



Smart Growth America

Improving lives by improving communities



National Complete
Streets Coalition



State
Smart Transportation
Initiative



Transportation
for America

Fixing zoning to build more affordable housing & walkable communities

November 18, 2024

Tocarra Nicole Thomas, AICP

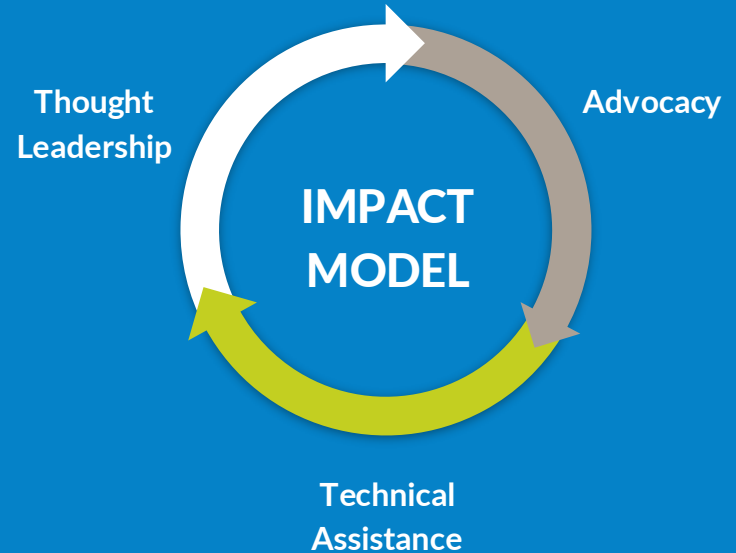
Director, Land Use and Development

Smart Growth America a National Nonprofit

OUR NORTH STAR

We envision a country where no matter where you live, or who you are, you can enjoy living in a place that is healthy, prosperous, and resilient.

We empower communities through technical assistance, advocacy, and thought leadership to realize our vision of livable places, healthy people, and shared prosperity.





PROGRAMMATIC PRIORITIES



**CLIMATE CHANGE
AND RESILIENCE**



**ADVANCING RACIAL
EQUITY**



**HEALTHY
COMMUNITIES**



Tocarra Nicole Thomas, AICP Director Land Use and Development

Spheres of Influences at SGA:
Center for Zoning Solutions Program Lead,
Attainable Housing

Practical Planning Experience:
Housing, Form-Based Codes,
Zoning Administration, Community
Development, Community Redevelopment,
Economic Development



CZS Vision and Priorities

A country where every community has implemented equitable land use policies that support people to live, work, and thrive, no matter where they call home

Codes for today's communities

Replace inefficient and exclusionary zoning regulations to unlock economic, social, and health benefits for all communities.

More housing in the right places

Implement effective policies to encourage mixed-use development and diverse housing options to create thriving, well-connected places.

Supporting a people-centered movement

Provide residents, advocates, and decision-makers with training, direct support, and accessible tools to advance zoning codes that center community needs.



CENTER FOR
ZONING
SOLUTIONS



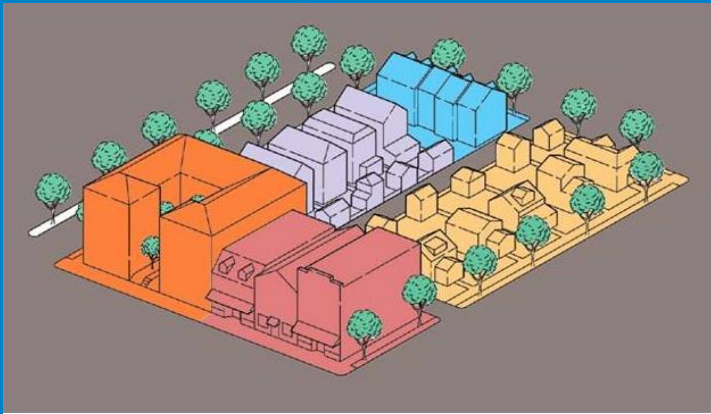
Walkable Communities with housing diversity see a price premium, pay less for infrastructure, and reap more financial benefits!



