

MIDDLE HOUSING

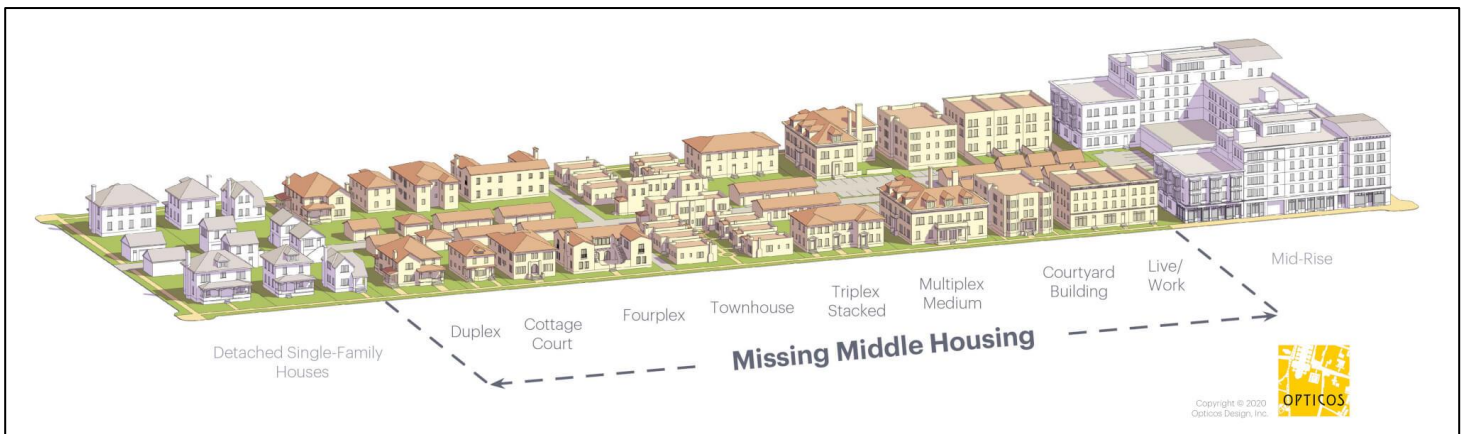
Planning Commission Retreat – August 4, 2022

What is Middle Housing?

Middle housing (aka “missing middle”) is a range of house-scale buildings with multiple dwelling units – compatible in scale and form with single-family homes – located in a walkable neighborhood (Opticos Design).

Middle housing broadens housing choices within a community and bridges the spectrum between apartments and detached single-family homes. Middle housing includes: duplex, triplex, cottage, fourplex, townhouse, etc.

The graphics contained below are from <https://missingmiddlehousing.com/>.



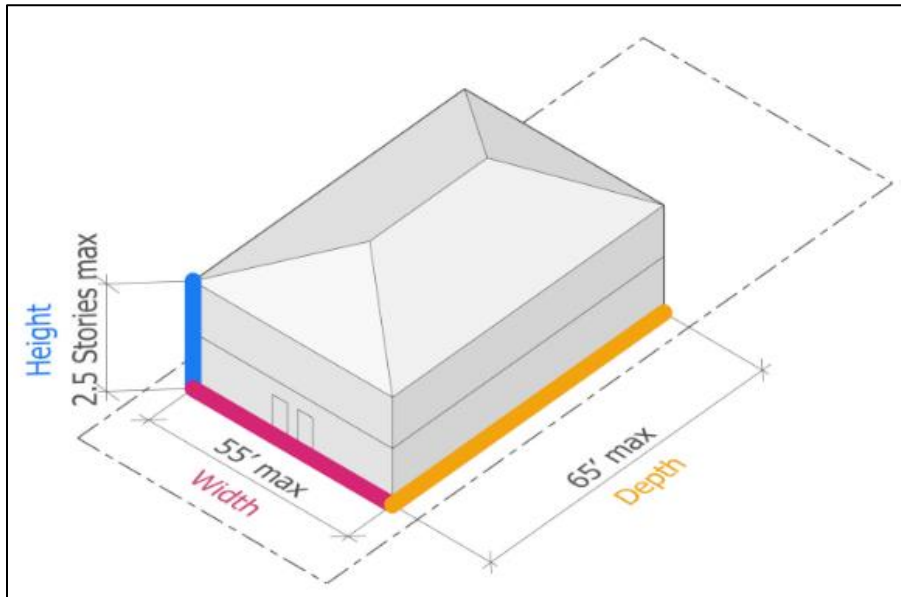
Middle Housing Characteristics

When middle housing is combined in a neighborhood (usually with single-family homes) they can provide enough households within walking distance to support local businesses and transit. Middle housing is not new but can be found in many vibrant pre-1940s neighborhoods.

