



Housing Policy Discussion

Zoning Reform

Joint City Commission & Planning Commission

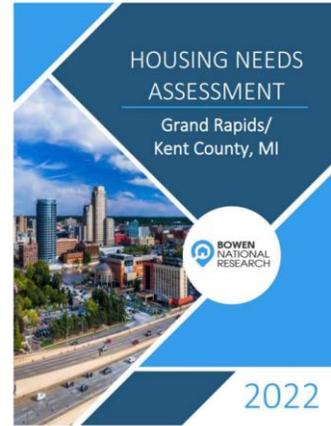
July 13, 2023

Housing Need

- Quantified by the 2020 and 2023 Housing Needs Assessment.
- The need for Zoning Reform is well documented.

34,699
 Total new units needed county-wide
 by 2027 to accommodate household
 growth and older home replacement.

14,106
 Total new units needed in the City of
 Grand Rapids by 2027.

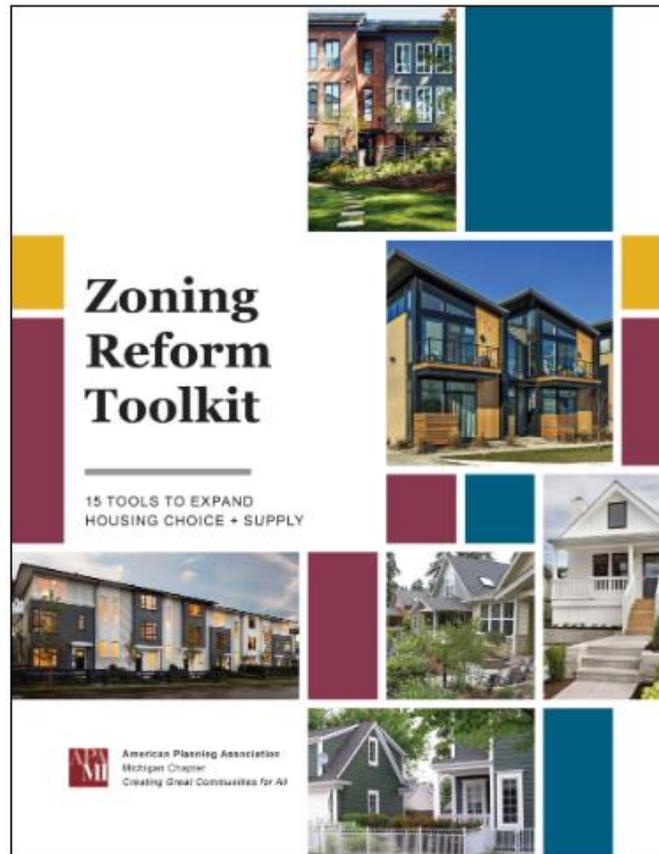


PLANNING MAGAZINE
 What Is Zoning Reform and Why Do We
 Need It?
*The case for change, why planners support it, and six zoning reform tactics that could
 help curb housing costs.*

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INNOVATIONS ZONING



Where Permissive Zoning Codes Slowed Rent Growth

Recent analysis from the Pew Research Center identifies more support for zoning reform as a tool for maintaining the affordability of rental housing in U.S. cities.

1 Minute Read
 May 15, 2023, 9:00 AM PDT
 By James Brasuell @CasualBrasuell



Interior 3D zoning conceptual rendering. / Minneapolis 2040 Comprehensive Plan

Four U.S. jurisdictions—Minneapolis; New Rochelle, New York; Portland, Oregon; and Tysons, Virginia—helped slow rent growth by approving new zoning codes that

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WE AGREE

- We need housing – all types, all price points.
- All neighborhoods must allow for some change.
- Utilize vital streets plan to guide housing densities.
- Traffic will increase, but not beyond capacity of our streets.
- Significant parking reductions will be necessary.
- Infill development must align with good planning principles.
- We must continue to resource infill development of underutilized properties along major corridors (e.g. Alpine/28th/Plainfield). We cannot ignore those opportunities because they're challenging and expect the neighborhoods to solve the housing need.
- An incremental approach is best.
- Zoning reform will not independently solve the housing shortage.

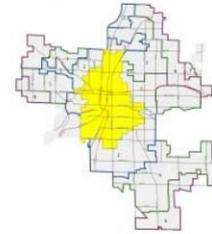


2002 Master Plan

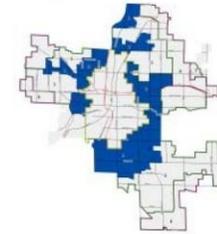
Chpt. 3. Great Neighborhoods

Neighborhood Patterns

Turn of the Century Neighborhood



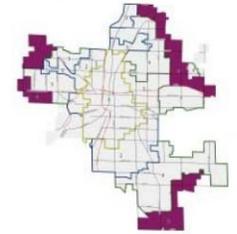
Early 20th Century Neighborhood



Post War Neighborhood



Late 20th Century Neighborhood



Turn of the Century neighborhoods and Early 20th Century neighborhoods

- Developed between 1850 and 1945.
- Most neighborhoods have a range of housing densities. Medium and high-density apartment buildings are often located at intersections on major streets, with medium density duplexes providing a transition to single-family homes on small lots.
- MP Density: 5 - 9.9 units per acre

Post War neighborhoods

- Developed after World War II, between 1945 and 1970.
- Reduced integration of residential and non-residential uses within neighborhood and/or on selected blocks. Some smaller scale multi-family continues to be integrated into single-family residential areas.
- MP Density: 1 - 4.9 units per acre

Late 20th Century neighborhoods

- Developed after 1970.
- Larger multi-family complexes are separated from single-family residential areas. Most developments are treated as segregated pods that are buffered by substantial building setbacks and attached to a major street.
- MP Density: 1 - 4.9 units per acre.

