9. **Mixed Housing Types and Affordability**

**Mixed Housing Types**

Mixing housing types successfully requires first understanding how housing translates into density (dwelling units per acre). The Land Use Plan for the County describes two general categories of density: Neighborhood Density contains a recommended range of 3 – 6 dwelling units per acre. Urban Density contains a recommended range of 6 – 34 dwelling units per acre. These two types of density generally translate into housing types. Low density housing usually develops in a range of 1 – 2 dwellings per acre. The category of 3 – 6 dwelling units per acre can range from small to large houses on relatively small lots to attached housing (duplex-type units). Six units per acre usually includes small single-family homes and duplexes or two unit attached housing. Over 6 units per acre usually results in townhouses, garden apartments, and high density apartments. Figures 6:78 – 6:80 show some of these typical housing types.

**Figure 6:78** Six units per acre is considered a small-lot single family house.

**Figure 6:79** 9 to 14 units per acre suggests townhouses.

**Figure 6:80** 20 units per acre and above implies multi-family housing.
To increase density to support expanding populations in the Development Areas and achieve a better mix of housing, the following approaches are suggested:

**Mix housing types within the same development.**

Most new residential developments contain a single type of housing. Single family residential subdivisions generally have little variation in lot size or housing type along a street or cul-de-sac. Mixing lot sizes and housing sizes along the same street and in the same block adds physical variety to a street and increases density. Rather than segregate incomes, it allows for a mixture of incomes within blocks of a development.

**Provide more opportunities for variety of Blocks, Lots, and Fronts.**

Blocks play an important role in the creation of lots and pedestrian friendly environments. They accommodate a range of building types and densities and have the ability to support a variety of uses. Several different types of blocks are described and illustrated on the pages that follow. These illustrations provide opportunities for different housing-type mixes. Developers should look toward the many creative and imaginative ways to achieve different housing-type mixes.

**Figure 6.83** At Harbor Town, a new community in Memphis, Tennessee, a typical street features a garden apartment building next to “shot gun” houses (excellent starter homes), which are in turn, next to small lot single family houses, in this case, “zero lot line houses.”
The Neighborhood Model: Building Block for the Development Areas

Section 6

**BLOCK TYPES**

**The Elongated Block**

**Definition:** An elongated block is a rectangular block which is generally twice as long as it is deep. It contains a central T-shaped alley.

**Features:**
- While its width is generally about 220 feet wide, its length can vary from 200 – 600 feet.
- Depth of lots can also vary.
- It allows for an infinite variety of lot widths within a block and flexibility to adjust to the marketplace.
- The alley may be placed off-center resulting in lots of different depths on either side.
- Land uses and densities may be changed across alleys (as opposed to thoroughfares).
- Blocks may be bent.

**Varying the Block Length:** The length of the block can be adjusted to accommodate commercial and pedestrian needs. One strategy would be:
- Shorter towards the Center (200 – 300 feet in length)
- Longer toward the General Area (300 – 400 feet in length)
- Longer still at the Fringe (400 – 600 feet in length)

**Varying the Block Depth:** Block depth depends on the intended activity and requirements for parking
- For low-density residential uses, such as single-family detached units and attached units, a block depth of 220 feet from r.o.w. line to r.o.w. line provides for 100-foot-deep lots and 20 feet of width for an alley.
- For townhouse and multifamily “plex” units with “tuck under” parking, the lot depth could be 70 feet. If like units are back-to-back, the block depth can be reduced to 160 feet.
- Commercial blocks and blocks accommodating multifamily buildings with parking lots could be sized to accommodate an expected parking load. Commercial blocks are usually double the depth of a residential block; however, this dimension should be refined for the use.
- Blocks that change function, land use and density across alleys should be sized according to the requirements of each land use and density. This will result in alleys that are off-center within the block, which is appropriate.

Figure 6:85 The Elongated Block.
The Irregular Block

**Definition:** An irregular block is one whose rectangular shape is varied and curved to provide different length and width. The block size is not prescribed.

**Features:**
- It has unlimited variations.
- It allows for changes in terrain.
- It is also known as the “organic” block because it was originally created by a subdivision of land located between well-used paths. It achieves a picturesque effect while negotiating sloping terrain and irregular property lines.
- Frontages of adjacent blocks need not be parallel.
- In the case of excessive block depth, it is possible to use a Close to provide an open center.

**THE LOT**

With the block as a structuring element, Master Plans can suggest the standards governing the “platting,” or the making of individual lots. Illustrations in the Master Plans can provide a guide to individual developers in producing their own site plans. The following lot types illustrate different ways to achieve a mixture of housing types in a neighborhood: Estate Lots, Village Lots, Cottage Lots, Duplex Lots, and Townhouse, Live / Work Lots. In addition Commercial lots, while not shown here, have their own physical features which can be placed within the Neighborhood Model.

