

Zoning Ordinance Updates

“Missing Middle” Housing Discussion

September 15, 2026

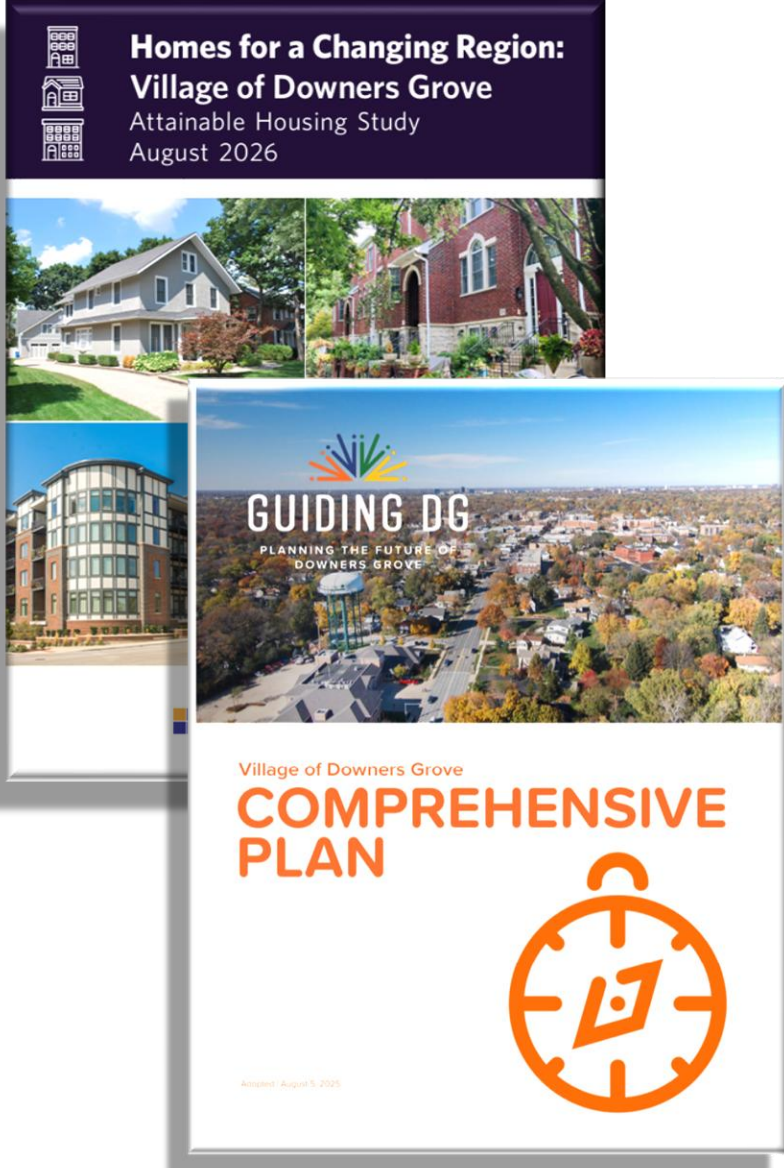


Zoning Ordinance Updates – “Missing Middle” Housing Discussion

- What Housing Types are Considered “Missing Middle”
- Household Types in Downers Grove
- Guiding DG Recommendations
- Attainable Housing Study Recommendations
- Existing Regulations That Allow “Missing Middle” Housing Development
 - Not a development proposal
 - Not a land acquisition discussion
- Discussion



Zoning Ordinance Updates – “Missing Middle” Housing Discussion - 2



- Tonight's discussion will inform potential next steps
- Potential next steps
 - Amend Zoning Ordinance text
 - Amend current zoning districts
 - Create new zoning districts
 - Create overlay zoning districts
 - Complete zoning map amendments (rezonings)
 - Amend bulk requirements
 - Density, height, setbacks, etc.
 - Amend use table
 - No further action

Zoning Ordinance Update – “Missing Middle” Housing

Diagram illustrating the spectrum of housing types, from detached single-family homes to mid-rise buildings. The spectrum includes:

- DETACHED SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES
- DUPLEX
- TRIPLEX & FOURPLEX
- COURTYARD APARTMENT
- BUNGALOW COURT
- TOWNHOUSE
- MULTIPLEX
- LIVE/WORK
- MID-RISE

A dashed line labeled **MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING** spans the gap between the Duplex and Mid-Rise categories.

