

SENSIBLE LOT SIZES FOR GAINESVILLE



WHAT THIS CHANGE WOULD DO

Protections

- Protects single family zoning
- Maintains spacing and setbacks between homes
- Preserves neighborhood character and green space

Enhancements

- Encourages more single-family starter homes to be built
- Increases flexibility for homeowners
- Makes single family development more equitable & sustainable
- Provides more diverse housing options
- Increases homeownership
- Creates more walkable, front porch neighborhoods
- Gives flexibility to local, small-scale builders previously only given to large developers

HOW IT ALL STARTED

Additional Strategy: Allow Different Housing Types and Sizes “By Right”

- By making changes by right, instead of requiring a PUD, the city could make development much easier and cheaper
- Recommendations:
 - Allow missing middle housing types such as duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes across the city
 - Reduce minimum lot size, and increase maximum lot coverage
- Due to their smaller sizes, missing middle housing types can be a naturally occurring type of affordable housing



Tri-plexes which have the appearance of single-family homes

HOW WE GOT TO TODAY

February 2019
**Affordable
Housing
workshop
held**

February 18, 2021
**The plan is
passed and
recommends
lot size change**

November 4, 2021
**City Staff's
Gainesville
Housing
Action Plan
approved**

September 2020
**Florida Housing
Coalition
creates housing
action plan**

Throughout 2021
**Community
engagement
meetings**

FLORIDA HOUSING COALITION 2020

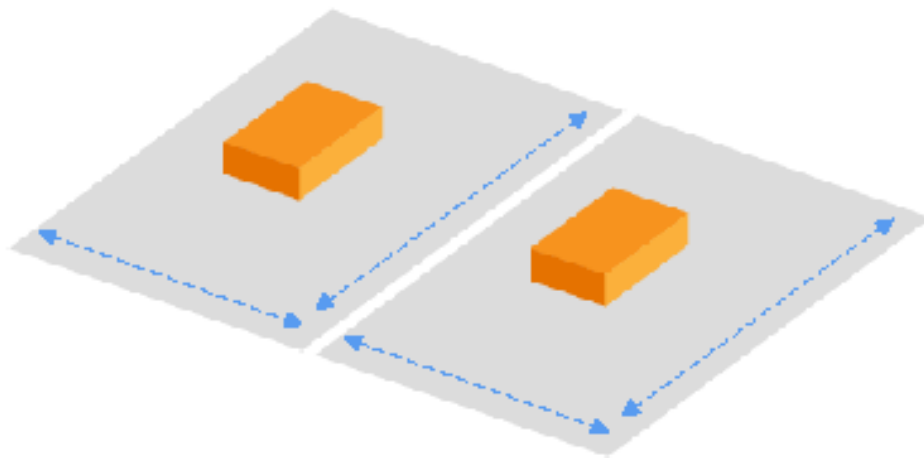
Recommendation 2: Allow More Housing Types and Sizes “By Right”

The City could promote housing type flexibility in single-family zones to encourage “missing middle” housing types such as duplexes, triplexes, town homes, and small apartment buildings. The City could also increase maximum lot coverage, reduce minimum lot sizes across the single family districts (RSF-1 through RSF-4), and alter the zoning code to reduce parking, setbacks, and street requirements to encourage the development of affordable housing.

(Medium-Term) In conjunction with the update of the City’s Comprehensive Plan, the City is working to develop an Inclusionary/Exclusionary Housing Development Policy. That policy will address these issues in more detail. The City has hired a consultant, HR&A Advisors, Inc. to help

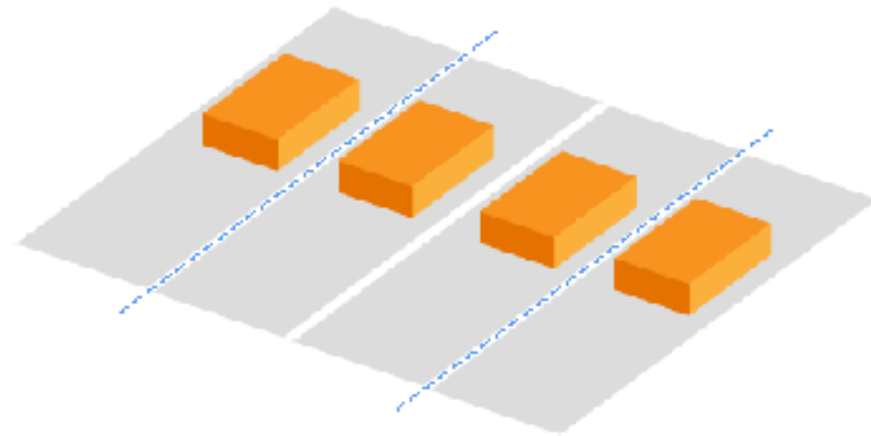
Parcel constraints limit the intensity of use of a *group* of parcels, reducing the likelihood that new, large housing developments include diverse housing types at a range of prices.

