within our development standards that encourage **housing variety and affordability**.



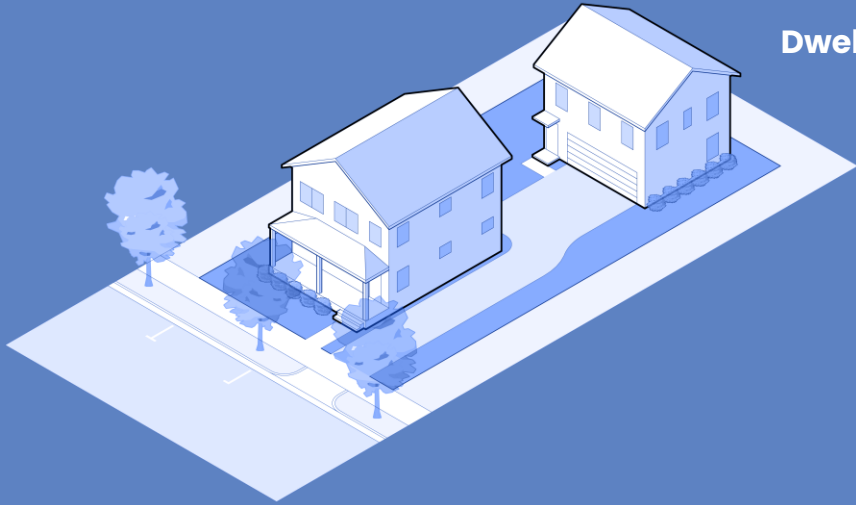
# Livable Places Houston

# Houston Needs More Housing Options

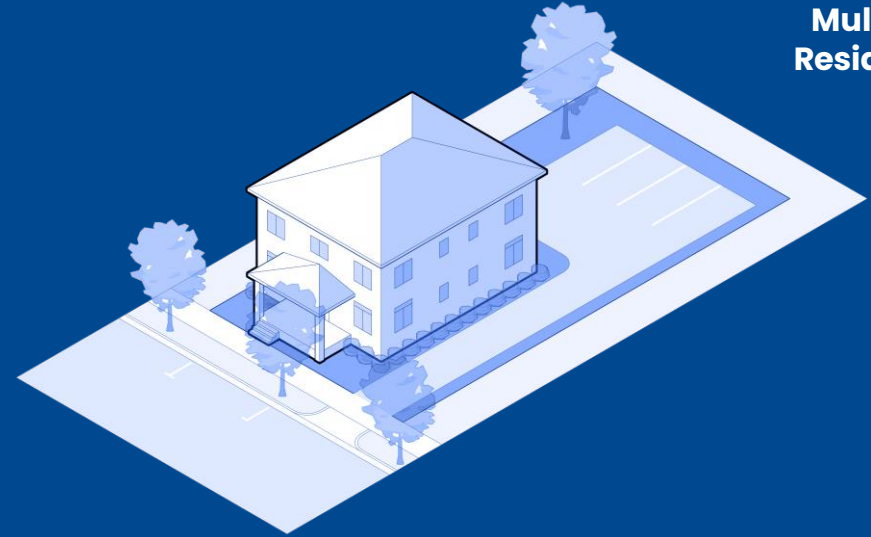


# LIVABLE PLACES ENCOURAGES HOUSING LIKE THIS:

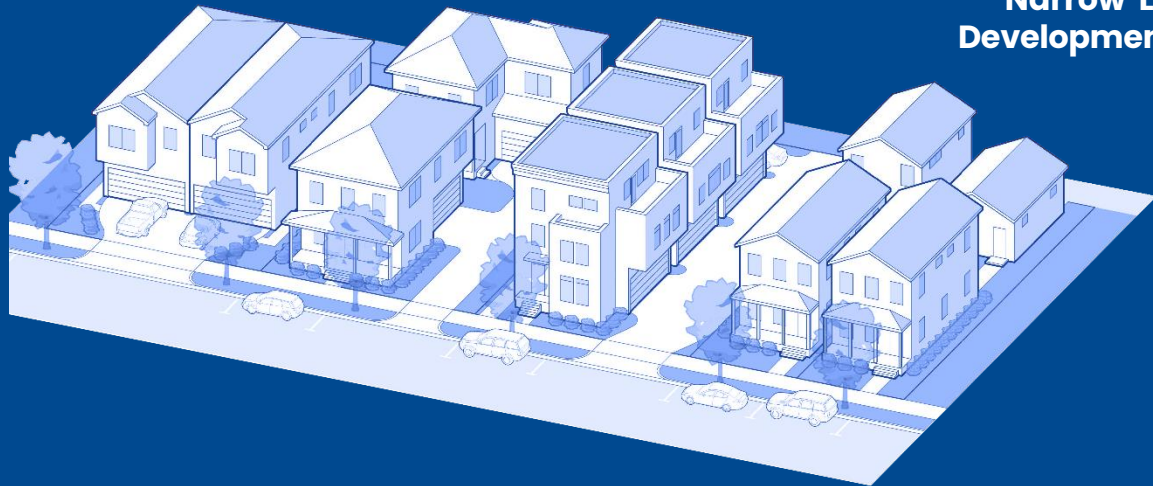
Second Dwelling Unit



Multi-Unit Residential



Narrow Lot Development



Courtyard-Style Development





# SECOND DWELLING UNIT

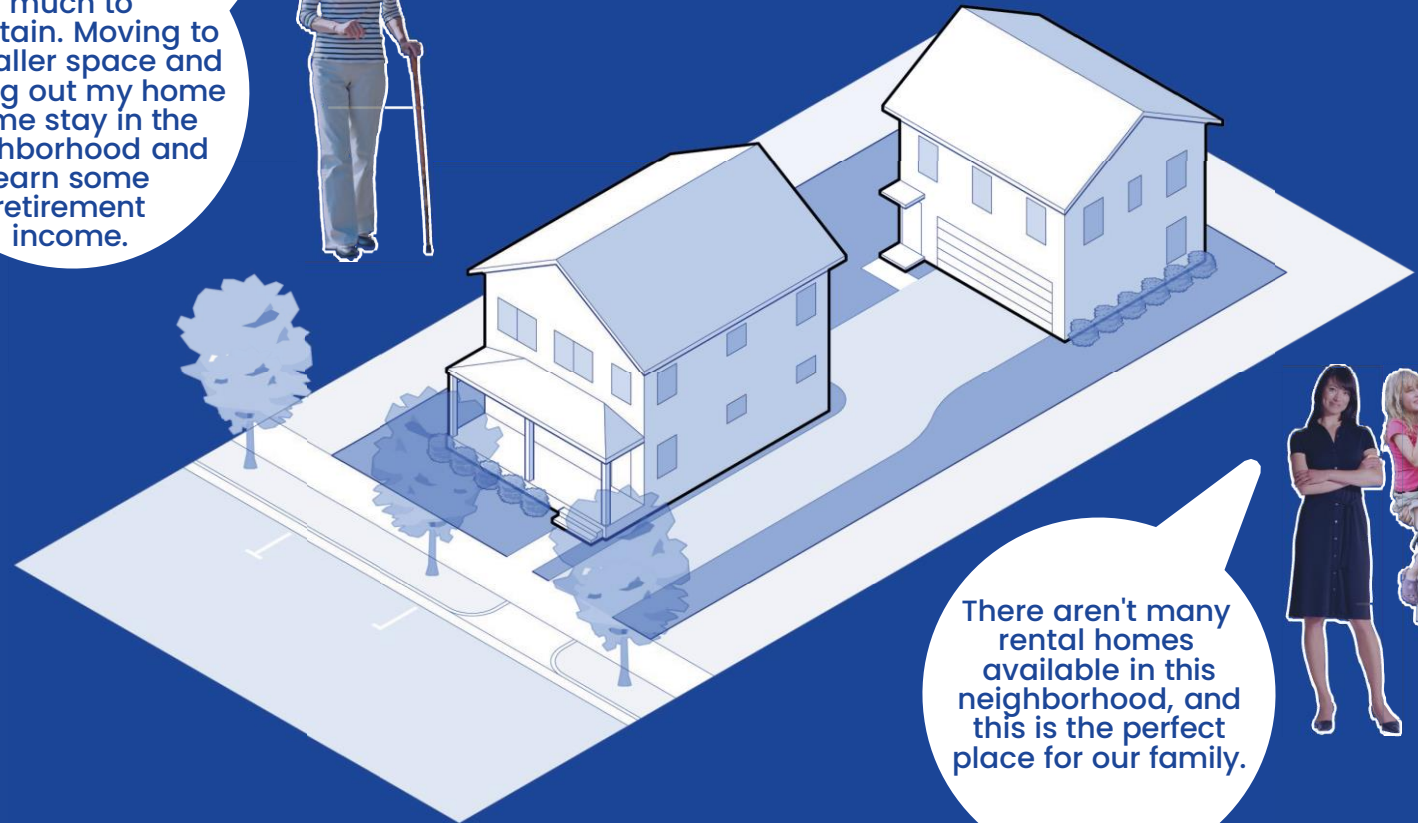
## SECOND DWELLING UNITS

An additional dwelling unit on a single family lot located above a garage or in a separate structure

Change:

Eliminating limit of dwelling unit size; allowing parking requirements based on unit size

My old house was too much to maintain. Moving to a smaller space and renting out my home let me stay in the neighborhood and earn some retirement income.



There aren't many rental homes available in this neighborhood, and this is the perfect place for our family.



# Second Dwelling Unit



# Second Dwelling Unit

## Standards

- Allowed on single-family residential lots with no deed restrictions