House-scale buildings with multiple units in walkable neighborhoods

MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING
Thinking Big and Building Small to Respond to Today's Housing Crisis
Daniel Parolek
with ARTHUR C. NELSON
DANIEL PAROLEK/ISLAND PRESS

OPTICOS



Zoning Ordinance Updates – Attainable Housing Study – Household Types

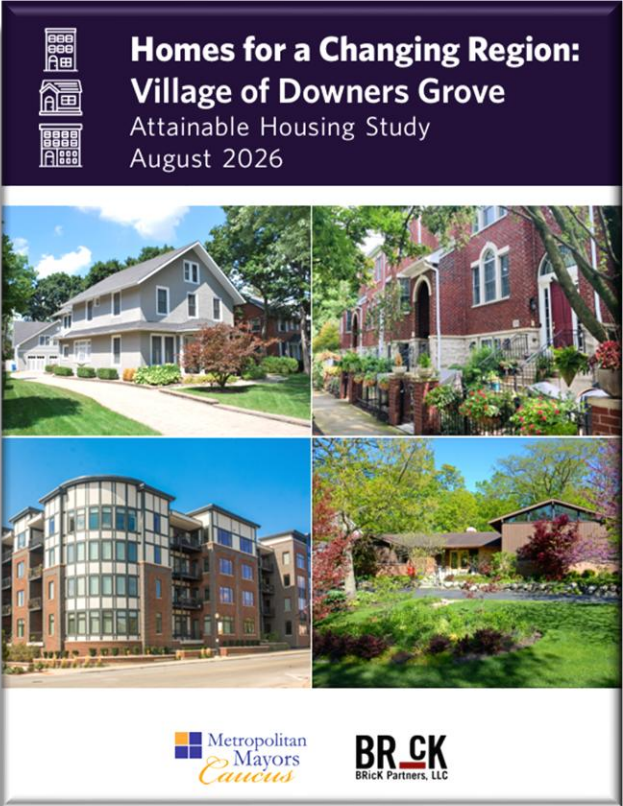
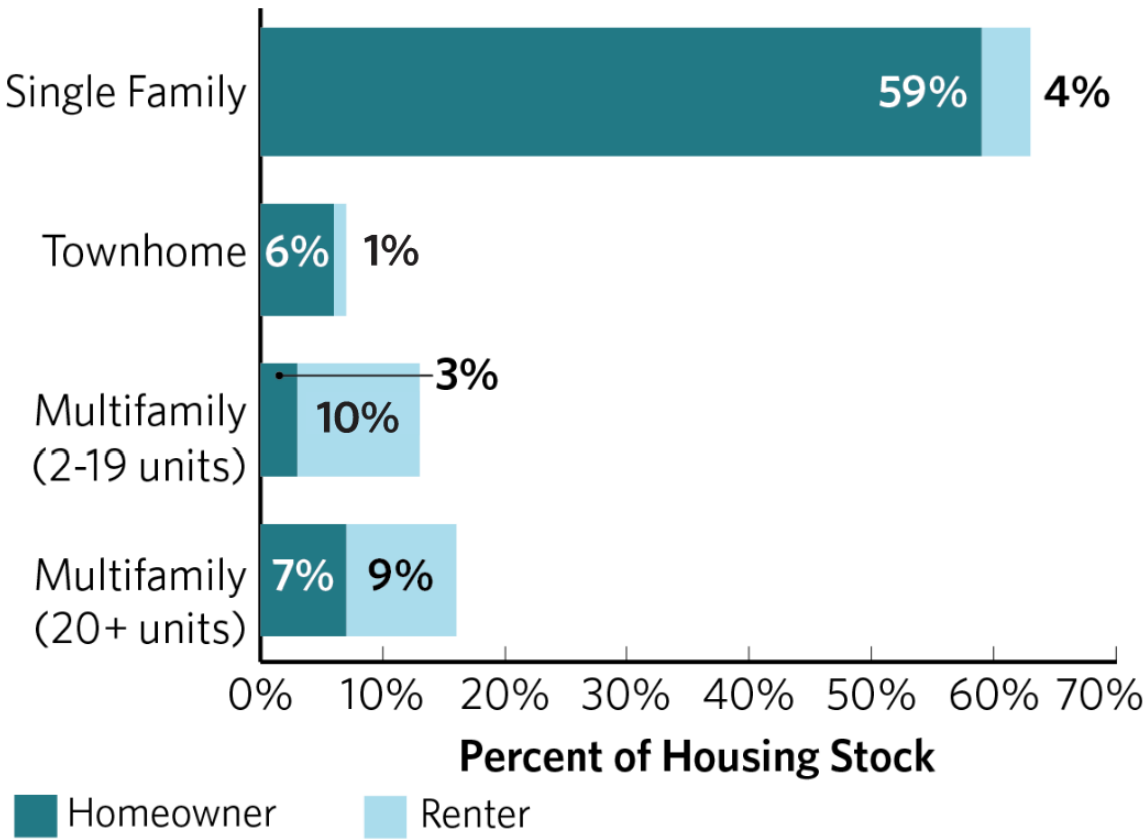
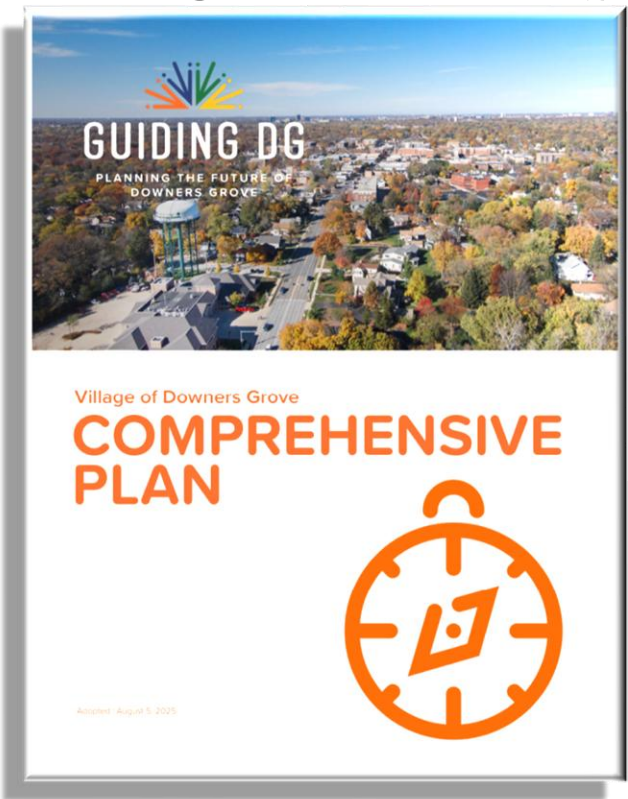
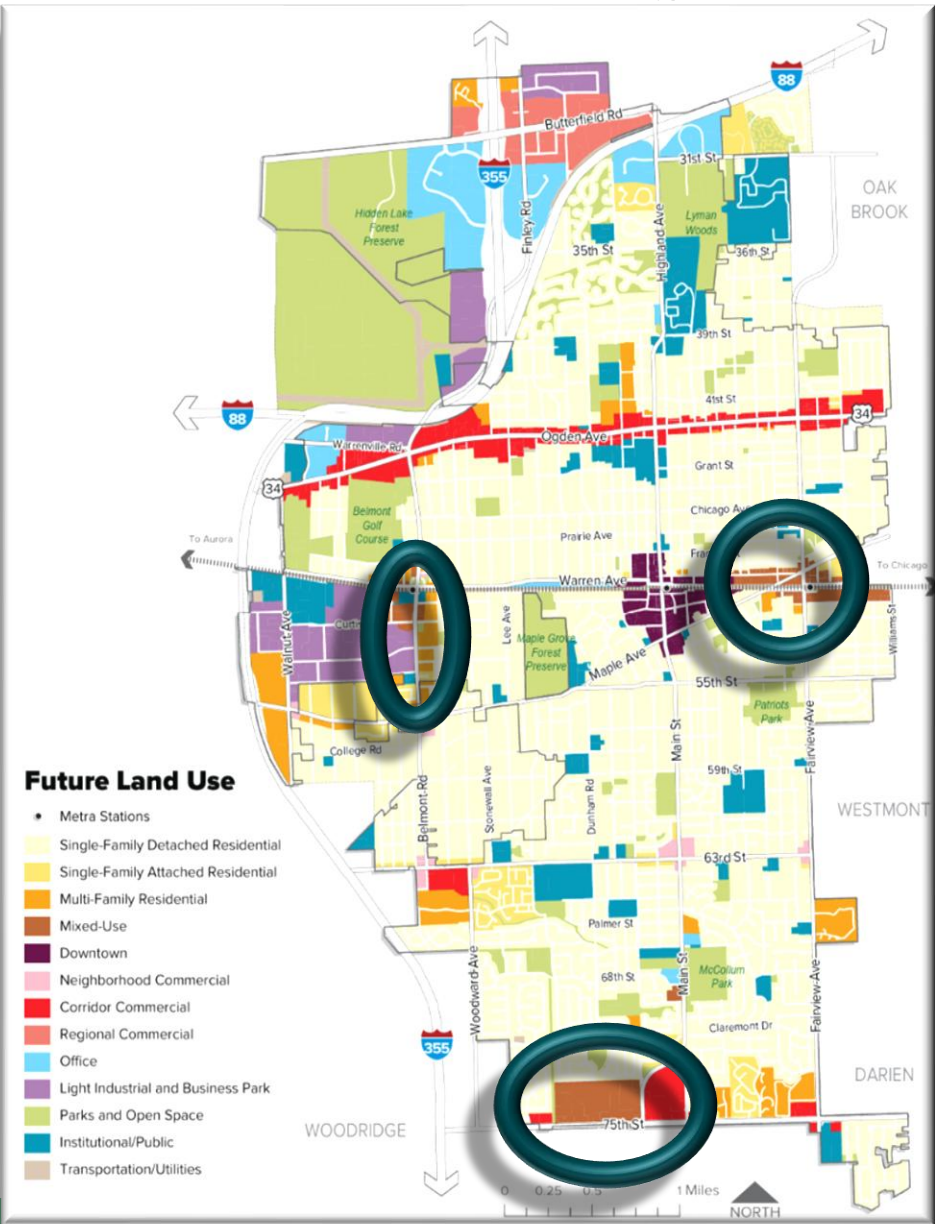