Current Zoning Policy

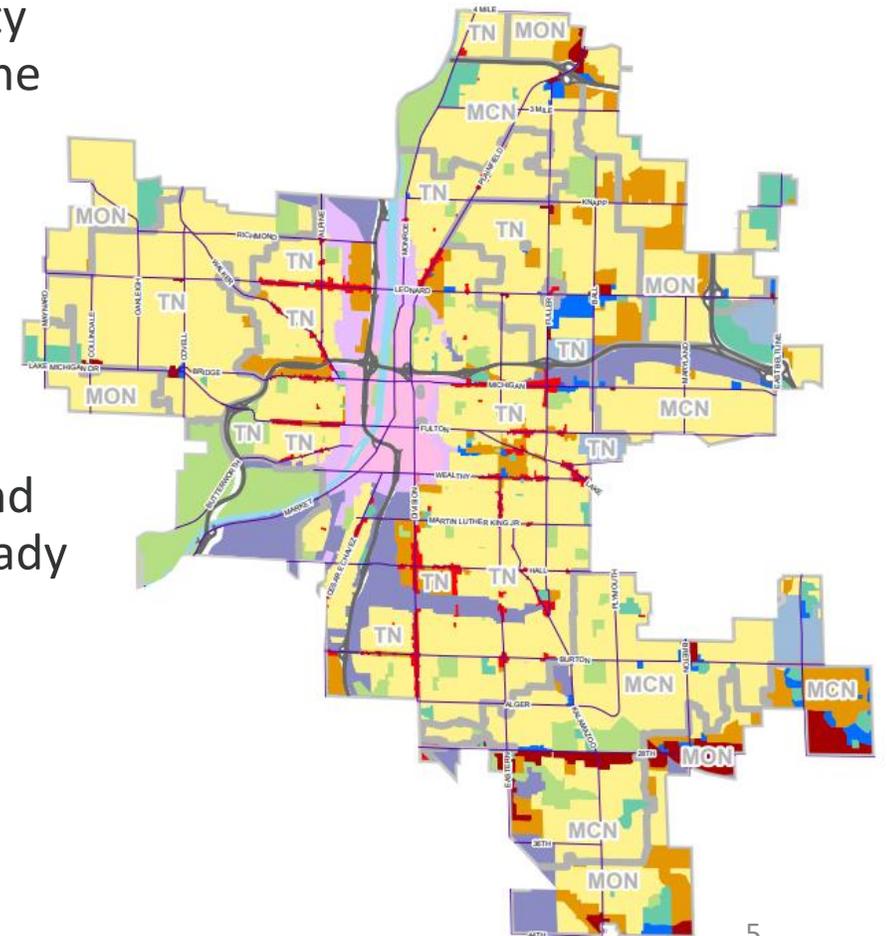
Residential Zone Districts are divided into Low-Density Residential (LDR) Districts and Mixed-Density Residential (MDR) Districts within the framework of the 3 Neighborhood Classifications.

The **LDR District** is intended to create, maintain and promote a variety of housing opportunities for individual households and to maintain the desired physical characteristics of the city's existing neighborhoods.

- TN Zoning Density: 11-22 units per acre
- MCN Zoning Density: 9 - 17 units per acre
- MON Zoning Density: 6 - 16 units per acre

The **MDR District (show in orange)** is intended to create, maintain and promote a variety of housing types in areas where development already exists or where it is desired in the future.

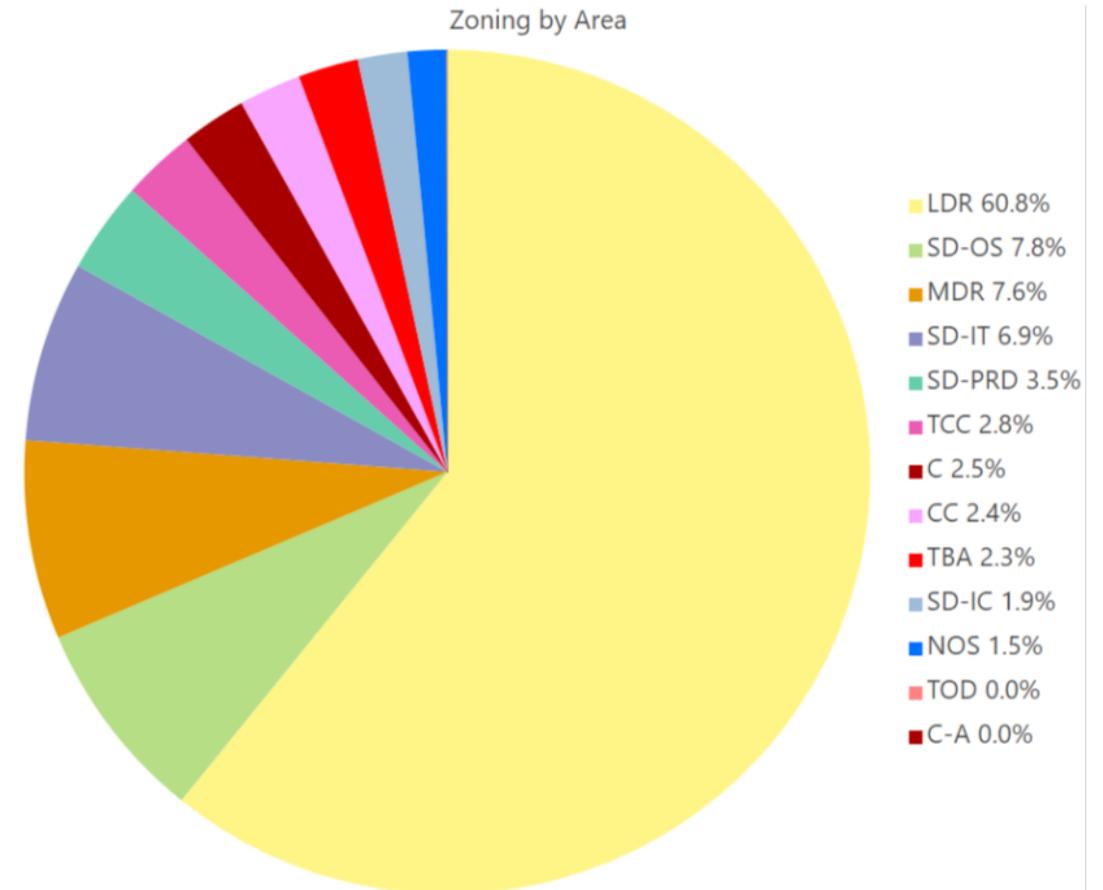
- TN Zoning Density: 17 - 53 units per acre
- MCN Zoning Density: 14 - 29 units per acre
- MON Zoning Density: 12 - 25 units per acre