Image Source https://i5.walmartimages.com/seo/Delta-Children-Kids-Large-Road-Map-Activity-Rug-4-6-L-x-3-3-W-City-Life-Green_0d0cf077-e4ab-4fa9-ab50-b247ef6e6760.9796c28d654891faaf8e7875bb7c5207.jpeg?odnHeight=2000&odnWidth=2000&odnBg=FFFFFF

- NAR: Each Single-Family Home Sell injects approximately \$110,000 and 2.9 full time jobs into the local economy
- NAHB: For every 100 MF Units that Come online, an average of 161 jobs and about \$11.7 million is added to the local economy in the first year; also supports an average of 44 jobs and generates \$2.6 million each year once the project is complete
- *Zoned In Communities with Smart Growth Approaches* such as FBCs generate more tax revenue for local governments (\$65 million) and saw stabilized rents even with increased growth
- Foot Traffic Ahead: “Throughout the pandemic, housing prices in walkable urban places skyrocketed, indicating favorability in the market and demand for more walkable places.”

What is a Form-Based Code?

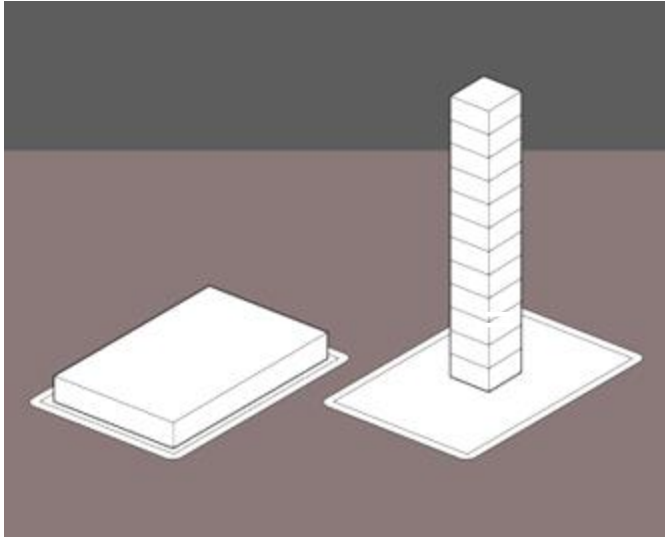


- A set of land development regulations that produce predictable built results, a high-quality **walkable** public realm, and uses physical form—rather than separation of uses—as the organizing principle
- Legally binding regulations not option guides
- Focuses on what happens **outside the buildings—form**
- Includes standards for both **public and private development**
- Ensures that the approved **vision or plan** for the area is realized
- Ensures that the **physical character** of that vision is maintained over time.



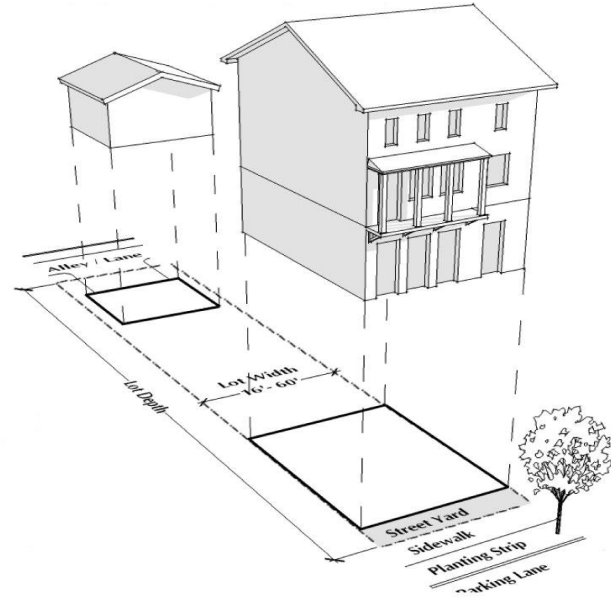
Conventional Zoning:

...focus on density



Form-Based Code:

...focus on building form





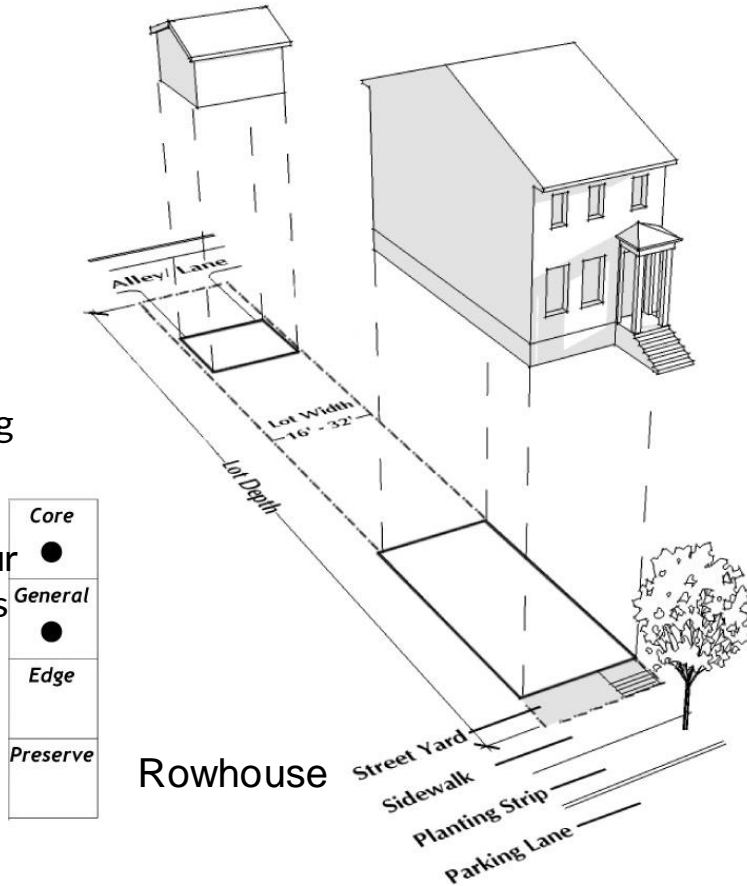
How would an existing neighborhood develop over time with a new FBC?



Credit: Dan Parolek

Create and adopt a menu of desired housing types

Tip: Start by identifying all of the existing "cool" and "unique" houses in your community as the Menu Baseline





Real Life Example: Claremore, OK Infill Development Accommodates Growth While Respecting Neighborhood Character via a menu of allowed housing types



Flex House-simple two-story 1,800 square foot building that adds duplex functionality to a single-family house.



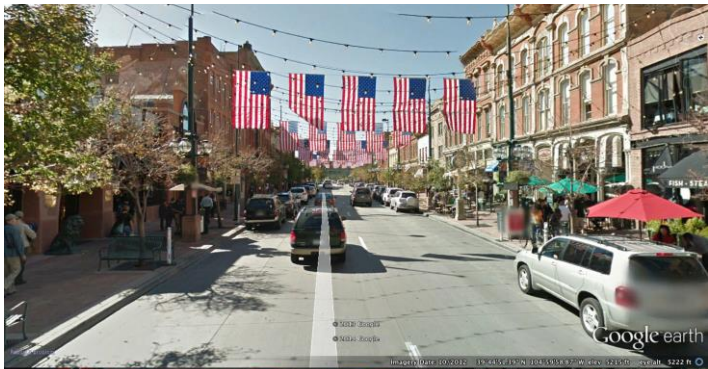
Single Cottage-one or two story building, the lower level serves either as a garage or a fully accessible apartment.



Walk-Up-twelve individual one bedroom units in a three-story wood-frame building with no elevator.