Figure 2: Housing Units by Type of Housing and Ownership.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2020-2024 5-Year Estimate.

Zoning Ordinance Updates - Guiding DG Future Land Use Map

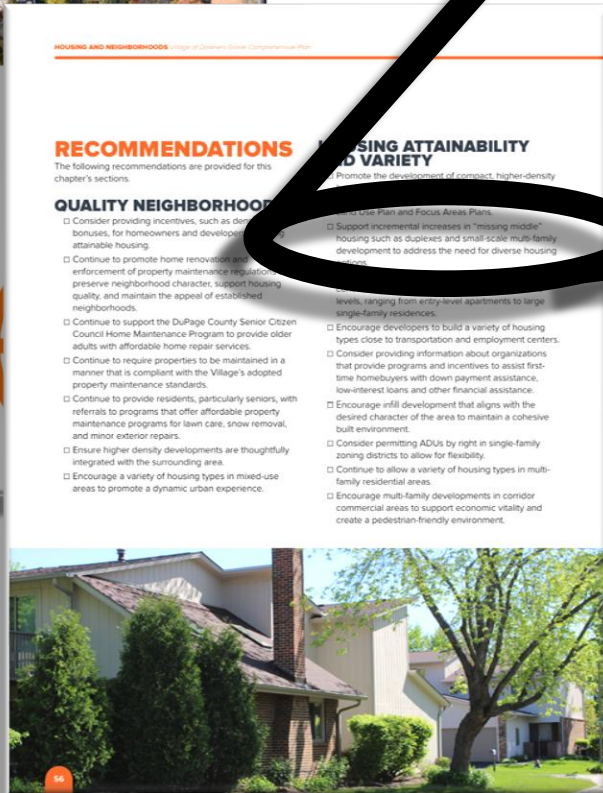


Zoning Ordinance Updates - Guiding DG “Missing Middle” Housing - Recommendations



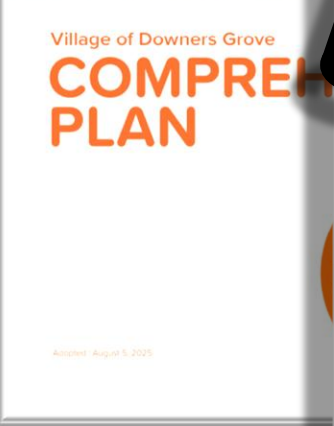
Village of Downers Grove COMPREH PLAN

Adopted: August 5, 2025



- Support incremental increases in “missing middle” housing such as duplexes and small-scale multi-family development to address the need for diverse housing options.

Zoning Ordinance Updates – Guiding DG – “Missing Middle” Housing - Implementation



Consider diversifying housing options by incrementally introduce duplexes, small-scale multi-family to existing single family districts.

IMPLEMENTATION Village of Downers Grove Comprehensive Plan

Item 1: Update Zoning, Building and Subdivision Ordinances (Not Including Sign Ordinance)

#	Action	Chapter	Priority	Duration
02	Consider diversifying housing options by incrementally introduce duplexes, small scale multi-family to existing single family districts.	5.7	1	12-15 months
03	Consider offering density bonuses for affordable housing projects.	5	1	12-15 months
05	Update zoning ordinance to encourage the use of bed-friendly glass in multi-family buildings.	4.7	1	12-15 months
06	Review the Zoning Ordinance to ensure shops, restaurants, entertainment, and high-density housing are allowed in mixed-use projects.	5, 6, 7	1	12-15 months
07	Ensure Zoning Ordinance prioritizes mixed-use development in Downtown, Fairview, 75th Street, Belmont Train Station, West Ogden Avenue and, where appropriate, the Eggenwiler and the Butterfield Road Corridor.	4, 7	1	12-15 months
08	Consider amending the outdoor lighting code to a dark-sky outdoor lighting code.	5	1	12-15 months
09	Consider updating ordinance to encourage the use of bed-friendly glass in multi-family buildings.	5	1	12-15 months
10	Examine sustainability infrastructure requirements (e.g. EV charging, native plantings).	7, 8, 9, 10	1	12-15 months
11	Re-examine shared parking agreement regulations.	6, 7	1	12-15 months
12	Examine parking requirements to encourage outfit redevelopment and green space.	6, 7	1	12-15 months

Item 2: Implement the Fairview Focus Area Plan

#	Action	Chapter	Priority	Duration
Project A	Explore incentives and financing tools to assemble parcels and fund property and infrastructure upgrades.	7	1	12-15 months
Project B	Preserve and enhance the Fairview Metro Station while evaluating redevelopment options for its parking lot.	7	1	3-5 years
Project C	Implement streetscape improvements per Guiding DG Streetscapes Plan.	7	1	up to 20 years

Item 3: Consider Developing a Public Art Program

#	Action	Chapter	Priority	Duration
01	Add art, streetscape upgrades, and placemaking to create distinctive nodes.	6, 9	1	12-15 months
02	Partner with local artists for rotating exhibits and interactive displays.	6, 9	1	12-15 months

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Zoning Ordinance Updates – Attainable Housing Study – “Missing Middle” Housing



Recommended Strategies

This report has identified four housing needs in the Village of Downers Grove:

- Seniors need more downsizing options to remain in Downers Grove.
- Downers Grove has a shrinking supply of starter homes for first-time homebuyers.
- Many renters in Downers Grove face challenges affording their housing.
- Cost of living in nearby communities impacts local workers and key employers.

On July 9, 2026 the Homes team convened an expert panel to discuss with Downers Grove stakeholders how various strategies can assist the Village in addressing its housing needs. Discussions focused on how local municipalities have utilized Housing Commission, Inclusionary Housing Ordinances, and Housing Trust Funds to generate a mix of price points in new housing development; how Missing Middle Housing development can meet needs of seniors and first-time homebuyers; and how local policies and partnerships can assist with attainable housing development.

As a follow-up to this consultation, this report recommends the following strategies for the Village to encourage a balanced housing stock that meets the needs of various residents:

Recommendation #1: Further cultivate housing leadership, civic engagement, outreach, and education.