Minimum Lot Dimensions

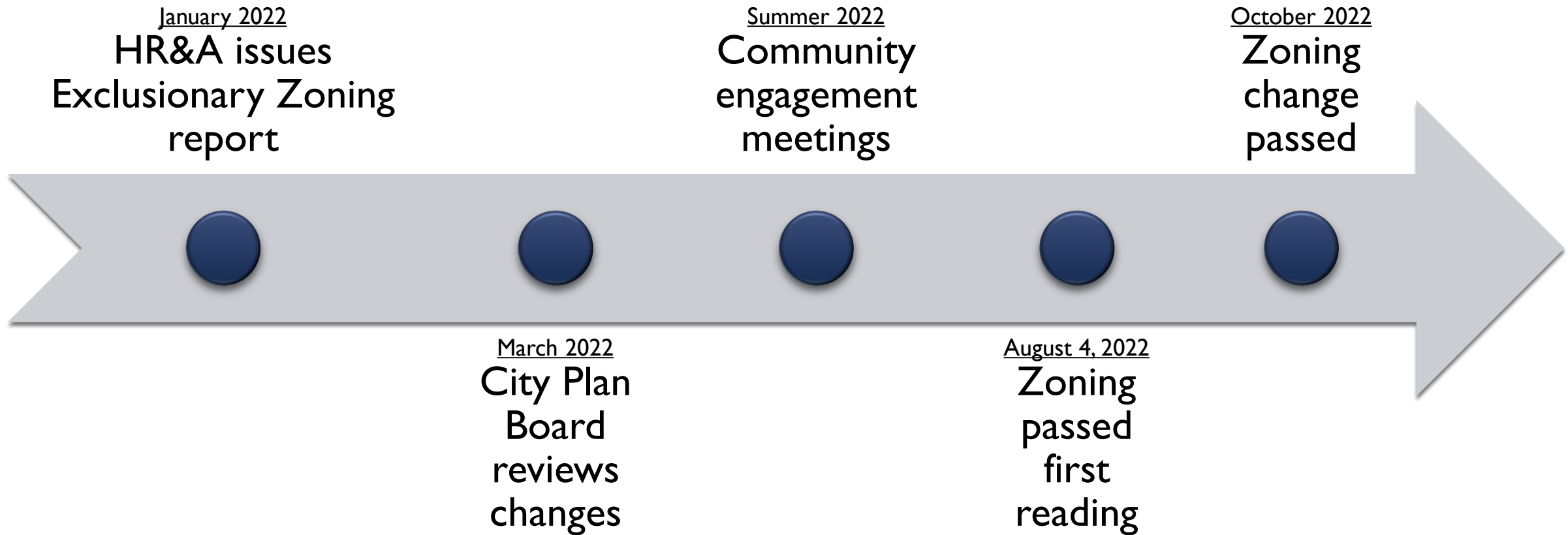


Lot Split Limits

Lot split limits in minor subdivisions prevent developers and existing homeowners from subdividing larger lots to accommodate additional housing units at a more affordable price point.