- No size limit for detached second unit

## Access

- Limit one curb cut per public street frontage



# Second Dwelling Unit

## Parking

- Parking based on unit size (attached/detached). If the first unit has 2 off-street parking spaces;
  - +0 if second unit is < 1000sf
  - +1 if second unit is 1001-1500sf
  - +2 if second unit is > 1500sf
- Required parking can be detached from the unit but located within the lot boundary
- Market based parking allowed



# MULTI-UNIT RESIDENTIAL

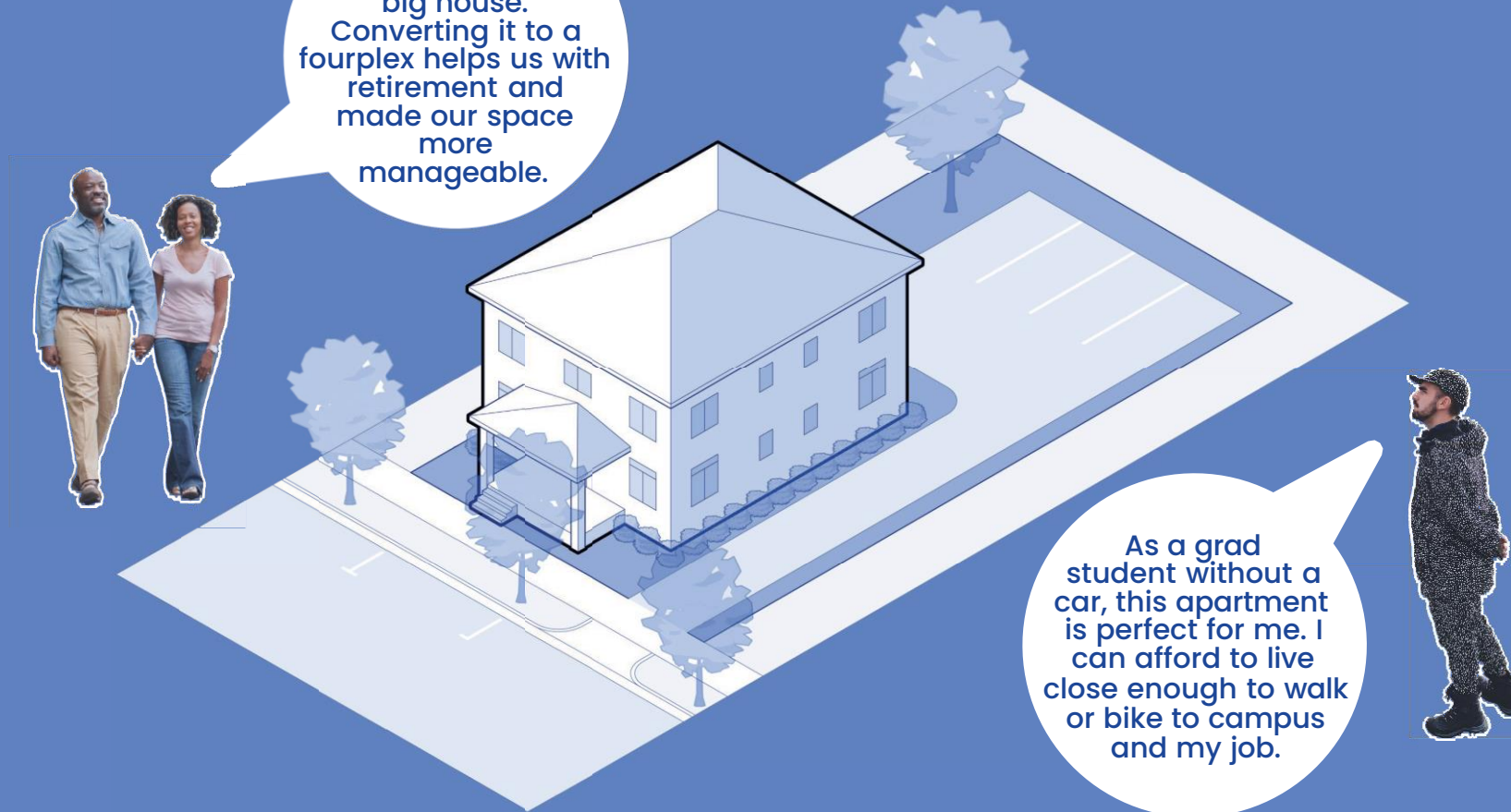
## MULTI-UNIT RESIDENTIAL

A triplex, multiple duplexes, a fourplex, or multiplex with up to 8 dwelling units

### Change:

Reducing driveway width;  
reducing parking requirements;  
reducing multi-family regulations

With our kids grown, we don't need such a big house. Converting it to a fourplex helps us with retirement and made our space more manageable.



As a grad student without a car, this apartment is perfect for me. I can afford to live close enough to walk or bike to campus and my job.