- Strategy 1.1: Establish a Housing Commission to support the Village Council.
- Strategy 1.2: Convene employers, faith-based organizations, multifamily property owners, and nonprofits to engage their residents in this Attainable Housing Study.

Recommendation #2: Maximize and leverage resources to improve and support existing Downers Grove properties and residents.

- Strategy 2.1: Connect property owners with nonprofit programs to maintain the affordability, accessibility, and quality of Downers Grove's existing housing stock.
- Strategy 2.2: Coordinate with DuPage County, DuPage Housing Authority, and the Illinois Housing Development Authority on public sector funding opportunities.
- Strategy 2.3: Consider whether a rental inspection program is needed.
- Strategy 2.4: Establish a demolition tax to discourage teardowns and generate income for local housing priorities.

Recommendation #3: Implement recommendations from the Guiding DG Comprehensive Plan that provide for additional housing opportunities.

- Strategy 3.1: Update regulations for Accessory Dwelling Units.
- Strategy 3.2: Update regulations for Missing Middle Housing in select areas.
- Strategy 3.3: Allow for development of Missing Middle Housing in select areas.
- Strategy 3.4: Explore an Inclusionary Housing Ordinance to leverage private sector action to create new housing at a range of price points.

Each strategy is detailed more fully in the report.

- Strategy 3.3: Allow for development of “missing middle” housing in select areas



Zoning Ordinance Updates – Attainable Housing Study – “Missing Middle” Housing - 2



Metropolitan
Mayors
Caucus

Recommended Strategies

- Review zoning regulations in municipalities that allow Missing Middle Housing in select areas, including Northbrook, Geneva, Warrenville, Bensenville, and Oak Forest.
- Commission to
- Where in the community would be most suitable to allow Missing Middle Housing.
- What types of Missing Middle Housing could be allowed in those areas.
- Whether to create a new zoning district for Missing Middle Housing, update the Village's existing potential Missing Middle Housing zoning district, or amend selected existing zoning districts to allow certain types of
- How "test fits" can evaluate whether various regulations such as parking requirements would enable or prevent development of various Missing Middle Housing types.

- Where in the community would be most suitable to allow “Missing Middle” Housing
- What types of “Missing Middle” Housing could be allowed in those areas.

Zoning Ordinance Update – Existing Residential Land Use Table

Table 5-1: Allowed Uses

USE CATEGORY	R-1	R-2	R-3	R-4	R-5	R- 5A	R-6	B-1	B-2	B-3	DC	DB	DT	O-R	O-R-M	M-1	M-2	INP- 1	INP-2	FC	FB	FT	Supplemental Regulations
Subcategory																							
Specific use (See Sec. 28.05.020)																							
RESIDENTIAL																							
Household Living																							
Detached house	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	–	–	–	-	–	P	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	P	
Attached house	–	–	–	–	P	P	P	–	–	S	-	S[20]	P	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	P	
Two-unit house	–	–	–	–	P	P	P	–	–	–	-	S[20]	P	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	P	
Apartment/condo	–	–	–	–	–	–	P	P	P	S	S [17]	S	S	–	–	–	–	–	–	S [17]	S	S	[17] Located on 2nd floor or above
Group Living (except for the following uses)	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	S	S	–	–	S	
Group home, small (8-person max. occupancy)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	P	P	–	–	P	Sec. 28.06.050
Group home, large (9 or more occupants)	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	S	S	–	–	S	Sec. 28.06.050
Nursing home	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	P	P	S	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	S	–	S	S	Sec. 28.06.080
Sheltered Care	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	P	P	S	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	S	S	Sec. 28.06.080

Zoning Ordinance Update – “Missing Middle” Housing - 1

“Missing Middle” Housing Types
Duplex – Side by Side
Duplex - Stacked
Townhomes
Triplex - Stacked
Fourplex – Stacked
Cottage Courts
Courtyard Building
Multi-plex: Medium
Live-Work

A live-work unit is a hybrid space combining elements of residential living with commercial or office space.