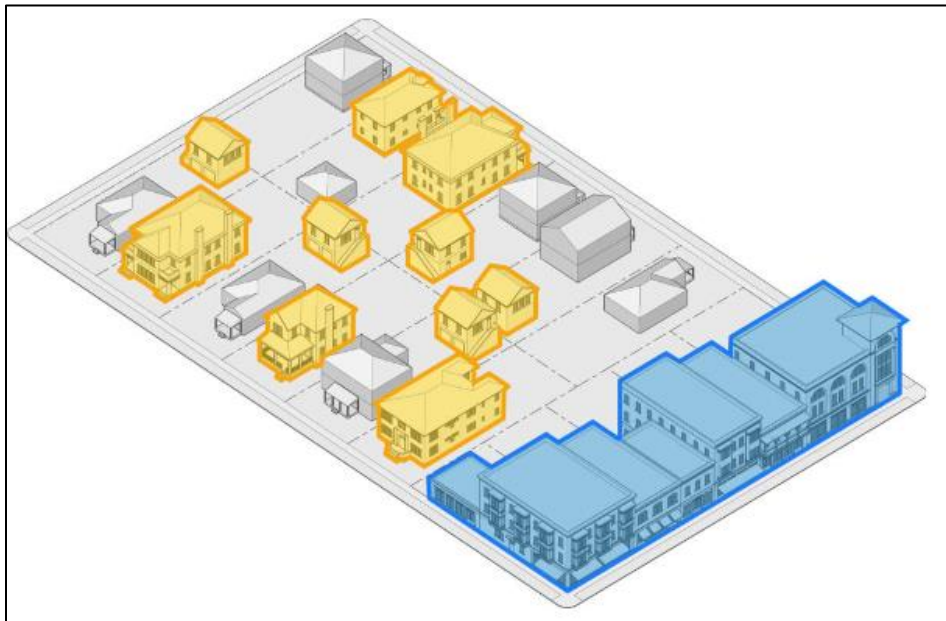


Common characteristics of middle housing include:

- Walkable neighborhoods
- Small-footprint buildings
- Lower perceived density
- Smaller, well-design units
- Fewer off-street parking spaces
- Simple construction



Example of small footprint



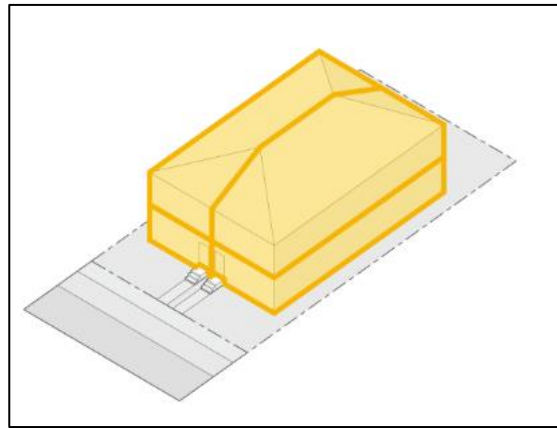
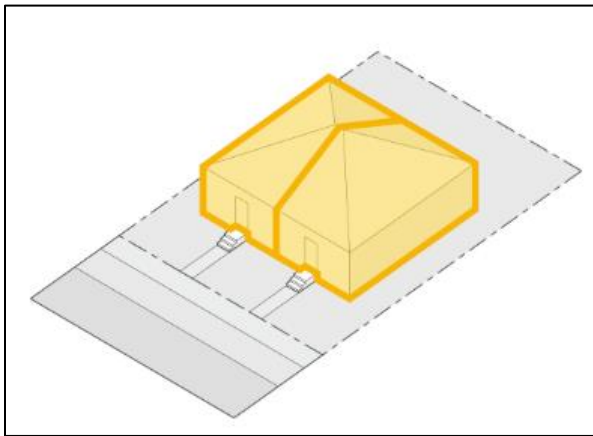
Example of integration to single-family neighborhood near businesses



Example duplex side-by-side



Example fourplex stacked



Draft Work Plan for Middle Housing

The 2022 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Docket includes an item to:

“Amend the Land Use Element to explicitly allow duplexes and triplexes and allow with conditions other dwelling types that are similar in scale with single family detached homes, in low density residential zones.”

This amendment is proposed to be carried over due to its broad scope (approximately 66% of the City is designated low density residential), to leverage State grant funds to support in the work, and to allow adequate time for community engagement and alignment with the 2024 major update to the Comprehensive Plan, and to stay on schedule with other ongoing and planned work that has already been prioritized or is underway.

The City has recently received a Department of Commerce grant with the objective of evaluating the appropriateness of allowing middle housing types (including duplexes and triplexes) in low density residential zones. This grant will provide resources to analyze existing policies and regulations, conduct community engagement, and develop draft policies for consideration as well as concepts for future implementation through the Development Code. The work occurring under the middle housing grant would overlap in some areas with the 2024 Comprehensive Plan update. For example, middle housing policies have the potential to influence the Land Use, Housing, and Community Design Elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Aligning the engagement and policy work with the broader Comprehensive Plan update is imperative to avoid potential conflicts or misalignment between the goals and policies of the plan.

The objective of the proposed work plan is to evaluate the appropriateness of adding middle housing types, such as duplexes and triplexes, to low density residential zones. The key components of the project scope include the following:

- Analysis of existing policies and regulations
- Racial equity analysis (this is a requirement of the grant and will satisfy a requirement for the update to the Housing Element)
- Community engagement, including partnering with Community Based Organization(s)
- Draft Comprehensive Plan policies
- Draft implementation concepts for future Development Code amendments

Under the terms of the Commerce grant, the above activities need to be completed by June 30, 2023. The grant does not require policies or regulations be adopted. The draft goals and policies developed as part of the middle housing work will be incorporated into the applicable elements of the Comprehensive Plan update and would be considered and adopted as part of the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, anticipated by the end of 2024.