# Multi-Unit Residential (MUR) Development



# Multi-Family Developments





# Multi-Unit Residential Development

## Standards

- Allowed on unrestricted lots or reserves
- Minimum 50 feet frontage required on a 50 feet right-of-way
- Maximum depth of 150 feet from public street
- 3 - 8 units maximum
- No more than 2-3 stories with total height of 30 feet

## Access

- Alley access when abutting an alley especially, for corner properties abutting alley or  
access from side street
- Driveway width of maximum 16 feet
- One curb cut per public street frontage allowed
- Pedestrian connections to the sidewalk

# Multi-Unit Residential Development

## Building line

- 5 feet building line along local & collector streets
- 15 feet building line along major thoroughfare  $\leq$  80 feet
- Units along the street face the street with an entry feature that can encroach upto 4 feet into reduced BL on the first floor

## Parking

- 1 parking space per unit  $\leq$  1500 sf
- 2 parking spaces per unit  $>$  1500 sf
- 1 bike parking space per unit required when market-based parking applied
- Guest parking – 1 per every 6 units
- Parking must be located on the side or rear of the property
- Market based parking allowed



# NARROW LOT DEVELOPMENT

## NARROW-LOT DEVELOPMENT

A single-family home located on a narrow lot that fronts a street but with shared or rear vehicular access



### Change:

Requiring rear/side vehicular access via alley or shared driveway when possible, otherwise allowing common narrow drives

Simple ownership model  
First floor living  
Large private yard

Combined driveway approach

Narrower drive  
Some private yard space  
On-street parking

Flag lot

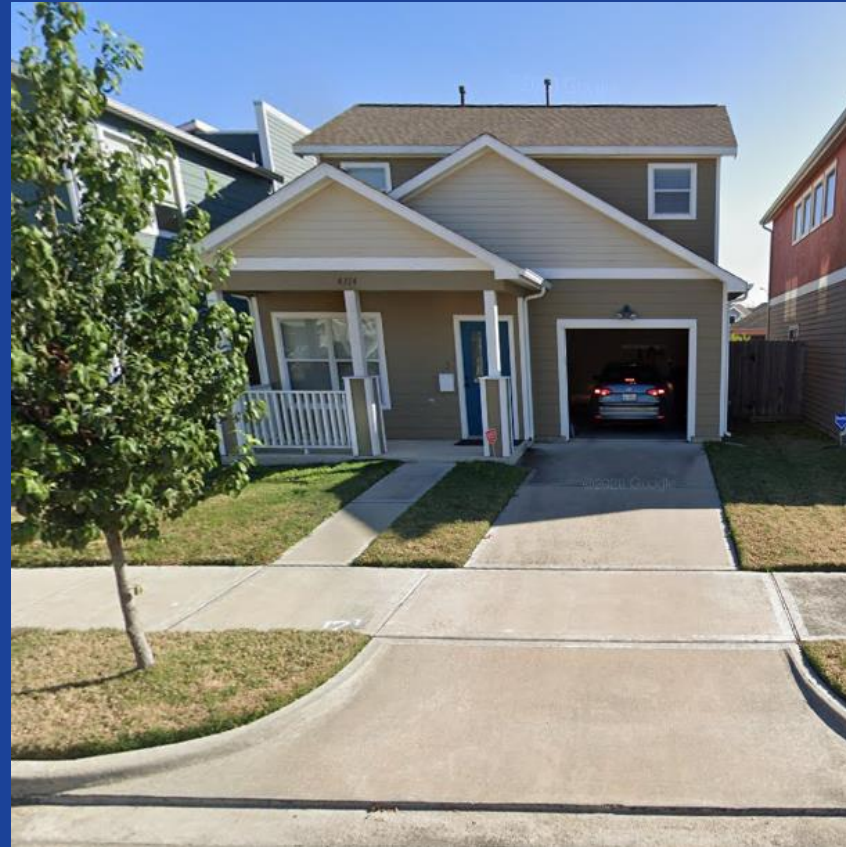
Accommodates more units  
No yard maintenance  
On-street parking