*Figure 6.86* An illustration of a possible plan for a neighborhood combining regular and irregular blocks.
LOT TYPES
The residential lot allows for different types of housing and commercial structures as illustrated below:

Figure 6.87 LOT TYPES: ESTATE LOTS, COTTAGE LOTS AND VILLAGE LOTS

Figure 6.88 LOT TYPES: LIVE/WORK LOTS, TOWNHOUSE LOTS AND DUPLEX LOTS
Figure 6.89 LOT TYPES: MULTIFAMILY LOTS AND PLEX LOTS

Figure 6.90 LOT TYPES: COMMERCIAL LOTS
### Possible Lot Features by Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lot Type</th>
<th>Cottage Lot</th>
<th>Village Lot</th>
<th>Estate Lot</th>
<th>Plex</th>
<th>Duplex Lot</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Width</strong></td>
<td>40'-50'*</td>
<td>50'-70'</td>
<td>70'-90'</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>25'-40'*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Depth</strong></td>
<td>100-120'</td>
<td>100-150'</td>
<td>&gt;110'</td>
<td>If all units self park, can be a min. of 75ft.</td>
<td>90-110'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Garage and Parking</strong></td>
<td>Alley loaded attached or detached. Consider “Hollywood Drives.”</td>
<td>Alley access preferred</td>
<td>Alley or front access.</td>
<td>In rear - tuck under parking, one additional tandem space-access is from alley only</td>
<td>Alley access - attached or detached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Can Back Up To:</strong></td>
<td>All lot types.</td>
<td>Plex Lots Cottage lot Townhouse lot Duplex Lot Live-work lot Village Lot Estate Lot</td>
<td>Cottage Lot (when estate lot is alley loaded) Village Lot Estate Lot</td>
<td></td>
<td>All but Estate lots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Min. Side Yard:</strong></td>
<td>0’ on one side. 10’ on the other side.</td>
<td>5’ min for structures less than 2 stories 15’ min for structures 2 stories or higher</td>
<td></td>
<td>Adjoined on one side 5’ setbacks**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Max Width of Primary Facade:</strong></td>
<td>32’</td>
<td>40’</td>
<td></td>
<td>32’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Townhouse Lot</td>
<td>Multifamily</td>
<td>Live/work Lot</td>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16'-24'*</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>16'-24'*</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-110’</td>
<td>As determined by parking requirement. Min. of 150ft</td>
<td>90-110’</td>
<td>Minimum 130’ determined by parking requirements.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alley access - attached or detached</td>
<td>In rear - can be accessed from alley, side street or front driveway</td>
<td>Alley access - garage discouraged to allow for continuous parking</td>
<td>Surface or structure behind building preferred. Some side parking is allowed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All but Estate lots</td>
<td>Multifamily Lots, Duplex Lots, Townhouse Lots, Live/work Lots, Cottage Lots, Commercial Lots</td>
<td>All but Estate lots</td>
<td>Multifamily Lots, Townhouse Lots, Live/work Lots, Plex Lots, Commercial Lots</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A No maximum string lengths.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Add 8’ to all side street lots.
** If Fire Suppression is provided. (sprinkler).
Lead walks are suggested at all houses (Lead walk - the path from the house to the sidewalk parallel to the street).
AFFORDABILITY

There are several different approaches to providing affordable housing in the Development Areas and these options are described below:

1. Scatter affordable housing throughout a neighborhood rather than concentrating it in enclaves

A mix of diverse housing, including affordable housing is shown in Figure 6:91 and 6:92 which shows it is possible to provide diversity within a highly marketable development. The illustrations of Wyndcrest, a contemporary development in Sandy Spring, Maryland, contained single family houses selling at over $300,000 in 1996 with subsidized townhouses at $80,000 and a number of products in-between. Wyndcrest was highly successful both from the point of view of the developer as well as from a community design perspective.

2. Make affordable housing look like all the other housing with the only difference being in size

It is important that affordable housing look like market rate housing. Not only does this provide a dignified presence on the street, but it avoids the stigma often associated with housing developments that are clearly “affordable.” This “blending in” helps maintain overall property values and allows for a variety of uses and reuses over time. Figures 6:93 and 6:94 show a proposal for several blocks known as “North Village” in Alexandria, where market rate townhouses are intermingled with apartments in “manor houses.” These manor houses are essentially buildings that look like large city houses. Each manor house contains from 6 – 7 units, many of which are subsidized. Viewing the ensemble from the street, it is impossible to tell that subsidized or affordable housing is located within the block.
3. Encourage the construction of accessory apartments in ancillary structures

While this method may never be the primary source for the production of affordable housing, it does offer a “natural” method of providing units for certain consumers. University students and young professionals, in particular, often find this type of housing quite amenable, providing an additional revenue stream for owners (See Figure 6:96).