HOW WE GOT TO TODAY



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January 5, 2023

Commission
directs staff to
reverse zoning

August 10, 2023

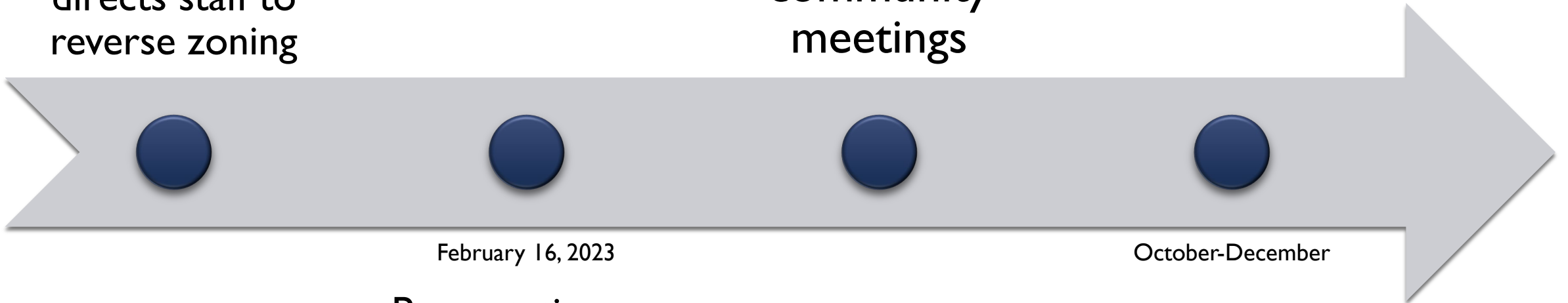
Commission
approves
community
meetings

February 16, 2023

Presentation on
lot dimension
reform

October-December

Community
engagement
meetings



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Gainesville Neighborhood Voices
Gainesville is For People
Alachua County Labor Coalition
Gainesville Alachua County Association of Realtors
Builders Association of North Central Florida

Official City Meetings

Martin Luther King Center
Westside Recreation Center



THE PROPOSAL

- ✓ Condense four single family zones into one, “single family” criteria
- ✓ Adopt lot dimension standards of “residential conservation”
- ✓ Allow “cottage neighborhoods”

RESIDENTIAL CONSERVATION ZONING



Zoning	Units/Acre	Density Min.	Min Lot Size	Lot Frontage	Rear Setback	Front Setback	Side Setback
RC	12	.08	3,000 sq. ft.	35 ft.	20 ft.	10 ft.	5 ft.

	RSF-1	RSF-2	RSF-3	RSF-4	SF	RC
Density/Intensity						
Max u/acre	3.5	4.6	5.8	8	12	12
Nonresidential building coverage	35%	35%	35%	40%	40%	40%
Min. Lot Area	8,500	7,500	6,000	4,300	3,000	3,000
Min Lot Width	85	75	60	50	35	35
Min Lot Depth	90	90	90	80	None	None
Min Setbacks						
Front	20 ⁴	20	20	20 ⁴	10 ⁵	10 ⁵
Rear	20	20	20	10	20	20
Side (street)	10	10	7.5	5	5	None
Rear, accessory	7.5	7.5	7.5	5	5	5
Maximum Building Height (Stories)						
Maximum Height	3	3	3	3	3	3

COTTAGE NEIGHBORHOODS



THE STATUS QUO ISN'T WORKING

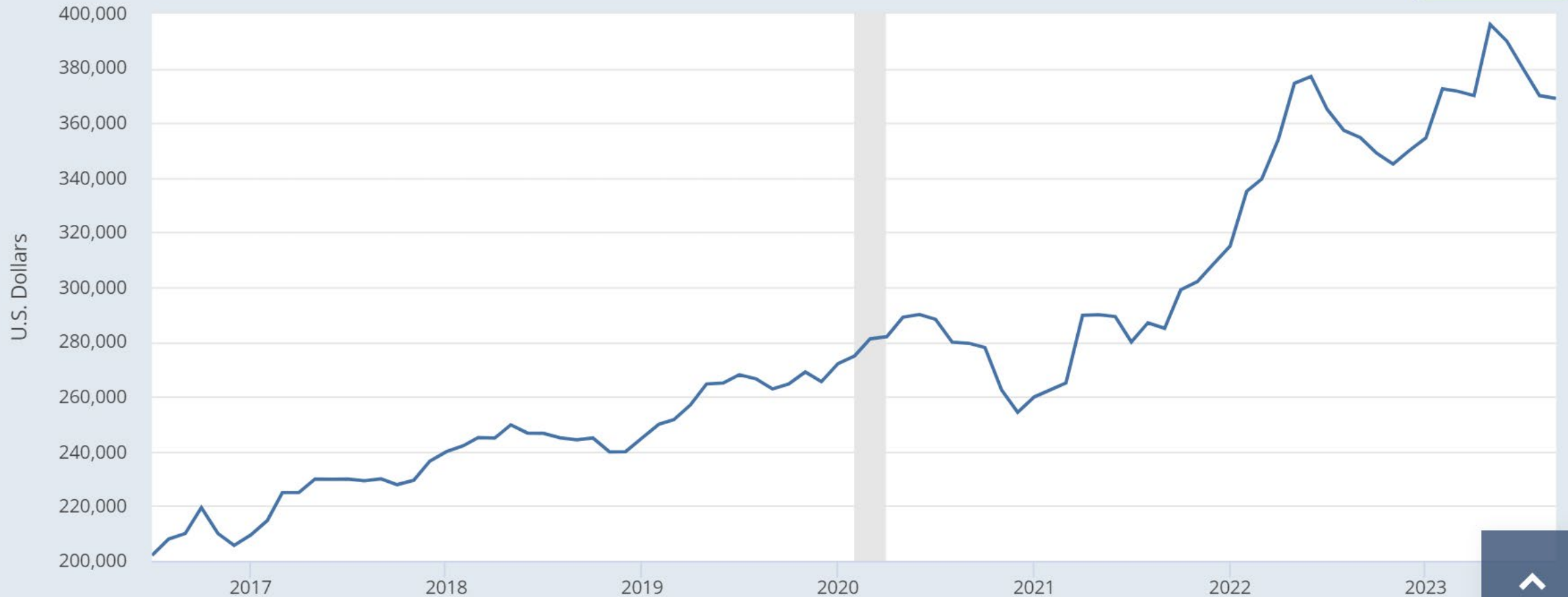
- ✓ The cost to buy a home is becoming out of reach for normal families
- ✓ Large lot sizes have made “starter homes” rare
- ✓ Research shows high minimum lot standards hurt single-family affordability
- ✓ Gainesville’s lot dimension standards are outdated and onerous