Shared driveway

Ample on-street parking  
Units face the street

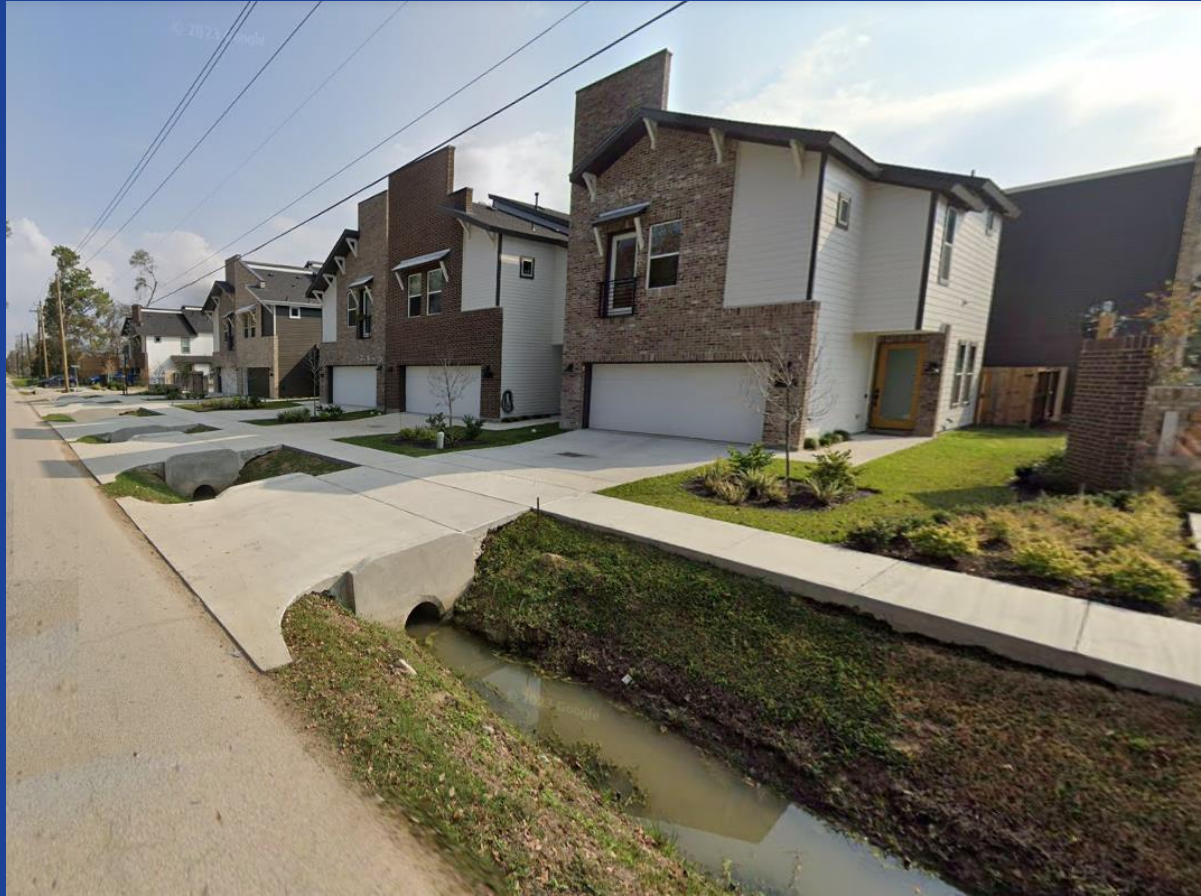
Alley access

# Narrow lot development



# Affects drainage capacities

What we are getting now

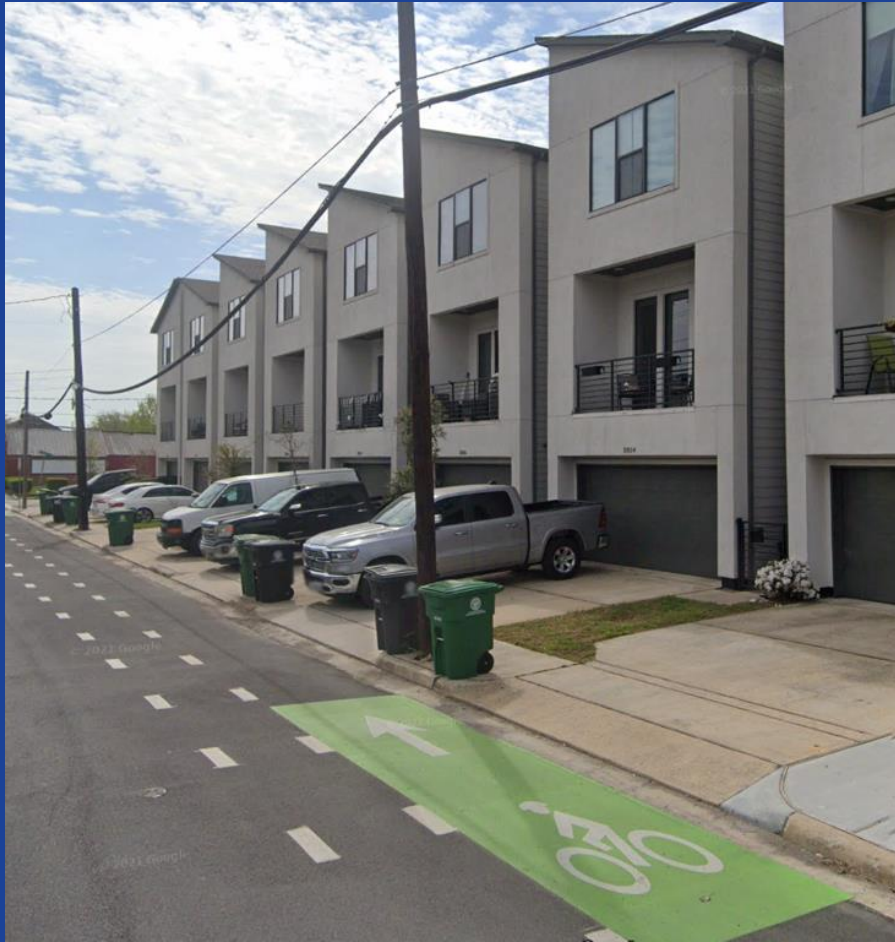


What we would like



# Sidewalks interrupted

What we are getting now



What we would like



# On-street parking not available

What we are getting now



What we would like





# Narrow Lot Development

## Access standards

- All properties abutting alley (corner or mid block) - take vehicular access via alley
- All corner properties abutting undeveloped alley, or no alley
  - Lots that take vehicular access via alley
  - or flag staff, shared driveway, permanent access easement (PAE) from side street that connects to alley when possible
- All mid-block properties abutting undeveloped alley or no alley
  - If creating lots 40 feet or wider, individual driveway access from the street allowed but maintain an unobstructed curb space of 22 feet
  - If creating one or more lots less than 40 feet wide (referred to as narrow lots)
    - vehicular access via flag staff, shared driveway or PAE needed OR
    - vehicular access via combined driveway approach for lots narrower than 40 feet on sites 15,000 sf or smaller

# Additional standards

## For front loading lots

- Lots with less than 40 feet frontage on a street or shared driveway are referred to as narrow lots
- Individual driveways will be maximum 12 feet wide for narrow lots less than 40 feet wide
- Combined driveway approach width - 24 feet maximum (12 feet for each lot) with 4 feet curb radius
- 10 feet building line and 19 feet garage building line required for garages facing the street
- For lots with street facing garages, 1/3 of the structure along the street must be occupiable space.
- For lots narrower than 40 feet, if not able to meet the 1/3 requirement, then functional balconies must be provided on the second floor.

# Additional standards

## For side/rear loading lots

- Units along the street must provide an entry feature facing the street and provide pedestrian connections to sidewalks
- For developments with flag lots, access will be shared by all lots abutting street
- Flag street cannot be longer than 200 feet from the street with roadway
- Guest parking reserves must be located within the private property

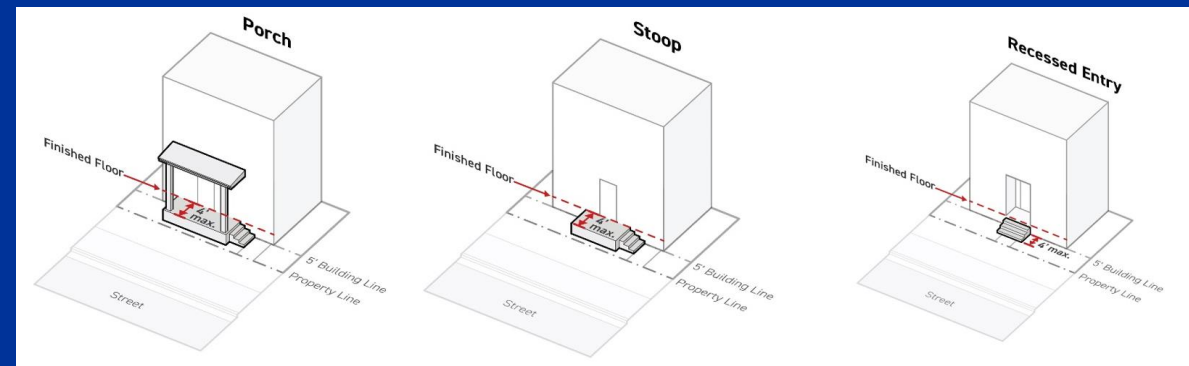
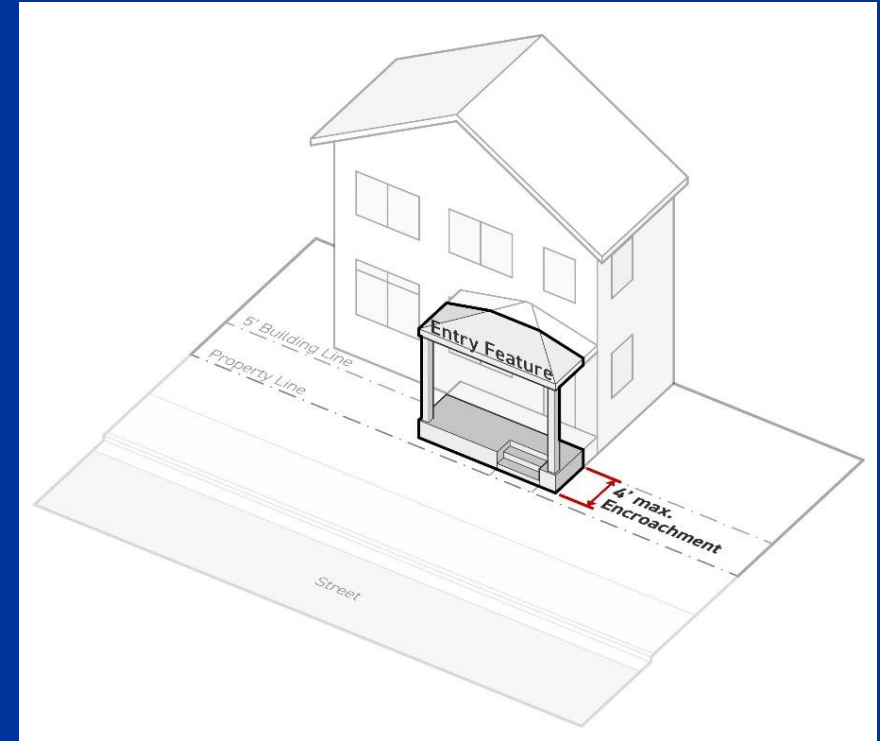
## Parking

- 1 parking space per unit  $\leq$  1500 sf
- 2 parking spaces per unit  $>$  1500 sf
- Guest parking – 1 per every 6 units – For shared driveway and PAE developments
- Required parking can be detached from the unit but located within the plat boundary
- Market based parking allowed