Existing Land Use

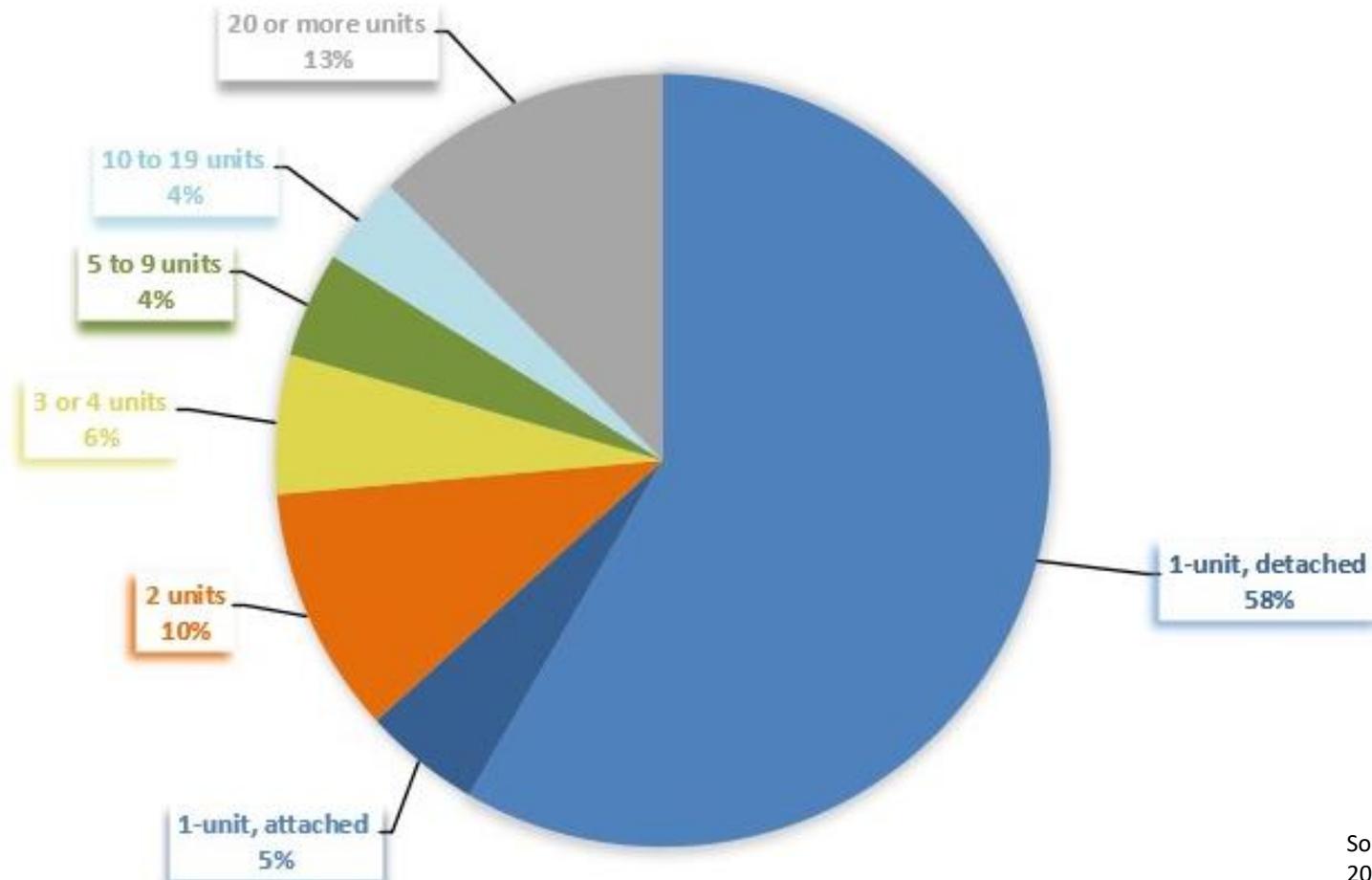
By Zone District

- 60.8% of land area is zoned LDR
 - permitted by-right
 - permitted with Special Land Use
 - Two-family
 - Multi-family (3+ units)
- 7.6% of land area is zoned MDR
- Single-family, two-family and multi-family (3+ units) developments are permitted by-right