HOMEOWNERSHIP IS GETTING OUT OF REACH

FRED

— Housing Inventory: Median Listing Price in Gainesville, FL (CBSA)

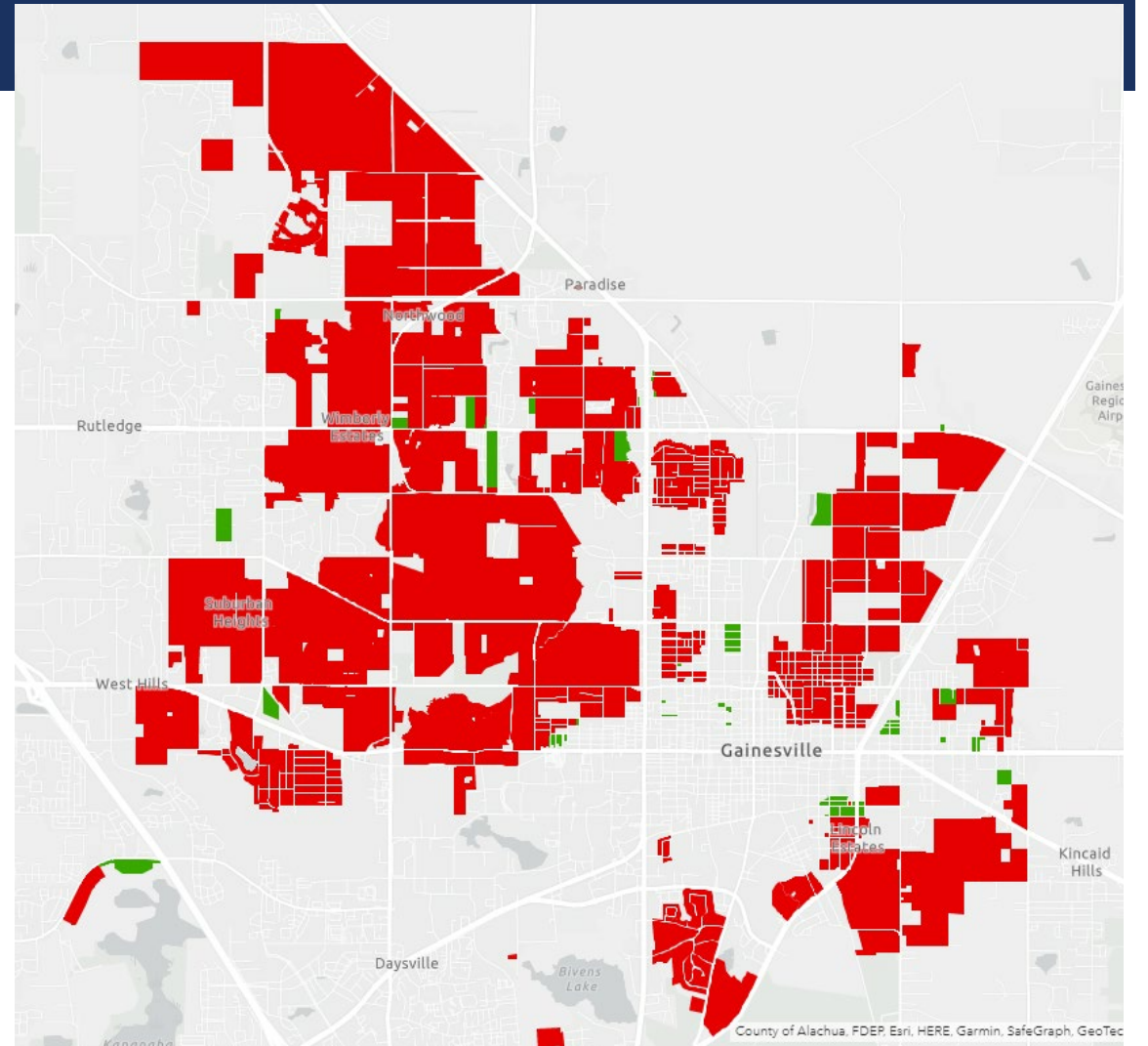
[VIEW MAP](#)