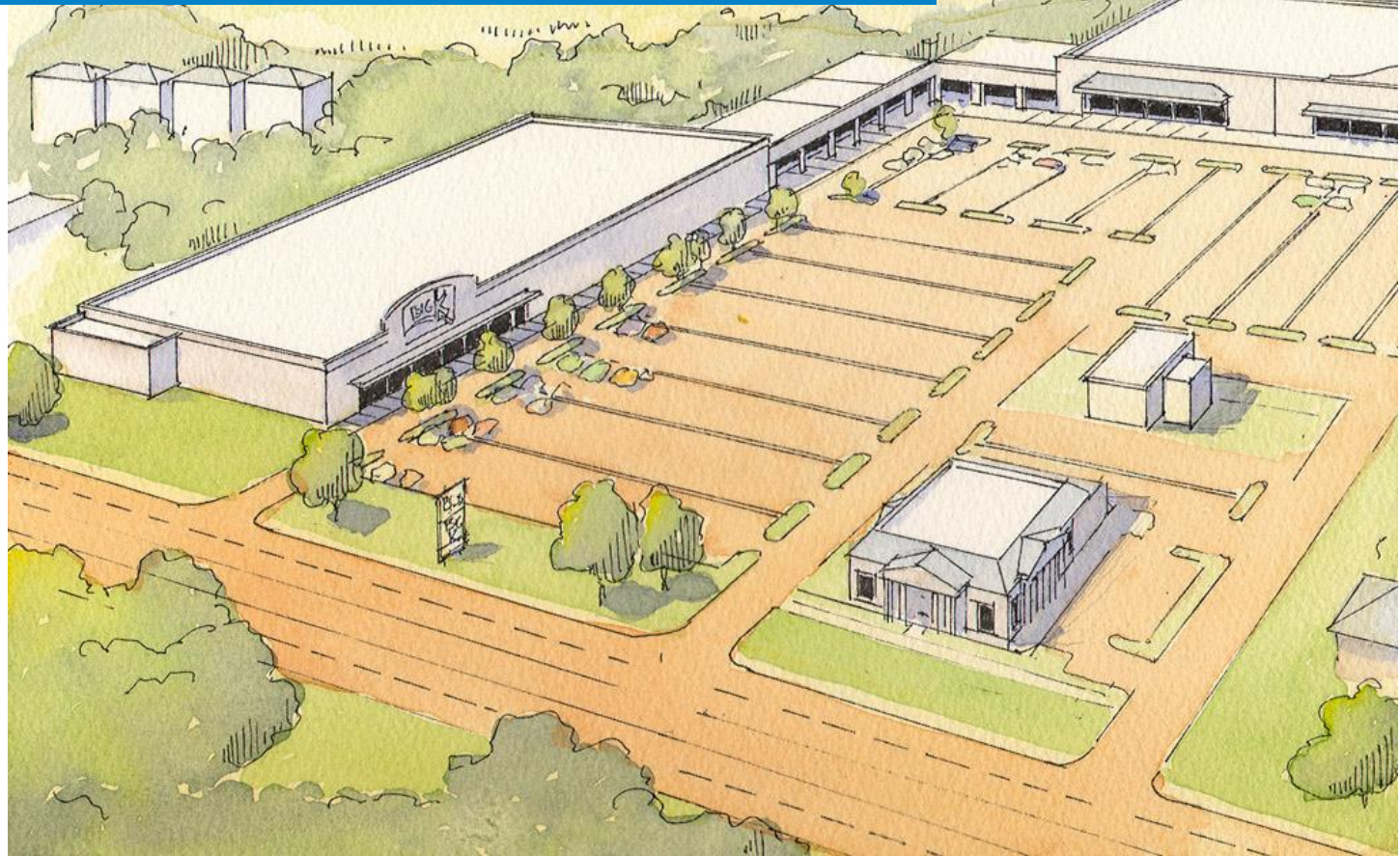


Adopt Pedestrian Scale Public Space Standards to create your community's "living room"



