

GET YOUR ZONING RIGHT

Updating your codes for more housing affordability

BETTER COMMUNICATION AND STRATEGY

- Build up a knowledge base among community champions to connect technical aspects of zoning to high-level policy goals
- Use personal stories and illustrated graphics to make technical ideas more tangible
- Host interactive education sessions to test regulations, illustrate trade-offs, and encourage collaboration
- Commit to evaluating regulations and making updates annually—codes are living documents

BETTER LOT STANDARDS

- Reduce or remove minimum lot sizes and rely on lot widths
 - + Lot area: 2,000 sf or less
 - + Lot width: 25 ft or less (especially for corner lots or lots with alleys)
 - + Allow subdivision of lots as flag lots or sublots
- Reduce side and rear setbacks for house-scale buildings (2.5 stories or less) to 5 ft
- Remove or reduce parking minimums
- Reduce transitional yard requirements between residential and small-scale commercial uses
- Work with stormwater and fire code officials to create strategies for small projects

BETTER RESIDENTIAL STANDARDS

- Remove minimum unit sizes
- Remove density limits (du/acre) and rely on building form (building width and height in stories)
- Allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs)
 - + Allow an attached and detached ADU
 - + Up to 1,200 SF total
 - + Beware of poison pills: owner-occupancy and parking requirements
- Allow house-scale plexes, cottage courts, etc.
 - + Control for # units/lot, not FAR
 - + Allow for fee-simple ownership with sublots
- Allow small-scale commercial
 - + Can limit to corner lots, certain streets, or where commercial uses existed at one time
 - + Up to 2,000 SF

BETTER PROCESSES

- Organize the code to be accessible and easily understood
- Allow housing to be built by right, limit discretionary review
- Streamline permitting for neighborhood-scale projects
- Have a system to review projects early on across departments to identify potential conflicts with other codes (building, fire, stormwater, trees, etc.)
- Have a process to administratively allow minor modifications or alternative compliance to reduce variances
- Consider pre-approved plans