WHERE MY HOME IS PROHIBITED

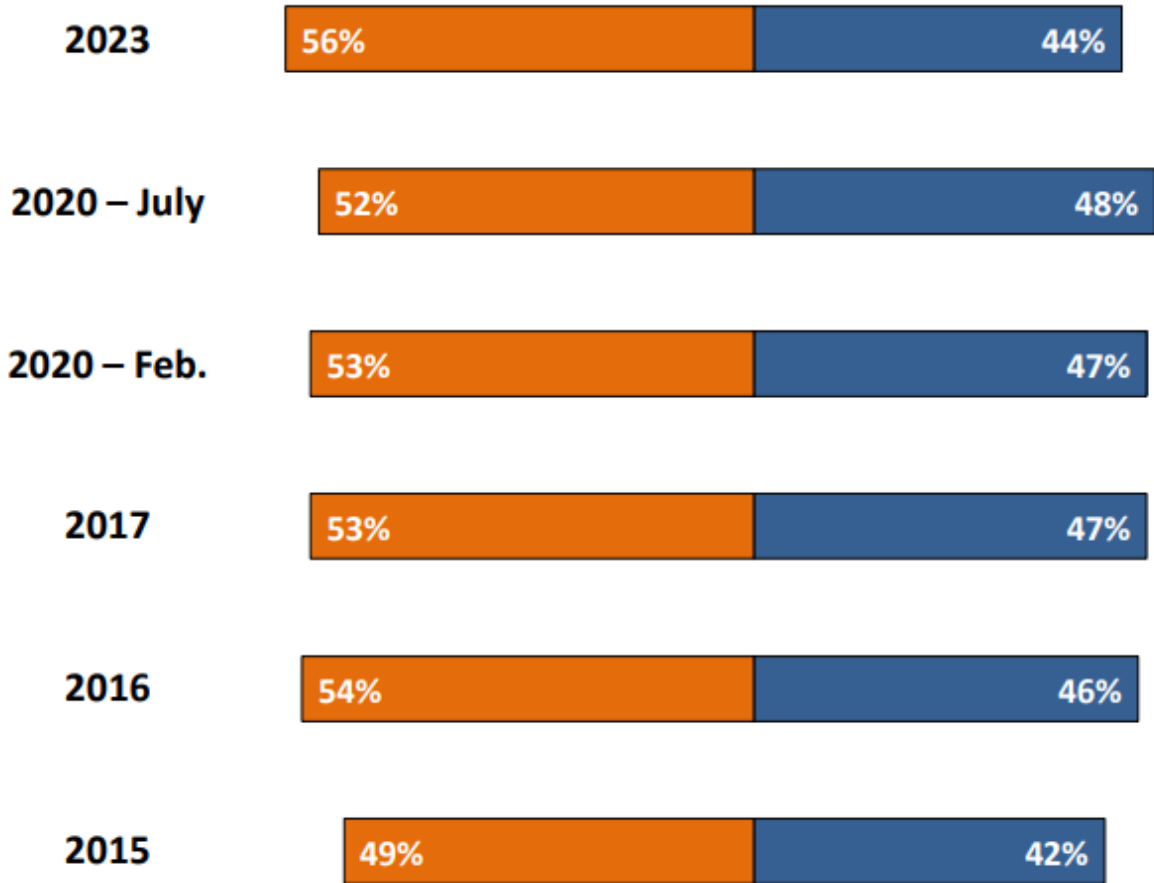
96.2%

of single family lots would prohibit
my small single-family home



Majority Prefer Houses With Small Yards and More Walkability Over Homes With Large Yards and More Driving