Grand Rapids' Housing Types

Units per structure

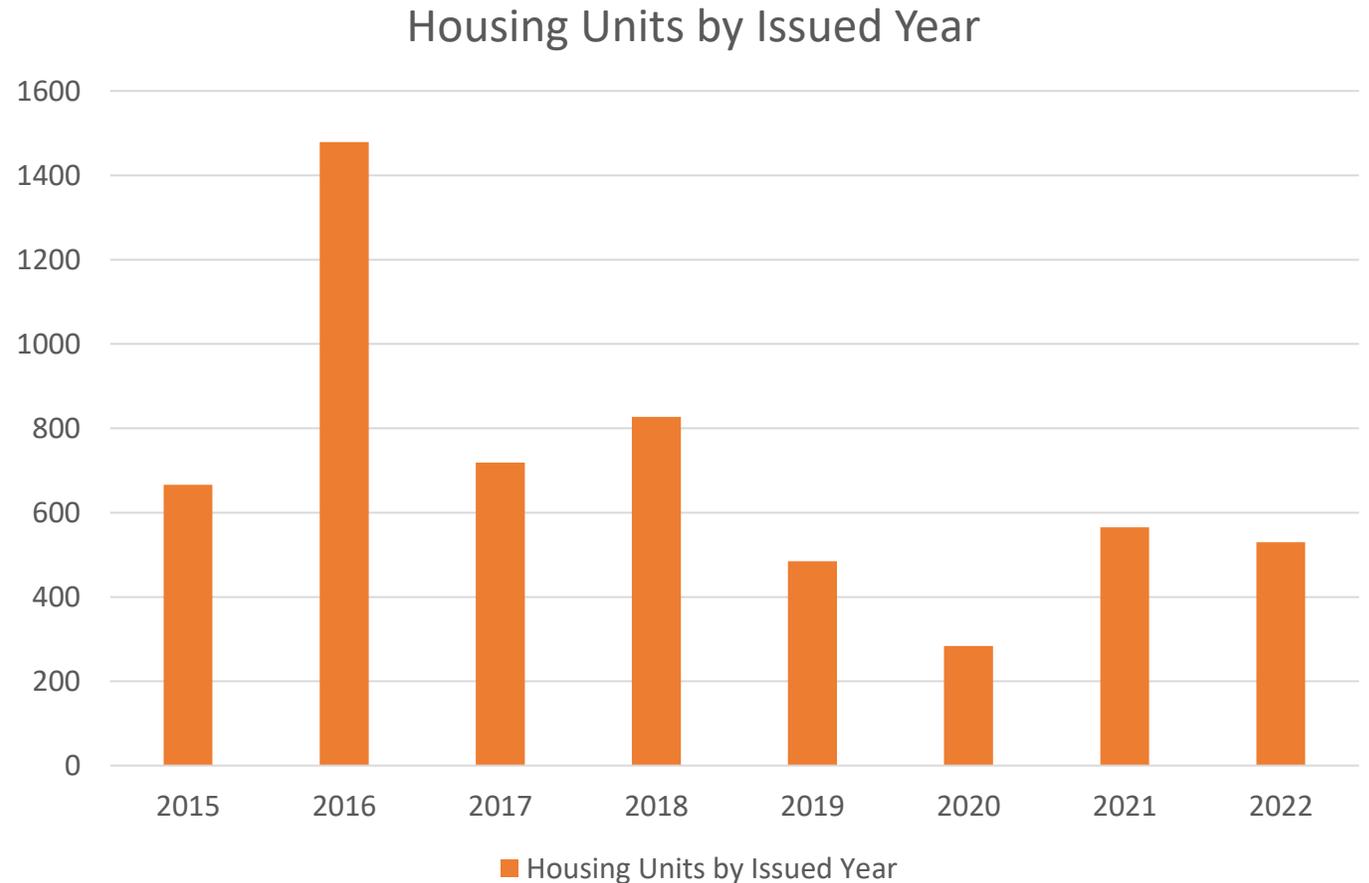


Source: US Census Bureau 2017 – 2021. 5-year American Community Survey, Table CP04

The Data...

Housing Units by Issued Year

- We need **14,106** housing units by 2027.
- This averages **2,821** new units per year.
- Since 2015, the City has averaged **538** new units per year.