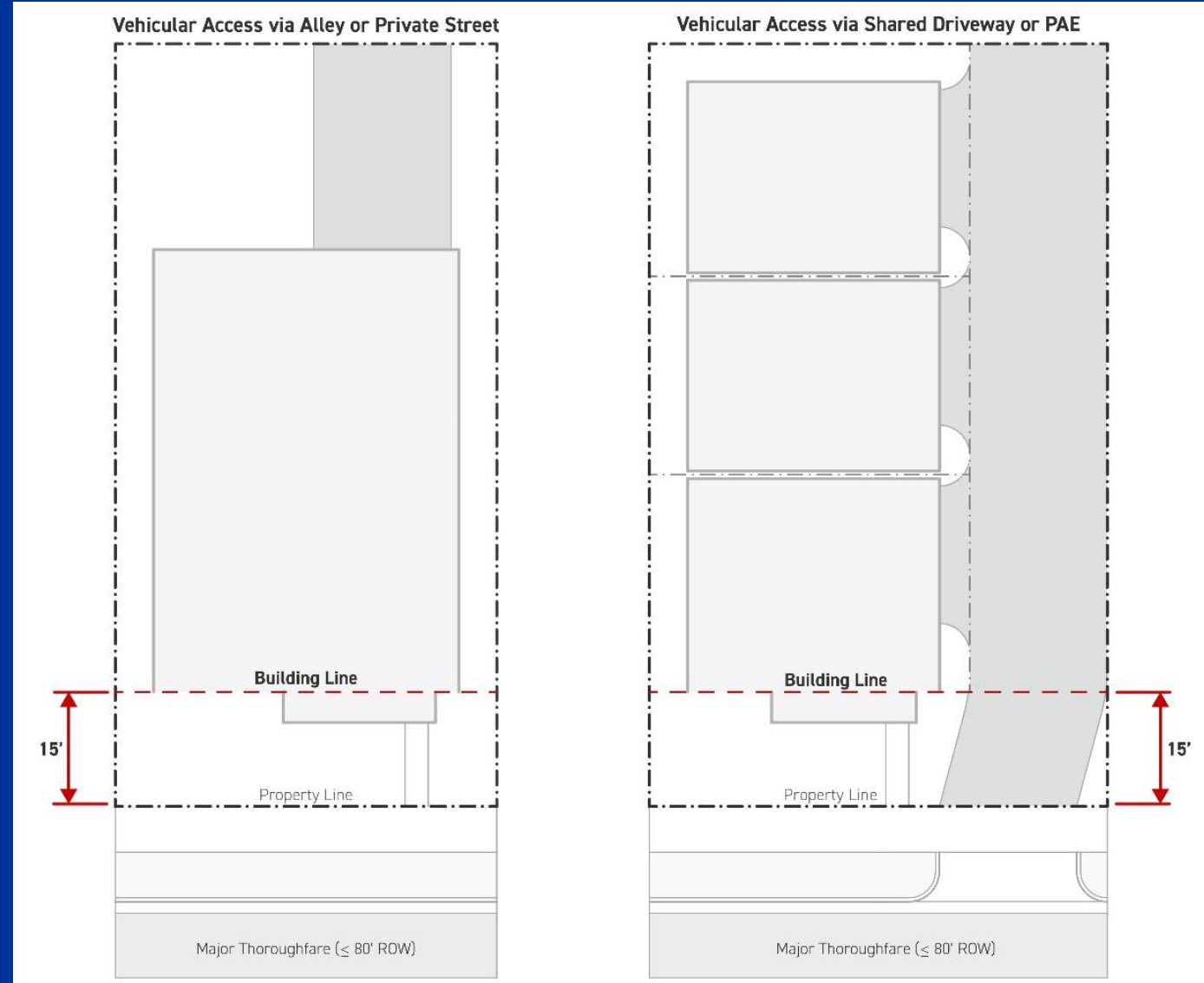
# Narrow lot development



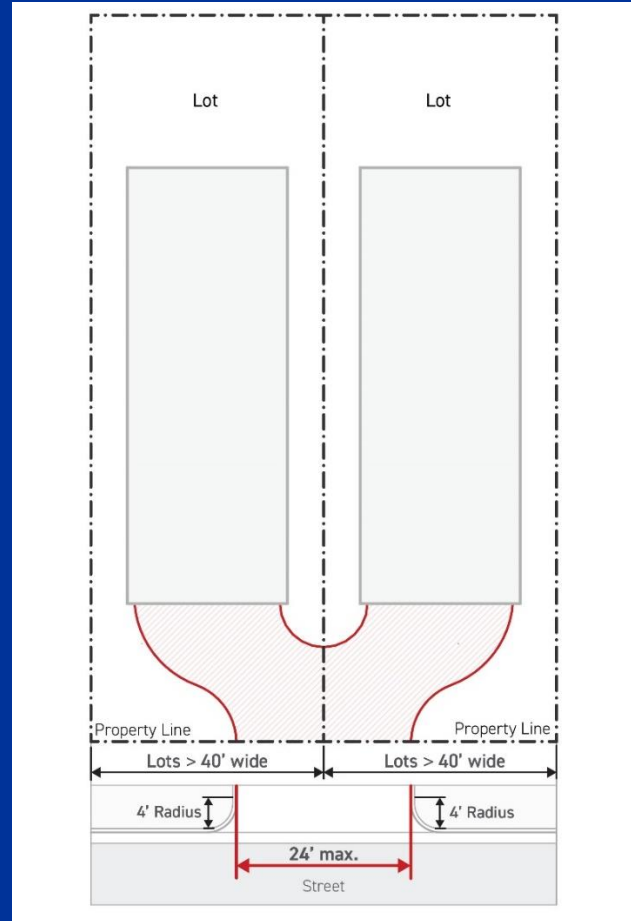
# Entry feature



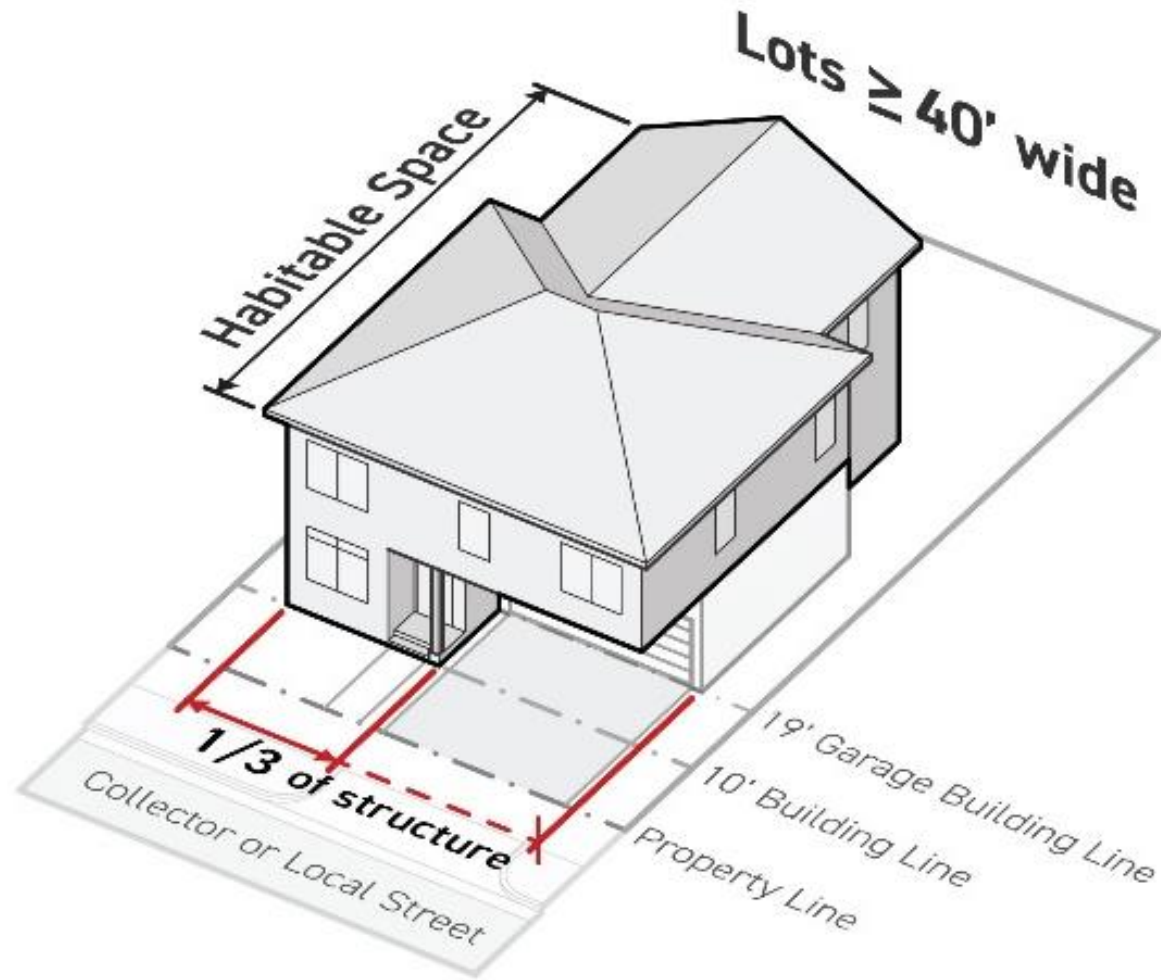