Preferred Community:

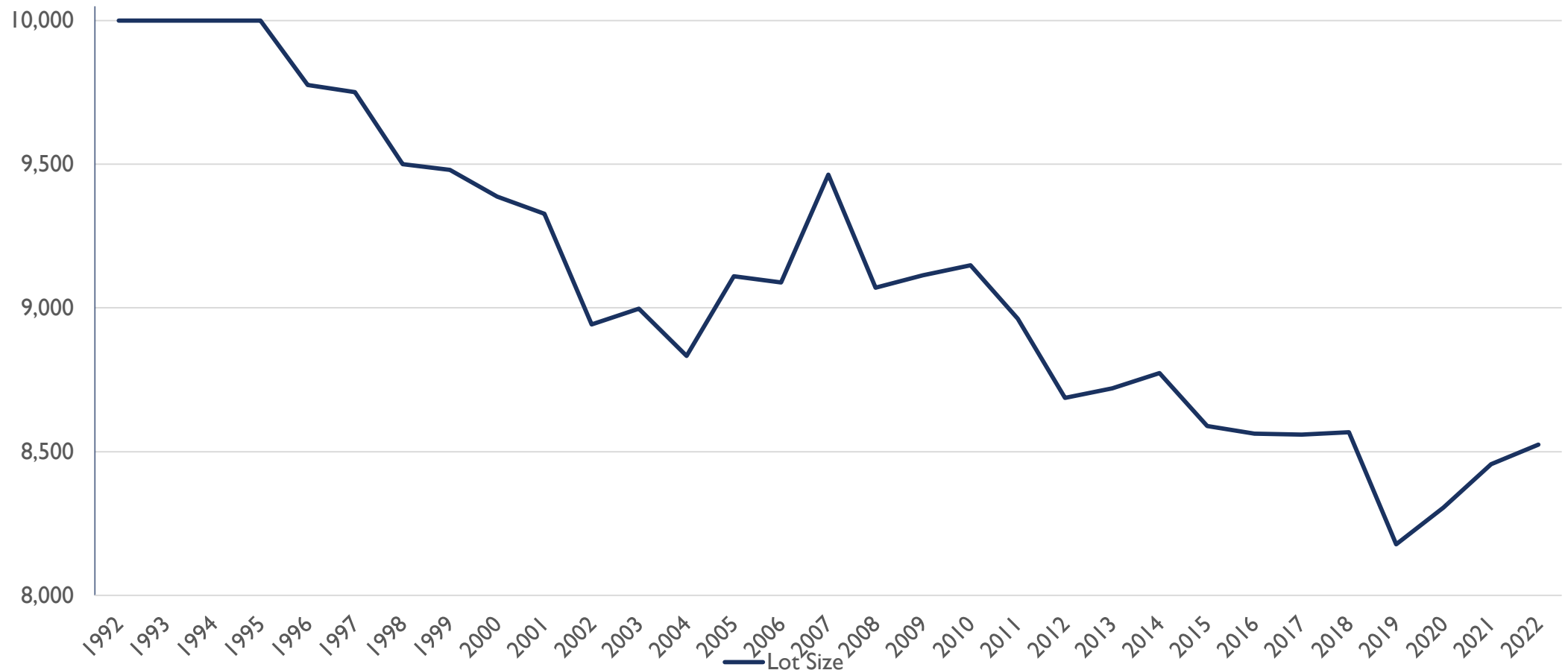


Houses with small yards and it is easy to walk to the places you need to go.

Houses with large yards and you have to drive to the places where you need to go.