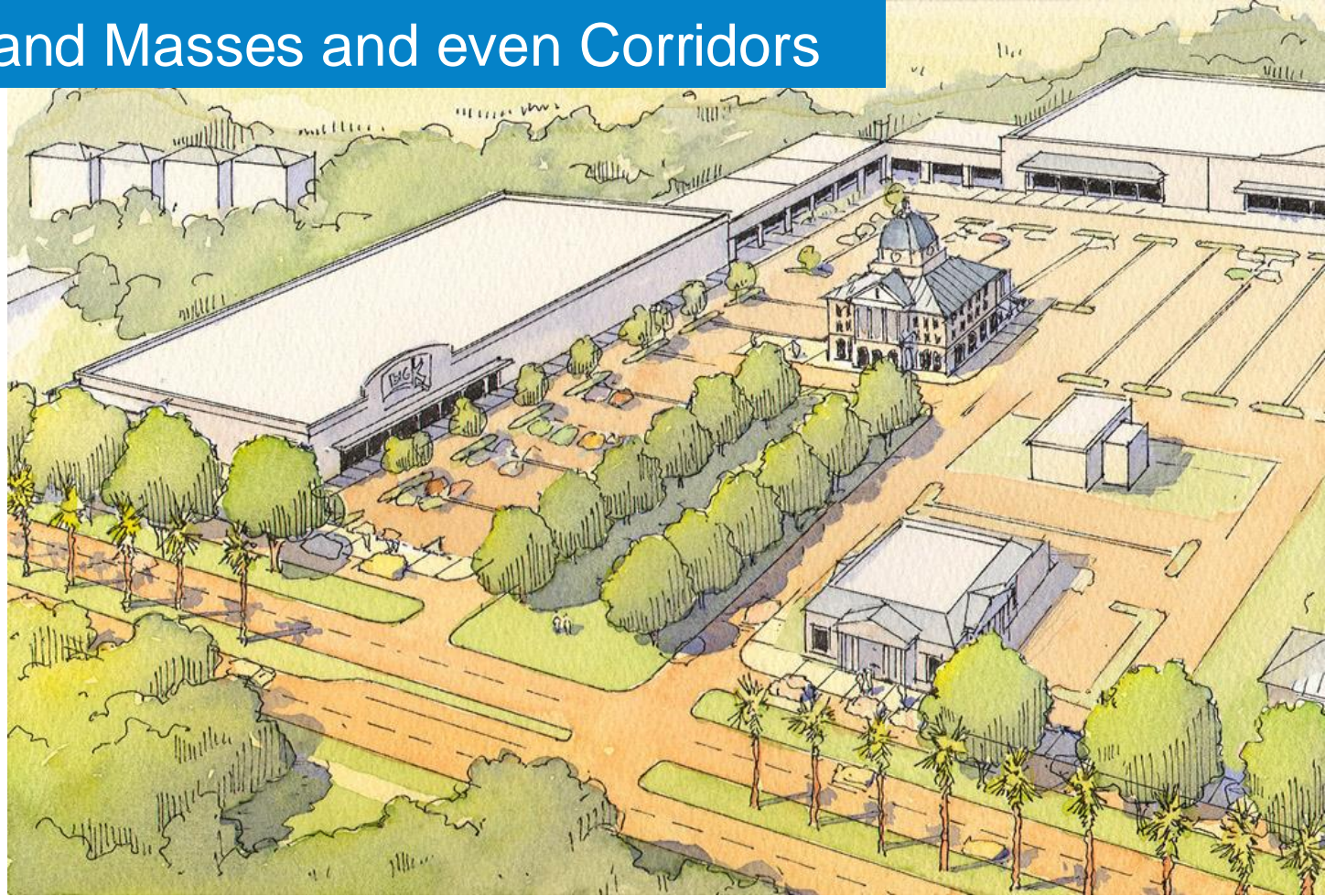
GROUND-FLOOR USE	CAFÉ ZONE	PEDESTRIAN ZONE	LANDSCAPE + FURNITURE ZONE	PARKING + PLANTER ZONE	SHARED TRAVEL ZONE
MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	Not Applicable <i>See Appendix A.5 Private Frontage Guidelines.</i>	6' - 8'	6' - 8' Tree wells; Street furniture to be provided per Section 6;	8' parallel	<i>See Section 3.3 for Street Type Standards.</i>
COMMERCIAL	Where Applicable; 6' - 12' <i>Additionally, See Appendix A.5 Private Frontage Guidelines.</i>	7' - 10'	<i>See Section 3.5 for Street Landscape Standards.</i>	16' - 18' head-in diagonal OR 8' parallel Parking Lane Planters (optional)	