Zoning Ordinance Update – Missing Middle Housing - 2

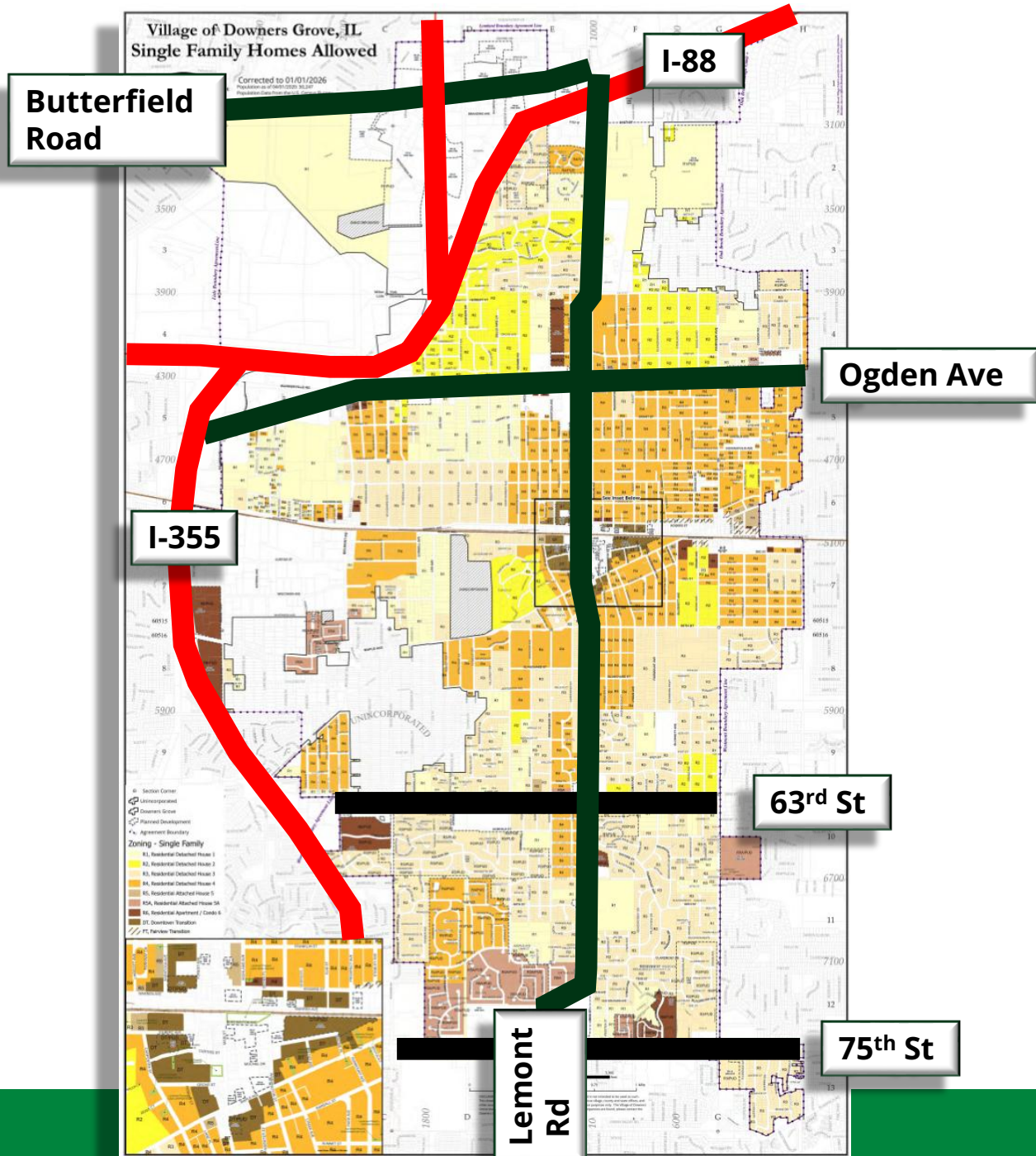
“Missing Middle” Housing Types	Described in Zoning Ordinance
Duplex – Side by Side	Duplex
Duplex - Stacked	Duplex
Townhomes	Attached House
Triplex - Stacked	Apartment / Condo
Fourplex – Stacked	Apartment / Condo
Cottage Courts	Single-family, Duplex, Attached or Apartment / Condo
Courtyard Building	Single-family, Duplex, Attached or Apt / Condo
Multi-plex: Medium (5-10 units)	Apartment / Condo
Live-Work	Apartment / Condo