# Reduced BL along MTFP 80 feet or less



# Combined driveway approach

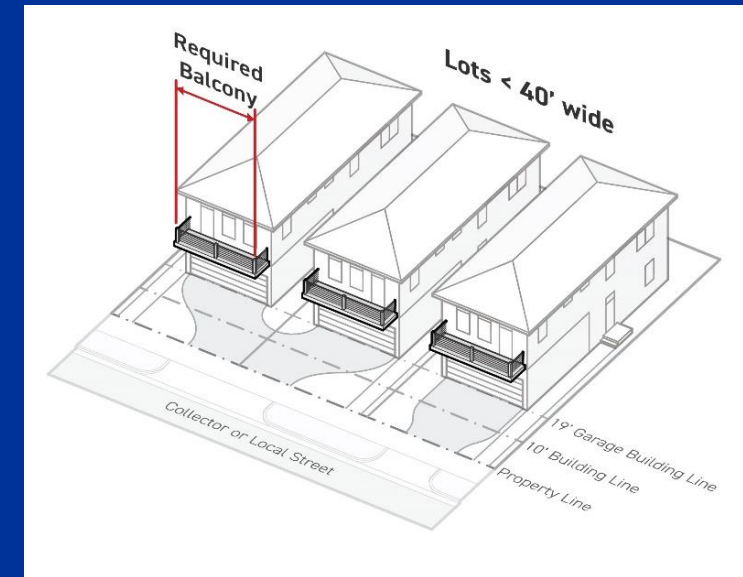
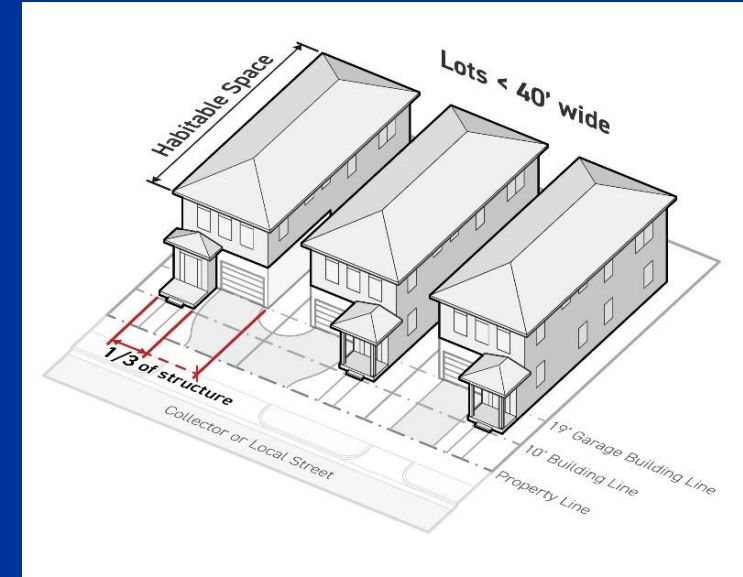
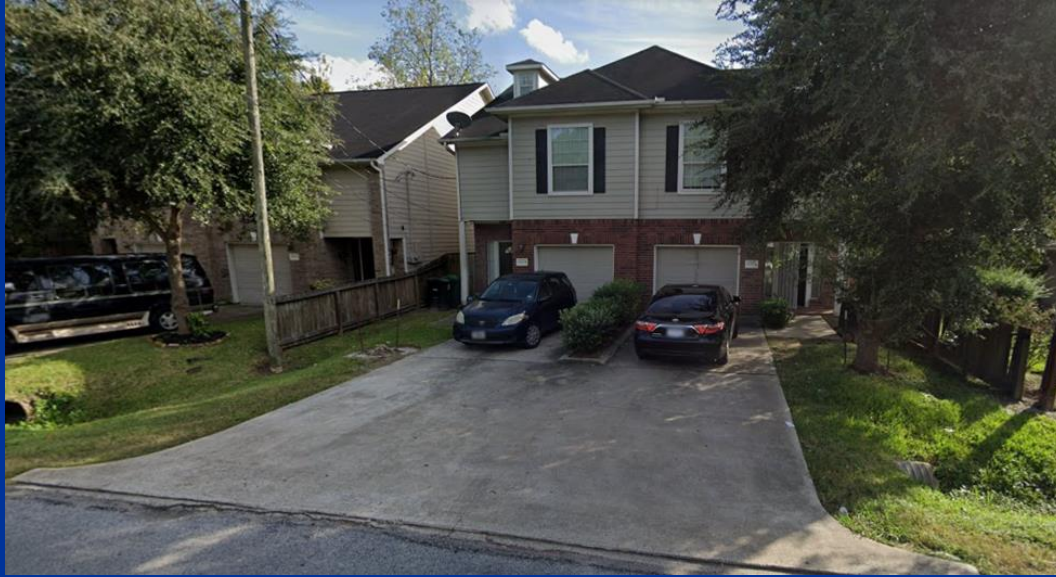