Retrofit Large Land Masses and even Corridors



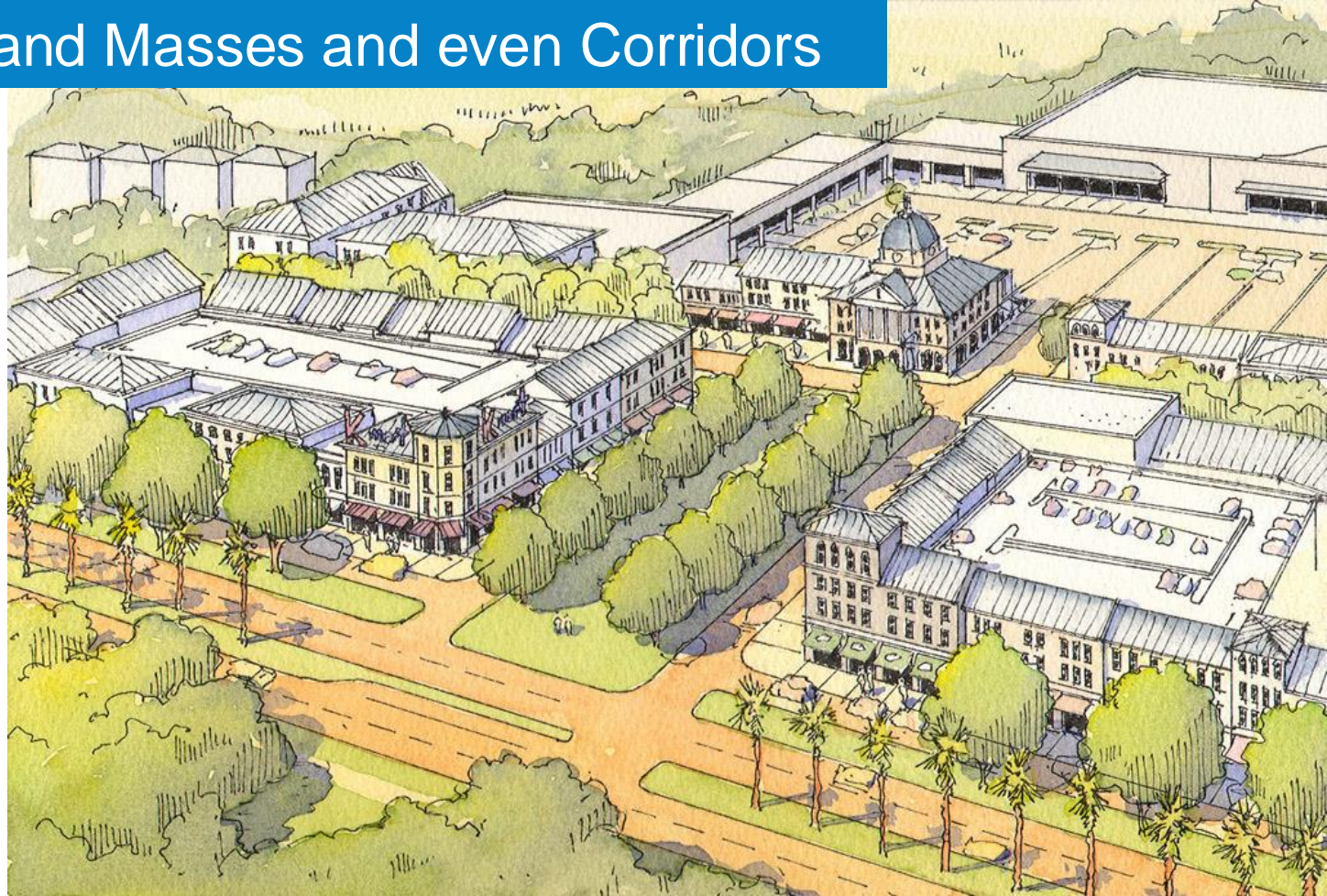
Dover, Kohl & Partners

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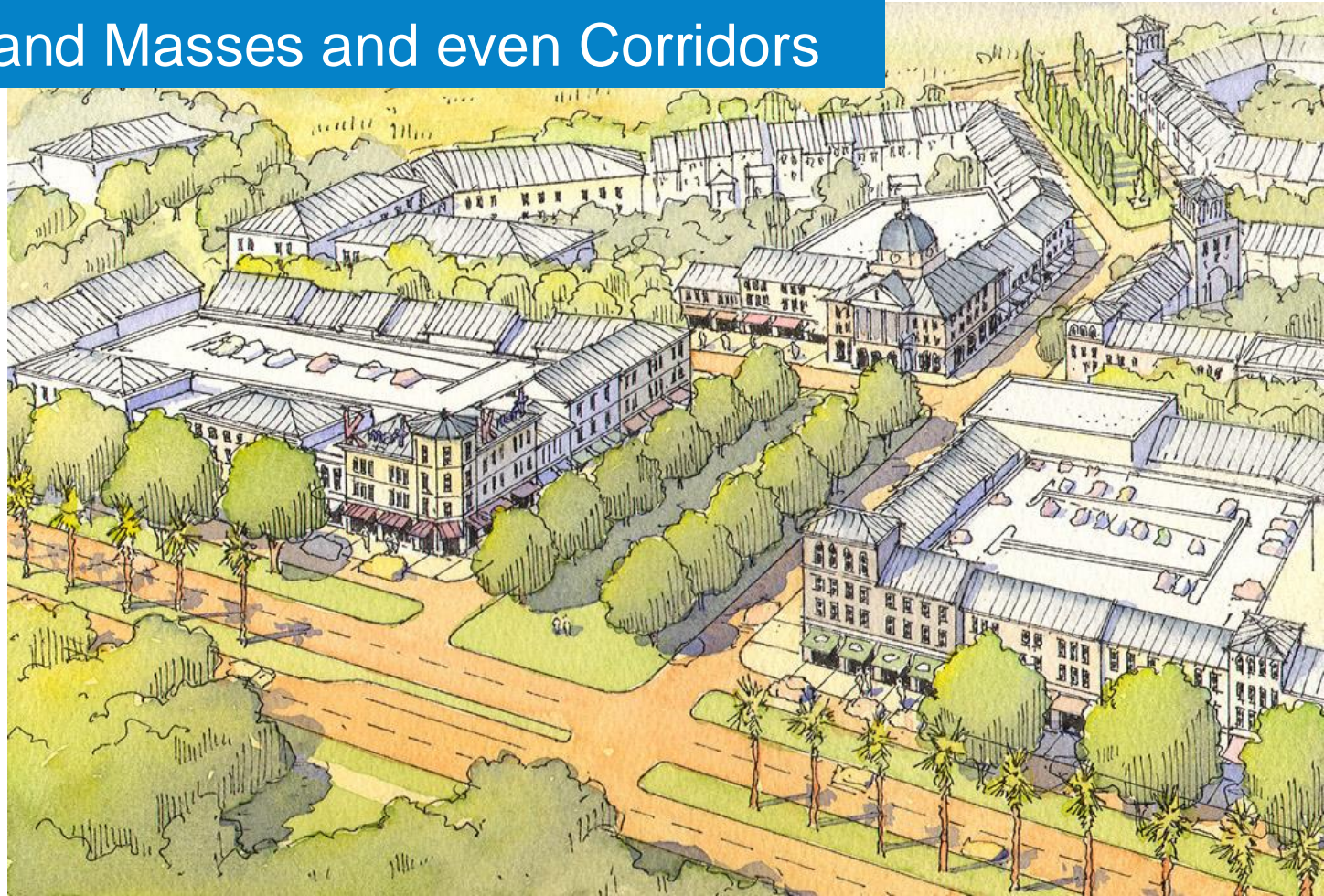
Dover, Kohl & Partners

Retrofit Large Land Masses and even Corridors



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Retrofit Large Land Masses and even Corridors



Dover, Kohl & Partners



Real Life Example: Canton Village Districts Code



Canton Village won the 2019 FBC Award (previously named Driehaus Award) for redeveloping a commercial strip on State Route 44 for higher density, mixed-use development as part of three distinct village districts, each specifying its own unique character elements. The Laurel is one apartment complex approved under this FBC.



Protect Small Businesses by allowing for smaller and more flexible business frontages



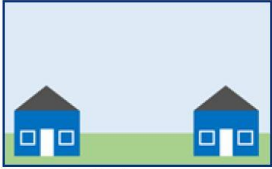
Credit: Winooski, VT
Urban General
frontage

Winooski, VT's
form-based code
permits smaller-
than-usual
business frontages
to enable
affordable space
for small and local
businesses.



The State of California is promoting housing by allowing all housing types in all zones

WITHOUT A SUBDIVISION (LOT SPLIT)

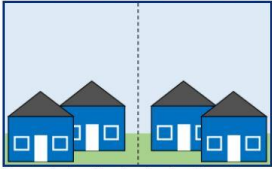


Two detached single-family units



One two-family unit

WITH A SUBDIVISION (LOT SPLIT)



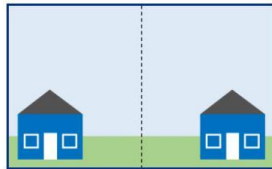
Two detached single-family units on each lot