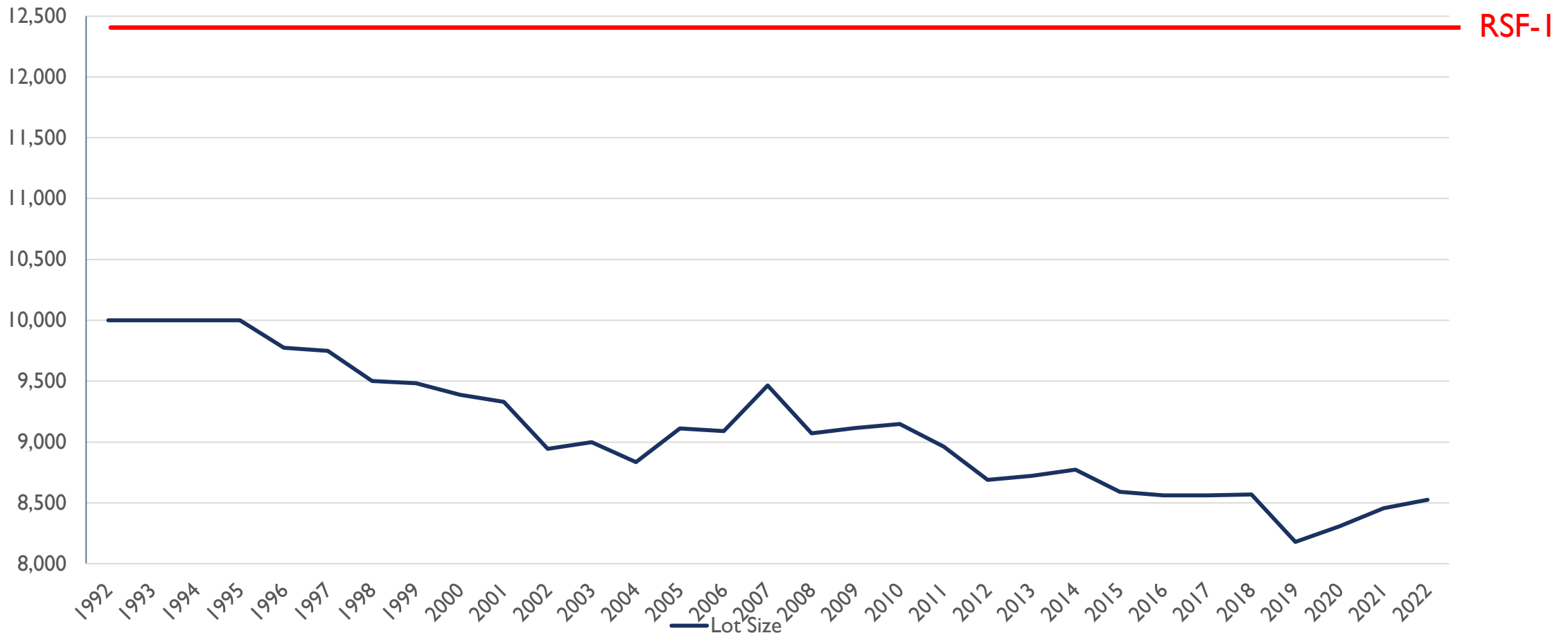
GAINESVILLE'S LOT REGULATIONS ARE OUTDATED

Median Lot Size New Detached Single Family Homes



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Median Lot Size New Detached Single Family Homes