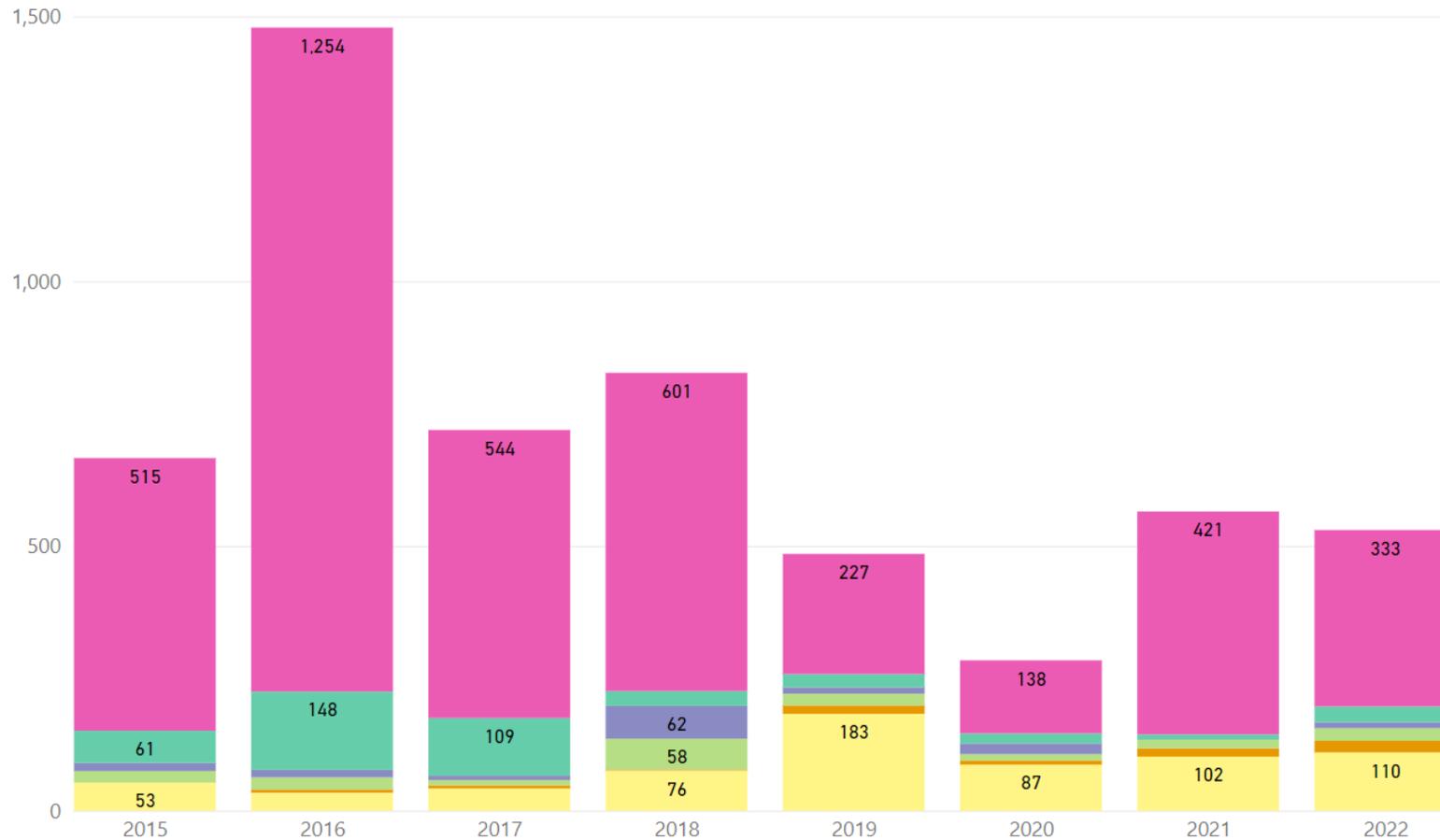
THE DATA

Housing Units Issued Year and Unit Category

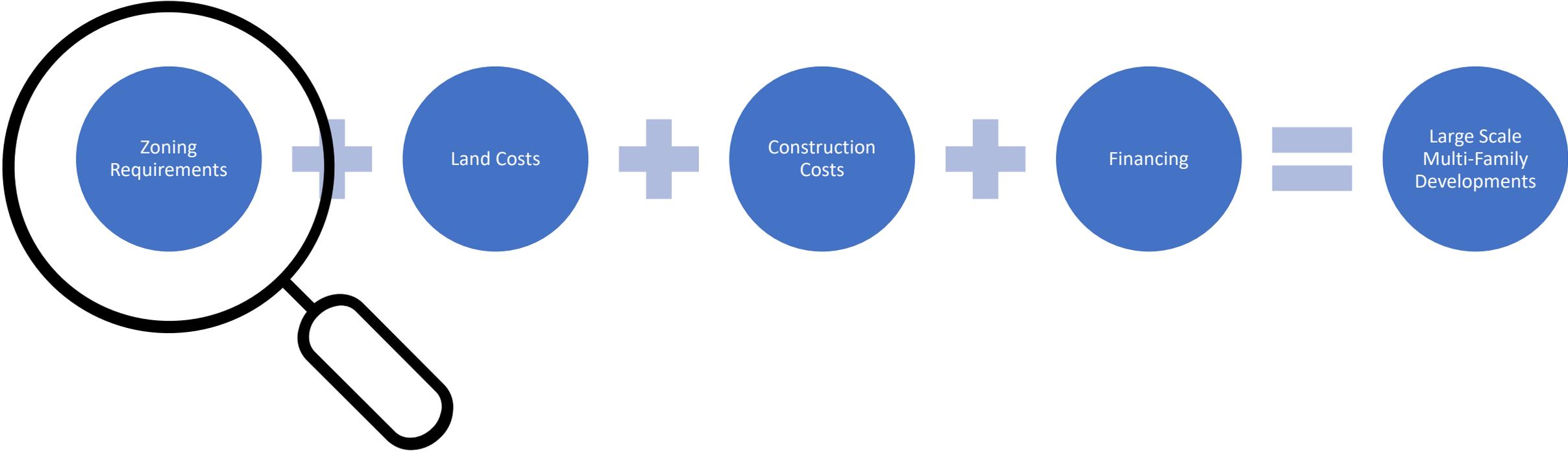
Housing Units by Issued Year and Unit Category

Unit Category

- a. 1 unit
- b. 2 units
- c. 3 to 4 units
- d. 5 to 9 units
- e. 10 to 19 units
- f. 20 or more units



Analysis



WHERE WE START

Increase housing supply

Accessory Dwelling Units

- Streamline review process.
- Eliminate owner occupancy.

Diversify housing types

Unrelated Occupants

- Allow more than 4 unrelated individuals to occupy a dwelling unit.

Group Living Uses

- SROs, Rooming/Board Houses, Transitional Shelters.
- Allow small scale uses in residential districts.

Increase housing affordability

Small Scale Residential Infill

- Streamline review process for small scale multi-family buildings.
- Connect to Vital Streets Plan.
- Reduce lot width/area requirements.

Parking Requirements

- Reduce/eliminate parking requirements.

Accessory Dwelling Units

Current State

- **Review Process:** ADUs are permitted as a Qualified Review, meaning the application will need Planning Commission consideration if a neighbor within 300 feet requests a hearing.
- **Requirements:**
 - One of the units must be owner occupied
 - Only permitted in conjunction with a single-family dwelling
 - One parking space



▲ Accessory dwelling units (or ADUs) come in many shapes and styles.

AARP

Accessory Dwelling Units

Changes to Consider

- Allow ADUs by-right
- Allow ADUs in conjunction with duplexes
- Eliminate owner occupancy requirement
- Eliminate parking requirement

Potential Implications

- Increase supply of affordable and diverse housing types
- Provides inter-generational housing
- Income generating
- Increased parking demand

Unit Occupancy

Current State

- **Requirement:** No more than 4 unrelated individuals can occupy a dwelling unit

Changes to Consider

- Allow 6 unrelated individuals to occupy a dwelling unit

Potential Implications

- Cost sharing benefits
- Increased demand on utilities
- Increased vehicle trips/day and number of vehicles parked in driveway or on-street

Group Living Requirements

Current State

- **Definition:** Residential occupancy of a dwelling unit by other than a household and providing communal facilities.
 - Includes Rooming/Boarding House, Single-Room Occupancy (SROs) and Transitional/Emergency Shelter.
- **Requirements:**
 - Only Rooming/Boarding Houses are permitted within the LDR district (as a Special Land Use)

Group Living Requirements

Changes to Consider

- Distinguish between small, medium and large-scale Group Living Uses
- Create tiered review process
- Allow within LDR districts
- Increase tenancy period

Potential Implications

- Residents of transitional shelters typically need support services
- Operation management plan is critical
- May be a good re-use of former institutional buildings (i.e., schools and churches)
- Provides a more residential setting for residents

Small Scale Residential Infill

Current State

- **Review Process:** Within the LDR district, duplexes require Planning Commission approval, unless located on corner lots. Multi-Family (3+ units) require Planning Commission approval.
- **Requirements:**
 - Minimum lot width is 90' for multi-family developments
 - Must be located on a “Major Street” (Plainfield, Michigan, Ann, Fulton, Division, Eastern etc.)
 - 1 – 1.5 parking spaces per unit