One single-family unit, One two-family unit



Two two-family units



Two single-family units

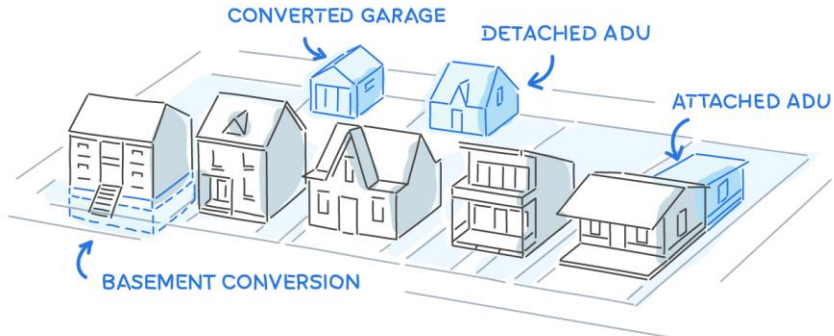
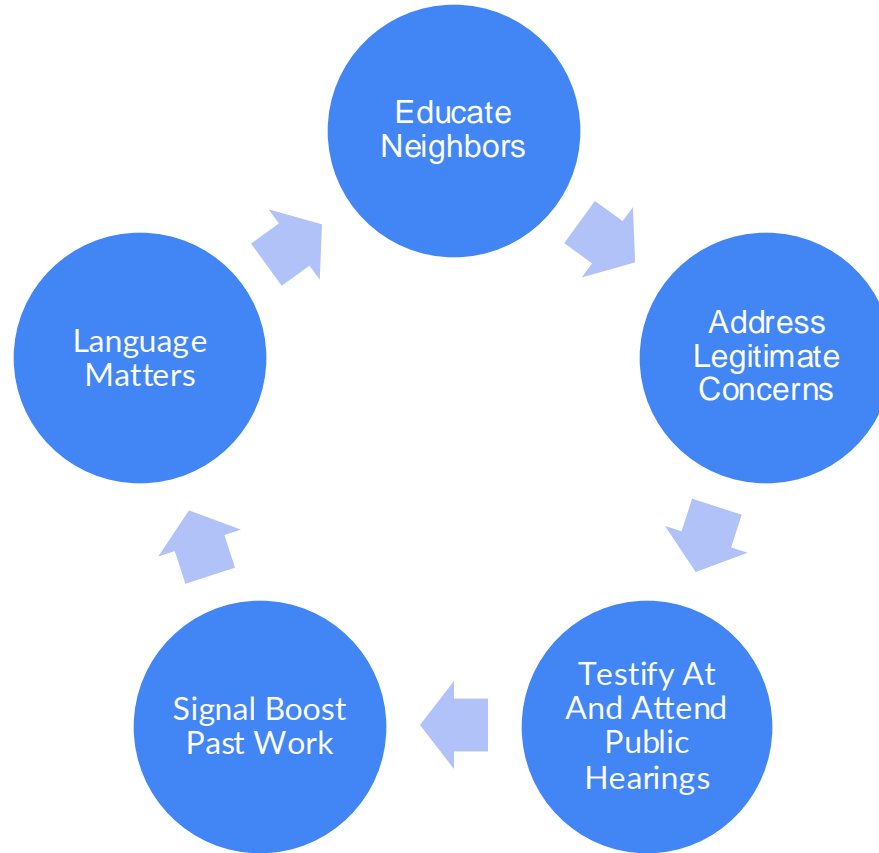


Image Caption: Seattle ADU



How can you support these approaches?





Affordable Housing and Walkability Cheat Sheet

1. Create and adopt a menu of kinds of housing (multifamily and single family) that can be built by right throughout the neighborhood
 1. Bonus points make sure that these housing units are near everyday destinations such as daycares, grocery stores, jobs, recreation, and educational facilities
2. Prioritize people over cars!!!
 1. Make corridors pleasant and safe to walk while decreasing speed naturally
 2. Allow buildings to use more of the parcel
 3. Allow for a range of building heights, bring buildings closer to the streets, and put parking in the back!
 4. Install people-oriented street infrastructure such as bike paths, benches, green spaces throughout the community, and eliminate blank walls along corridors
3. Create your community's "living room" by developing and adopting Pedestrian Scale Public Throughfare standards and applying standards to these streets which align with walkability and affordable housing
 1. Identify all of the desired activities, including walking, bicycling, driving, public transit, and a community's social life and ensuring that the uses are scaled for humans not cars
4. Protect small and local businesses
 1. Allow for redevelopment of existing structures with a focus of form over use
5. Adopt a neighborhood and/or a corridor specific Form-Based Code
 1. Allow the neighborhood and/or corridor to develop overtime according to the community's vision



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