# 1/3 Occupiable Space





# Combined driveway approach with balconies





# COURTYARD STYLE DEVELOPMENT

## COURTYARD STYLE DEVELOPMENT

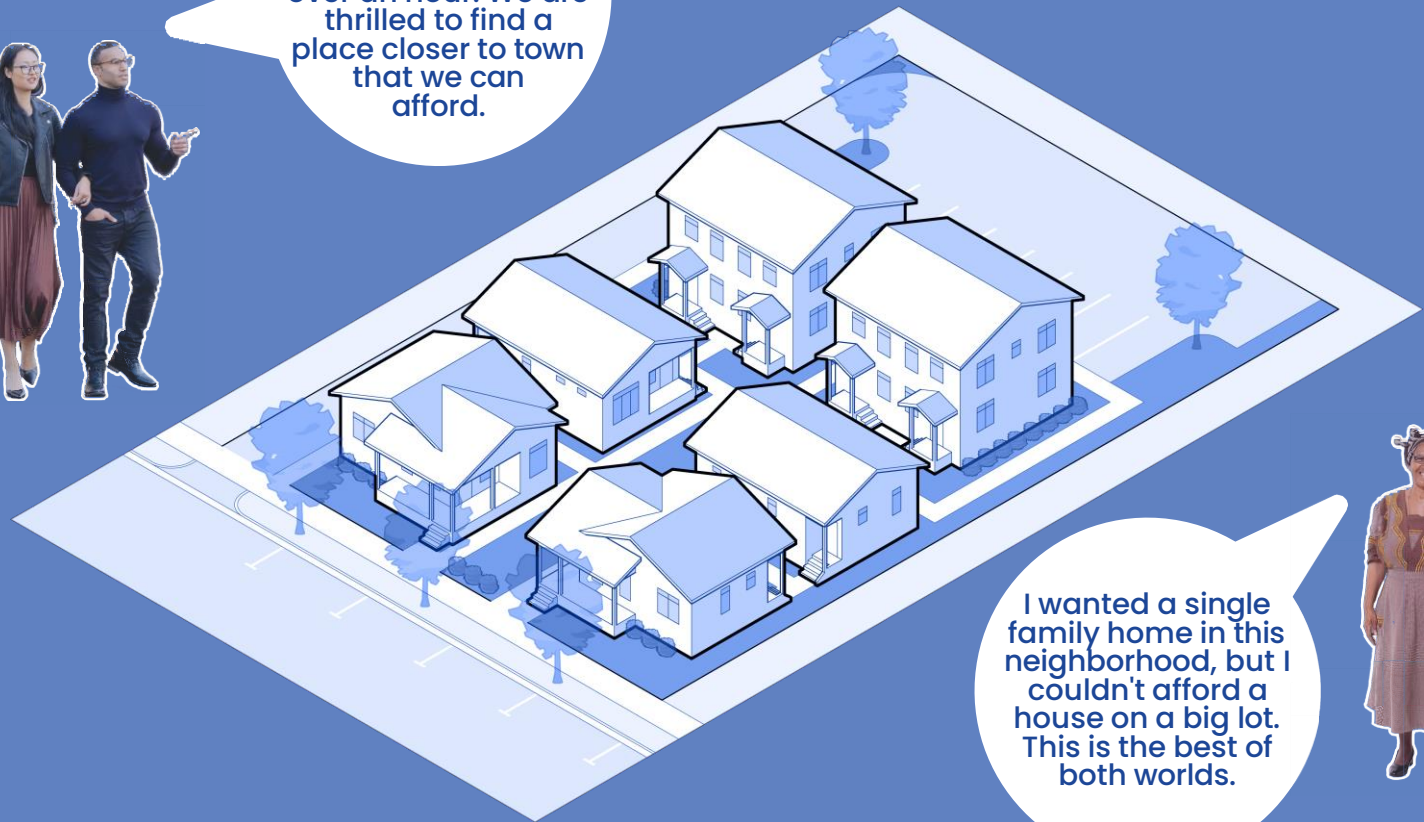
A cluster of single-family homes located around a shared courtyard

### Change:

Allowing lots to front on common courtyard space; eliminating minimum lot size and maximum density with height restriction; allowing decoupled parking from lot



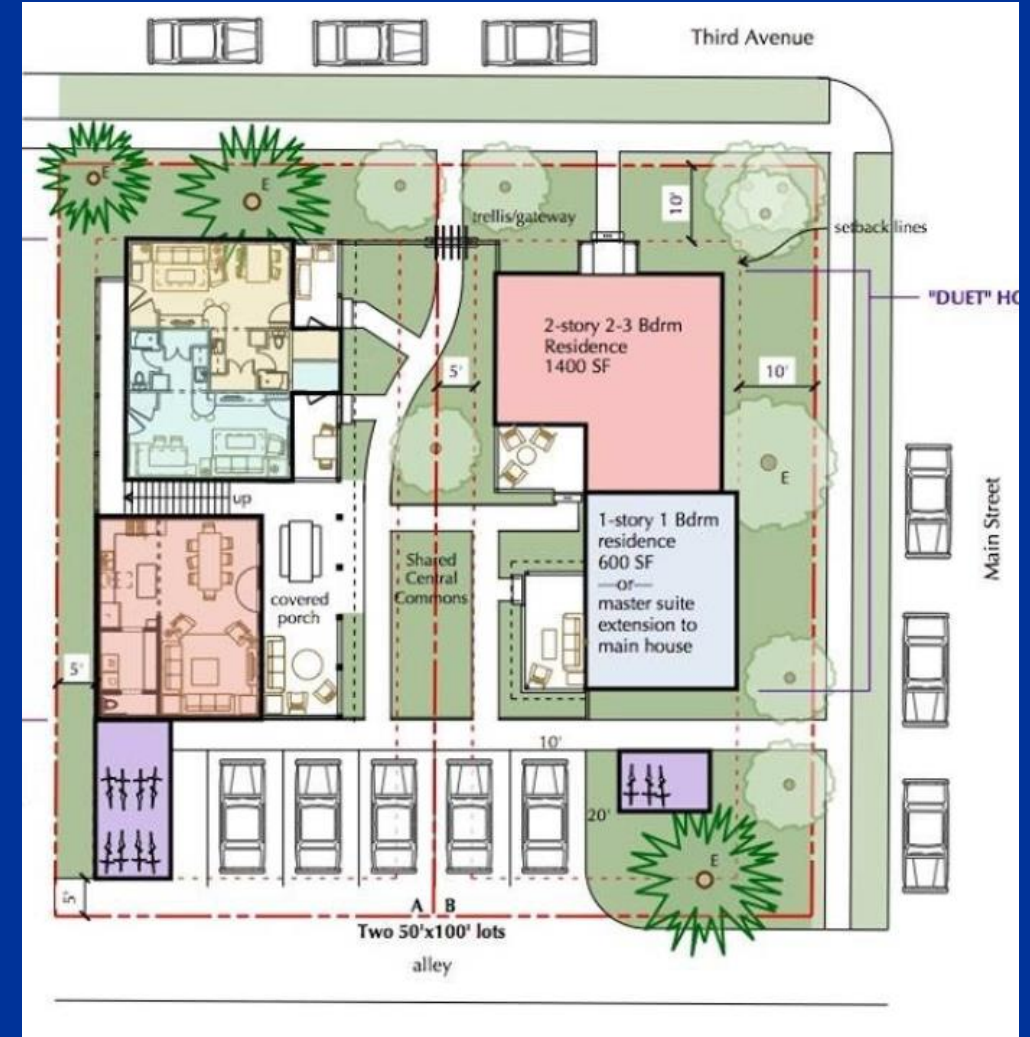
The commute from our house in Katy to the Texas Medical Center took over an hour. We are thrilled to find a place closer to town that we can afford.



I wanted a single family home in this neighborhood, but I couldn't afford a house on a big lot. This is the best of both worlds.



# Courtyard Style Development



# Courtyard Style Development

## Standards

- Platted as lots that are located around a courtyard
- Minimum 50 feet frontage required on a 50 feet right-of-way
- Maximum 150 feet deep property from the public right of way
- Lots can front on courtyard, alley, courtyard access drive, pedestrian pathway, or public street
- No restriction on lot sizes, lot width or density but height of the structures cannot be greater than 30 feet
- Lot size cannot be greater than 3500 sf
- Unit sizes cannot be greater than 1500sf
- All common areas must be under a common binding agreement

# Courtyard Style Development

## Access

- Alley access when abutting an alley, especially for corner properties or access from side street
- Vehicular access could also be from shared driveway, PAE or courtyard access drive
- Individual driveways from public street to lots are not allowed
- A total of 50% of lots in the subdivision must face the main courtyard or a public street
- Pedestrian connections from units to the courtyard, parking and sidewalk must be provided
- Provide courtyard space of 150 sf per lot, at least 12 feet wide
- Main courtyard is a minimum size of 480 sq ft with 20 feet distance between structures across the courtyard

# Courtyard Style Development

## Building line

- 5 feet building line along local & collector streets
- 15 feet building line along major thoroughfare  $\leq$  80 feet
- Units along the street face the street with an entry feature
- Entry feature can encroach upto 4 feet into the 5 feet building line on the first floor

## Parking

- 1 parking space per unit  $\leq$  1500 sf
- 2 parking spaces per unit  $>$  1500 sf
- Guest parking – 1 per every 6 units
- Guest parking located within private property
- Parking must be located on the side or rear of the property
- Parking can be detached from units but within the development
- Market based parking allowed





# Right-Sized Parking Minimums



\*Parking minimums = the minimum total parking spaces that a builder must provide on-site for a new development.