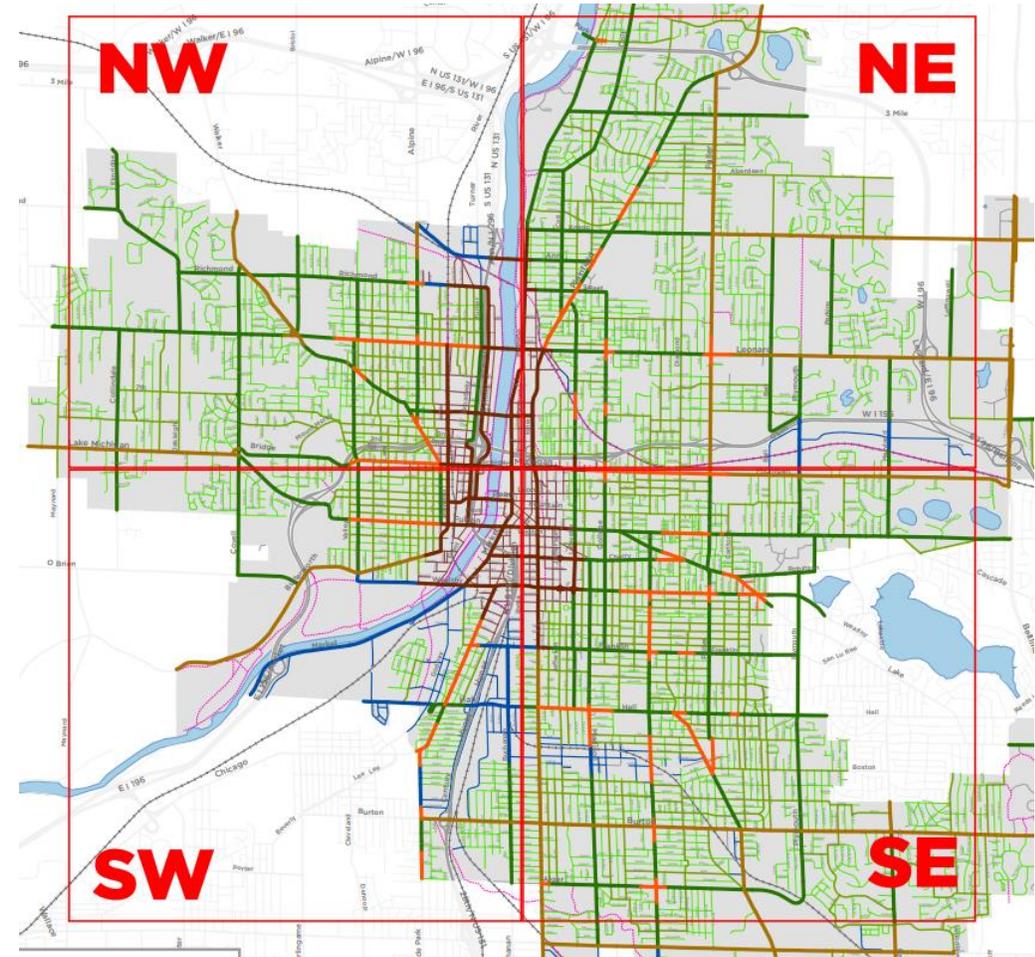
Changes to Consider

- Create two multi-family categories - 3-6 units (MF1) and 7+ units (MF2)
- Within the TN district:
 - Allow 6 or less units by-right on Link Residential and Network Residential streets
 - Eliminate lot width/area requirements for MF1
 - Reduce or eliminate parking requirements

Vital Streets

Street Type

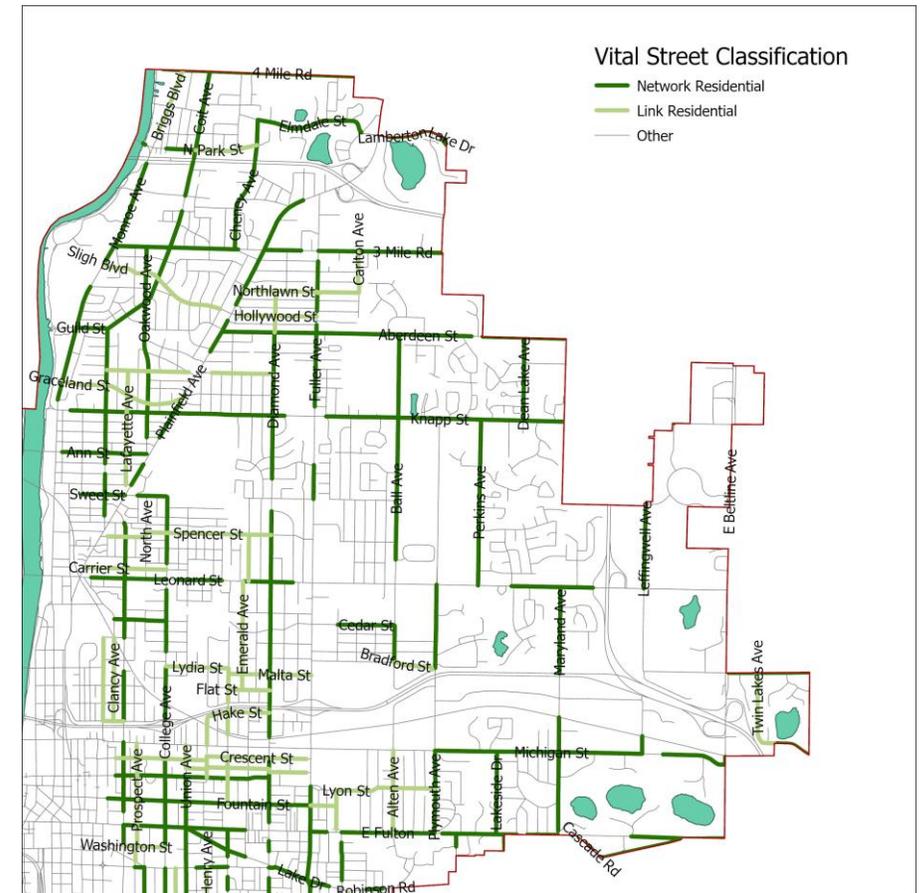
- Neighborhood Residential
- Link Residential
- Network Residential
- Crosstown Connectors
- Neighborhood Business
- Urban Center
- Maker/Industrial Primary
- Service
- Highways
- Trail (Existing or Proposed)