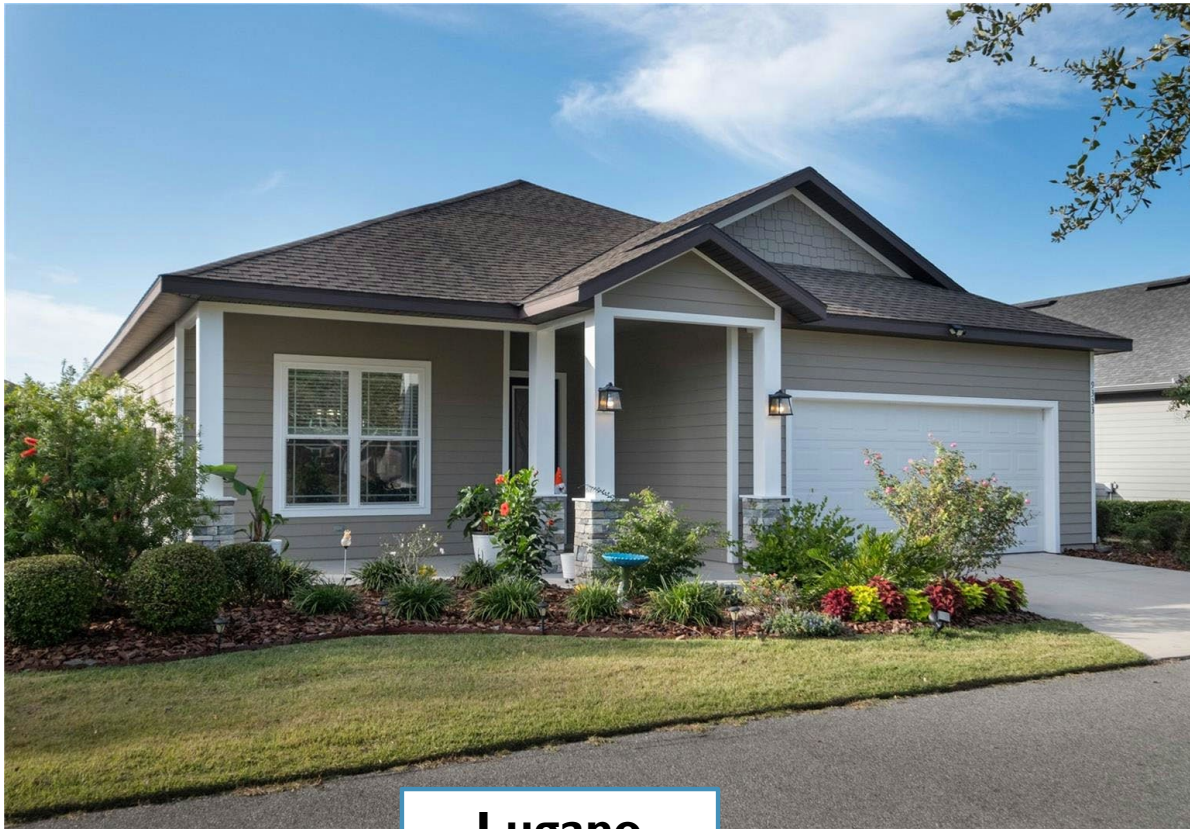
SIMILAR TO COUNTY REGULATIONS

Table 403.07.2

SETBACK REQUIREMENTS FOR RESIDENTIAL LOTS

Setbacks ¹	Front or Street	Garage Front ³	Rear	Side	Accessory Buildings
Lots less than one acre in size, Minimum Principal Building (ft.)	10	20	10	5 ²	Same as principal building except rear is 7.5 ft.
Lots one acre or greater in size, Minimum Principal Building (ft.)	15	20	15	10 ²	Same as principal building except rear is 10 ft.

SIMILAR TO COUNTY REGULATIONS



Lugano
.1 acres

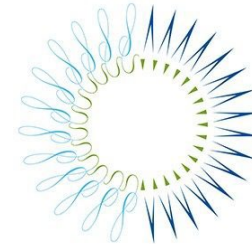


Eloise Gardens
.15 acres

RESEARCH SHOWS THE BENEFITS

Lot-Size Reform Unlocks Affordable Homeownership in Houston

September 14, 2023



THE
PEW
CHARITABLE TRUSTS

Lessons learned

Although land-use policy varies by jurisdiction, Houston's experience reducing minimum lot sizes yielded several key lessons:

- Land-use reforms can spur housing development.
- Land-use reforms often have only incremental impacts on the physical character of residential neighborhoods.
- New construction can be affordable for middle-class families.
- Adding more housing did not displace residents.

RESEARCH SHOWS THE BENEFITS

Minimum Lot Size Restrictions: Impacts on Urban Form and House Price at the Border

Cities with larger minimum lot sizes have



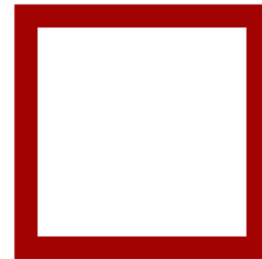
11%

Less density



80 sq. ft.

larger homes



3,000 sq. ft.

Larger lots



\$30,000

More expensive homes

REFORMS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES



AUSTIN LOT DIMENSION REFORM



The City Manager is directed to propose amendments that achieve the following goals:

1. reduce the minimum lot size in single-family zoning districts to 2,500 square feet or less so that existing standard-size lots can be subdivided, and be developed with a variety of housing types

SUPPORT FOR REFORM



Habitat
for Humanity



**SIERRA
CLUB**

AARP[®]

BIDEN
HARRIS

LOCAL SUPPORT



RECOMMENDATION

Staff review and bring back ordinance altering the single-family zoning code reflecting "Residential Conservation" lot dimension standards as well as the minor subdivision standards.