*Reducing parking minimums DOES NOT remove existing parking nor ban builders from adding more parking than is required.*

# Market-based parking requirements

Market based parking (no city required minimum parking) for all of the four housing types if;

- Property is within 1/2 mile rail stations, high frequency bus stops, blue route bus stops in opportunity zones, transit station, park & ride  
OR
- within 1/4 mile of high comfort bike paths





# Meeting Agenda

Welcome by Chairs

Director's Report

Housing Recommendations discussion

**Conservation Districts update**

Homework activity & Next steps

Public comments

**ROMAN MCALLEN**



# Proposed Conservation Districts

Driven by owners and residents

Can protect the character, look and feel of an area

Helps support compatible development & new construction

May be easier to establish than other protections

Promote livability and quality of life

Includes structures of any age

# Driven by Property Owners and Residents

- Analysis of development applications
- Historical studies of neighborhoods and cultural institutions
- Analysis of the area confirms consistent and identifiable physical attributes of culture, history, scale and development that can be preserved by protecting or enhancing one or more of those attributes
- An area is contiguous with boundary lines drawn to the logical edges of the area or subdivision, as may be indicated by a creek, street, subdivision line, utility easement, or other boundary
- Other data relevant to consideration as a conservation district as determined appropriate by the historic preservation officer
- Analysis may include determination of the number of the properties, or of the size of a proposed district



# Criteria for Creating Districts



The Houston Archaeological and Historical Commission (HAHC) and City Council will evaluate the following:

- Common streetscapes, street patterns, significant community sites, or land use patterns creating an area identity, and
- Common pattern of improvements, landscaping, or building setbacks on the properties, and
- Common scale or bulk among buildings and structures, roof heights, location of garages, or other building footprint elements, and
- Whether a proposed district is an area that was planned or developed by historically underrepresented or disenfranchised communities, or
- Evaluating community sentiment and public pride.

# Menu of Standards

When creating a Conservation District, the community may choose one or more of the following standards, or other standards determined to be appropriate:

- Building height or number of stories
- Building size and massing (general shape and form of the structure)
- Front-facing building features
- Lot size and coverage
- Front and side building setbacks
- Off-street parking and yard parking
- Roof line and pitch
- Paving and hardscape covering
- General site planning (location of primary and secondary structures)
- Architectural style and detailing
- Building materials
- Garage entrance location
- Fences and walls
- Building relocation and demolitions
- Alterations to existing structures

# Key Points for Establishing a Conservation District



- Based on initiation and input from communities, the Planning Department's Houston Office of Preservation (HOP), will work closely with property owners to identify the character traits the community wants to preserve.
- With the proposed standards determined, the HOP will host at least one additional meeting to present it to the public.
- 51% of property owners are required for approval. Boundaries can be modified to meet the 51% threshold.
- HAHC will hold public hearing(s) and may refer to City Council.
- City Council will hold public hearing(s) when considering the district.
- Unless there is 100% property owner support, the HAHC and City Council must each approve by a 75% majority vote.

# Conservation Districts Don't Affect

Ordinary maintenance, repair or replacement of exterior features that aren't structural

Landscaping with plants, trees, shrubs

The partial reconstruction of a structure or exterior feature damaged or destroyed by fire, storm or other disaster

Anything on the interior of a home



# Meeting Agenda

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Housing Recommendations discussion

Conservation Districts update

**Homework activity & next steps**

Public comments

**TAMMI WILLIAMSON**







# Contacts and Resources

## **Livable Places**

[LivablePlaces@houstontx.gov](mailto:LivablePlaces@houstontx.gov)

832.393.6600

## **Suvidha Bandi**

**Jennifer Ostlind**

**Tammi Williamson**

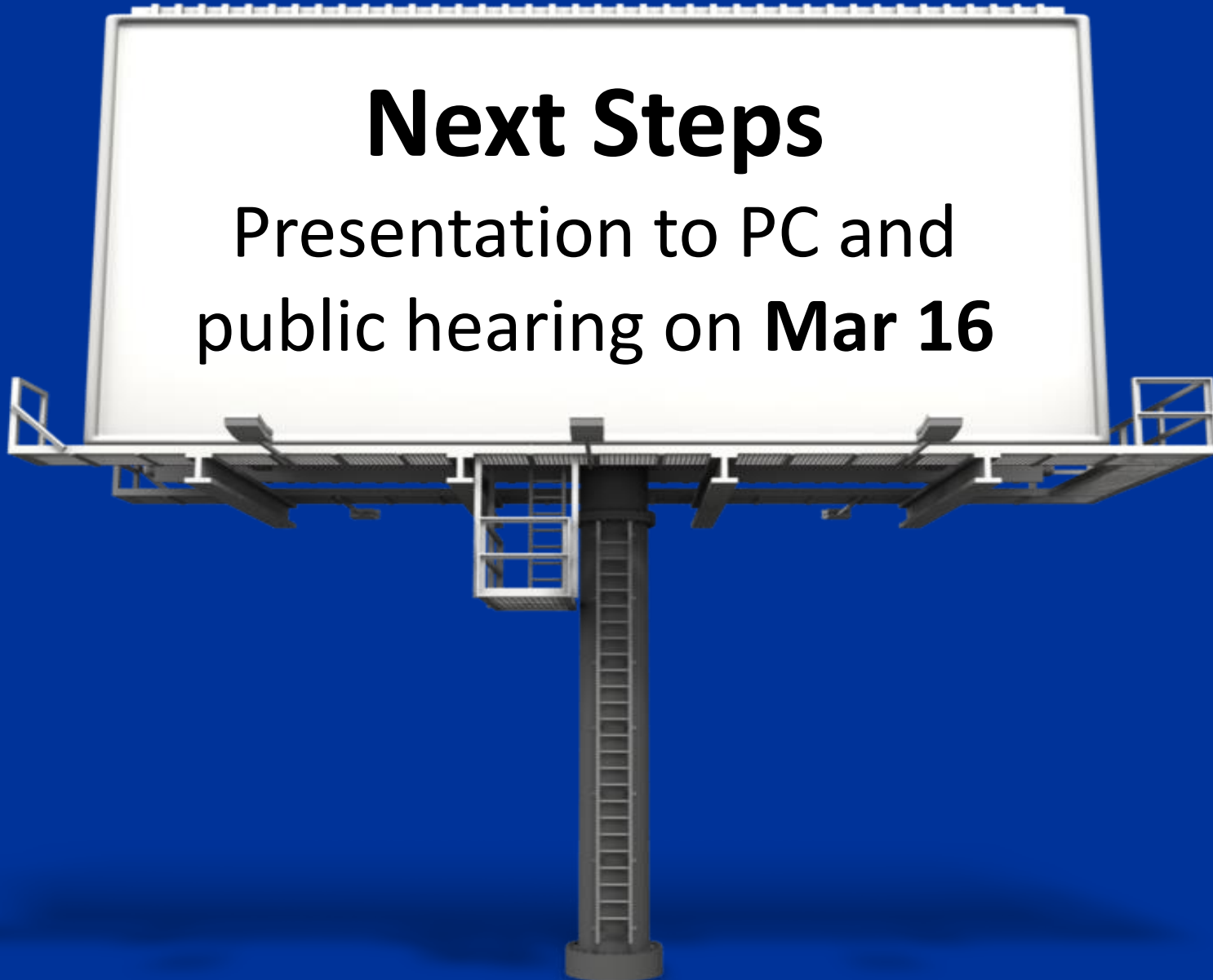
[www.HoustonPlanning.com](http://www.HoustonPlanning.com)

[www.LetsTalkHouston.org](http://www.LetsTalkHouston.org)



# Next Steps

Presentation to PC and  
public hearing on **Mar 16**





# Meeting Agenda

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**Public comments**

# Instructions for Public Comments

2 minutes per speaker

Press \*6 if connected on phone

Click on the microphone button

State your full name & spell your last name