Street Typologies

Link Residential

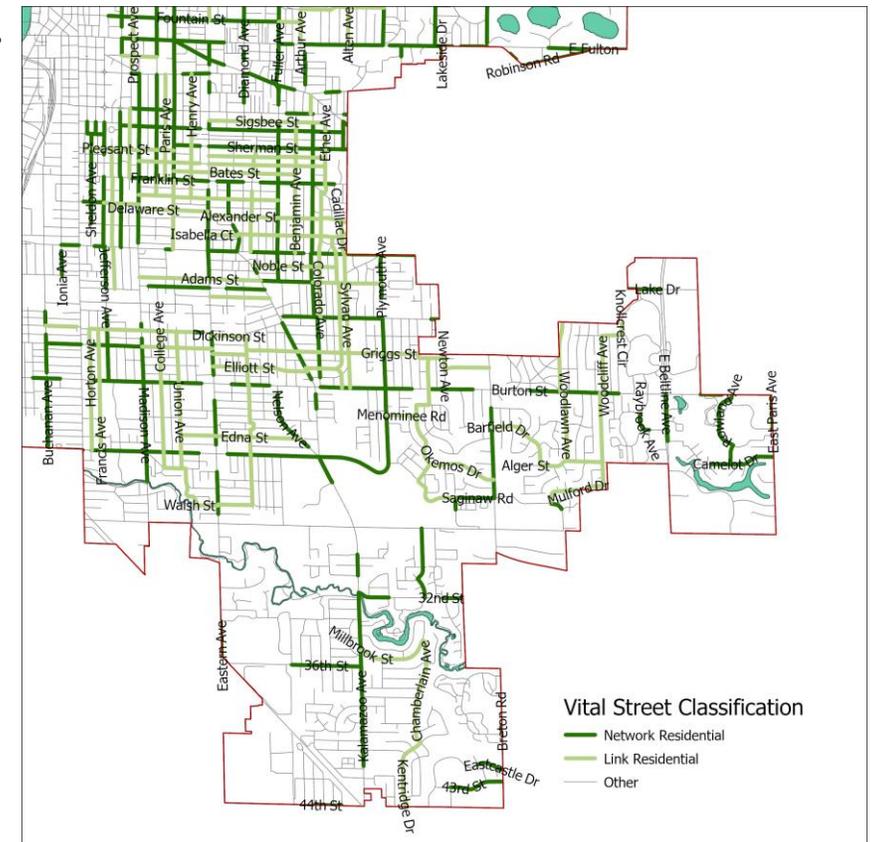
- Active speed control and traffic calming, narrow, two-way street, substantial yards and parkways, comfortable design for persons on bicycles.
- Predominantly low-to-moderate density residential in character, designed to support a high quality of residential life.
- Commonly the location of local community facilities such as parks or recreational facilities, schools, or houses of worship.
- May have a slightly higher volume of vehicular traffic than the Neighborhood Residential street, vehicle travel must be maintained at a low speeds to respect and enable the local community uses common on these streets.



Street Typologies

Network Residential

- Marked centerline, shared access points, few driveways, sidewalks on both side.
- Plays a critical role in the larger transportation network by efficiently and safely moving regional vehicle and non-motorized users.
- While family homes are the predominant land use, residential density may be higher along these corridors than is typically found in the Neighborhood or Link Residential and Crosstown Connector street types.
- Local community facilities such as parks or recreational facilities, schools or houses of worship are common on these streets and may be interspersed with some industrial or production space, or very small commercial uses.



DATA INFORMED DECISIONS

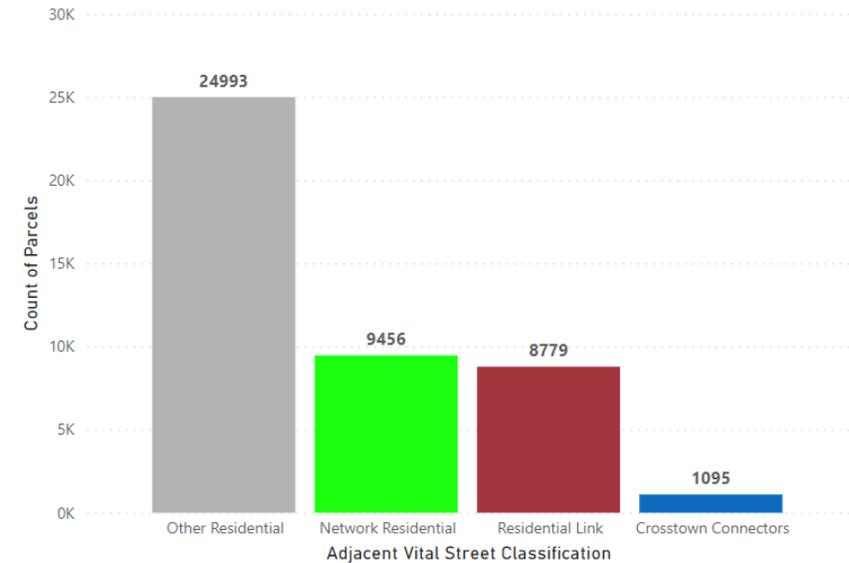
[Link to Dashboard](#)



FILTERS

In Historic District <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Neighborhood Type <input type="checkbox"/> MCN <input type="checkbox"/> MON <input type="checkbox"/> TN	Ward <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3												
Is Alley Adjacent <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Neighborhood All ▼	Zip Code All ▼												
Current Number of Units 0 656 	Parcel Area (Sq Ft) 151.73 3,809,163.31 	Parcel Street Frontage 9.07 2,167.38 												
Is a Corner Lot <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Zone (Hold ctrl to select multiple) <table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td>C</td> <td style="background-color: #333; color: white;">MDR</td> <td>SD-IT</td> <td>TBA</td> </tr> <tr> <td>CC</td> <td>NOS</td> <td>SD-OS</td> <td>TCC</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #333; color: white;">LDR</td> <td>SD-IC</td> <td>SD-PRD</td> <td>TOD</td> </tr> </table>		C	MDR	SD-IT	TBA	CC	NOS	SD-OS	TCC	LDR	SD-IC	SD-PRD	TOD
C	MDR	SD-IT	TBA											
CC	NOS	SD-OS	TCC											
LDR	SD-IC	SD-PRD	TOD											
Is Transit Route Adjacent <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes														

Count of Parcels by Adjacent Vital Street Classification



44,323

Total Number of Parcels

85.6

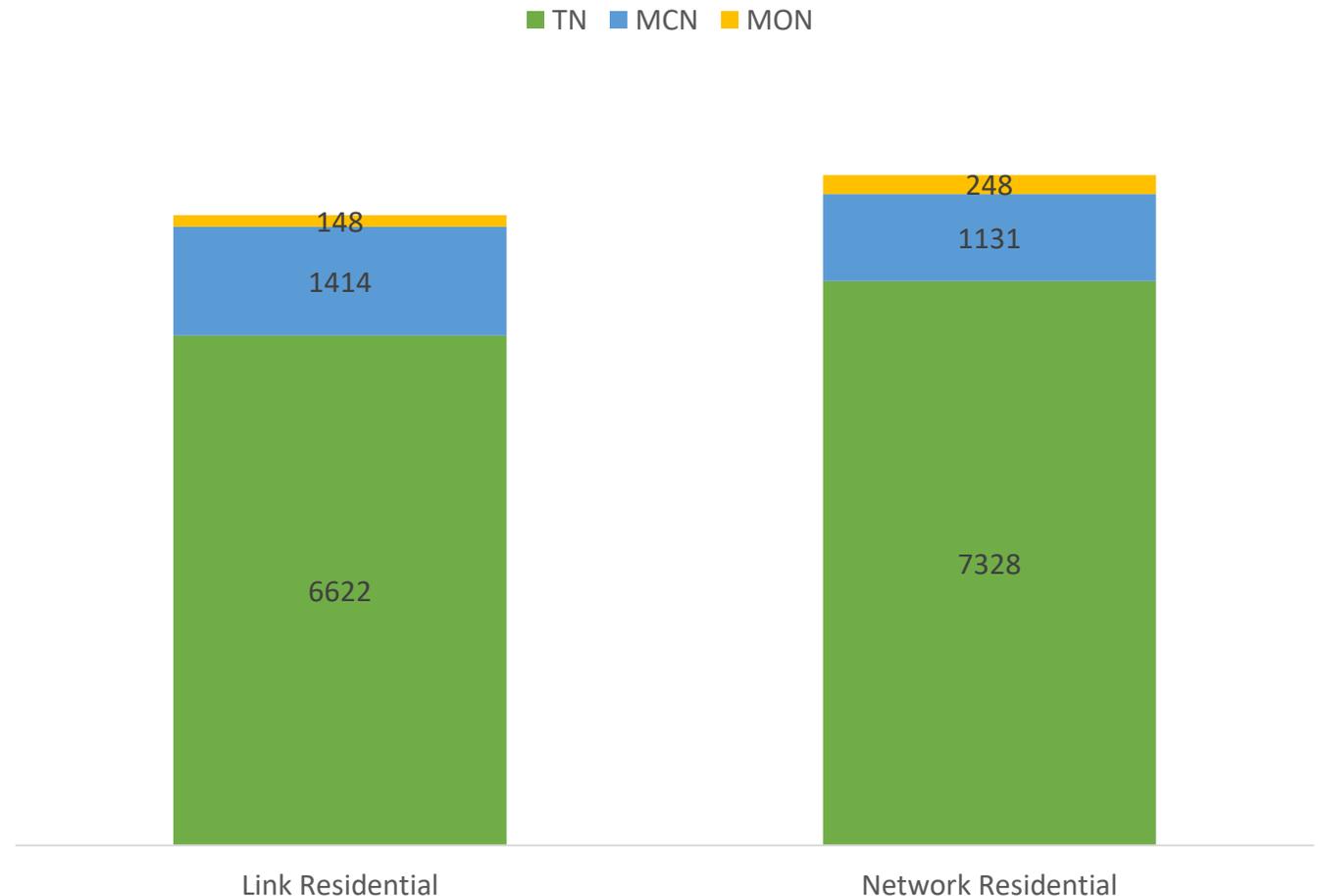
Ave. Parcel Street Frontage

23,369

Ave. Parcel Size (Sq Ft)

Scenario Building Example

- There are **24,993** residentially zoned parcels in the City.
- If Two-family Dwellings are permitted by-right on Link Residential and Neighborhood Residential Street Types in ALL residential zone districts – potential unit increase of **18,235**.
- If Two-family Dwellings are permitted by-right on Link Residential and Neighborhood Residential Street Types in TN residential zone districts – potential unit increase of **13,950**.



Parking Reductions

Current State - parking requirements by use (in TN-LDR district)

- Single-Family: 2 spaces per unit
- Two-family: 1.5 spaces per unit
- Multi-family: 1.5 spaces per unit, plus .25 spaces per bedroom above 2 bedrooms

Parking Reductions

Changes to Consider

- Within the TN district, reduce or eliminate parking requirements for residential developments containing 6 or less units.
 - TN districts are walkable, largely serviced by transit, provide access to goods and services, good bike network infrastructure
 - Allowing increased density on reduced land area cannot also support current parking minimums.
 - Failure to reduce or eliminate parking will make negate the other proposed changes or necessitate acquisition of adjacent parcels and demolition of existing structures.
 - Increased population density will help support improved transit services
- Increase waiver distance for transit from 300 to ½ mile *BRT) and 100 to ¼ mile (regular stop)

Potential Implications

- Increased demand for on-street parking
- Increased requests for neighborhood parking permit program
- Increased transit ridership (coordination with Rapid is needed)
- Possible increase in nuisance complaints – must have capacity within Code Compliance

NEXT STEPS



Communication Strategy

- Following the joint meeting, the Planning Department will send a letter to Neighborhood Associations, Corridor Improvement Authorities and known area housing providers to alert them to potential zoning changes and a preliminary timeline.
- All Planning Commission agendas and packet information are posted online.
- Input will be accepted for the Planning Commission's public hearing.
- Planning Staff will not be conducting any separate engagement sessions outside of the Planning Commission public hearing.

DISCUSSION

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- Eliminate owner occupancy.

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