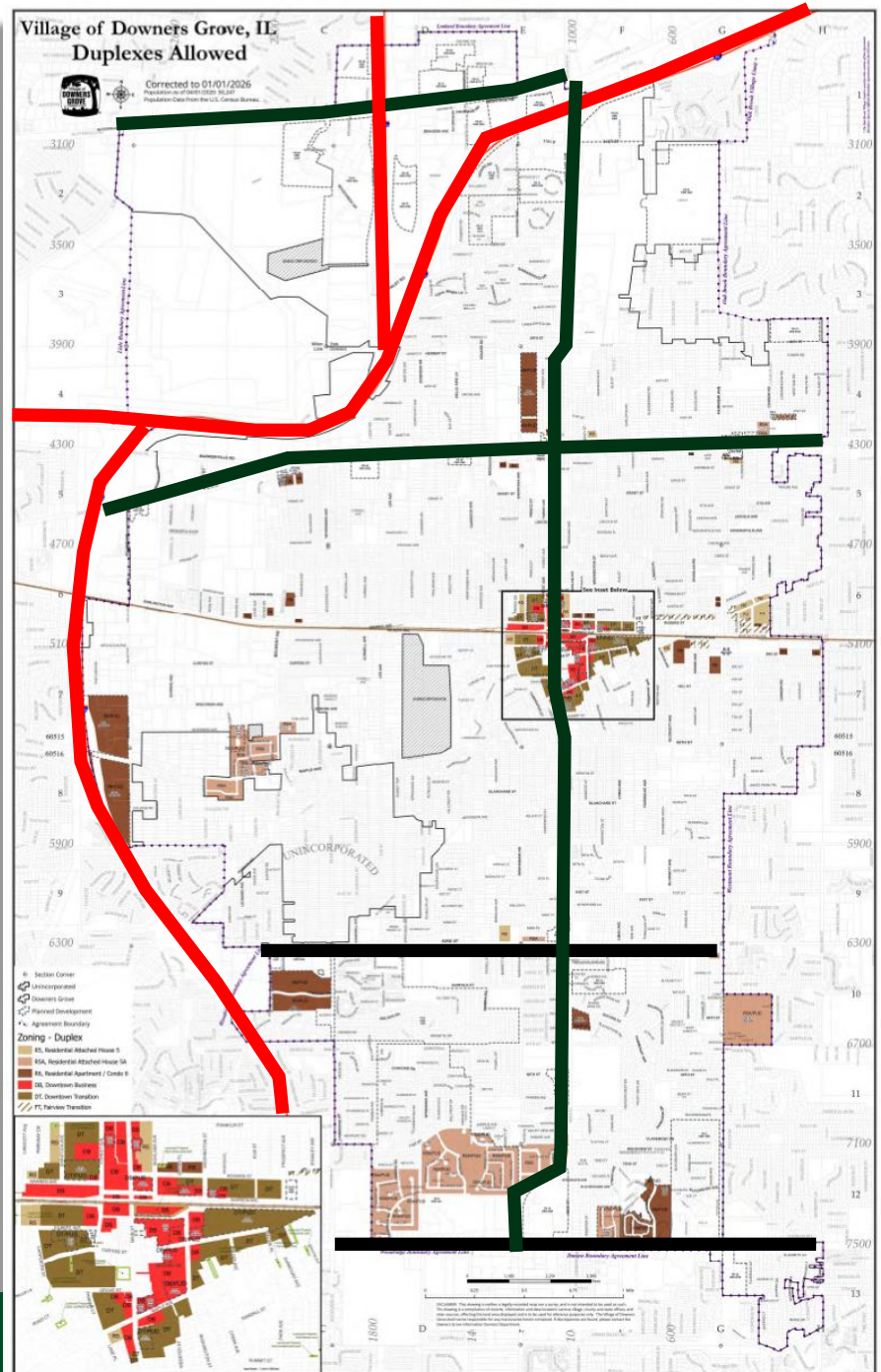
Zoning Ordinance Update – Missing Middle Housing - 3

“Missing Middle” Housing Types	Described in Zoning Ordinance	Where allowed
Duplex – Side by Side	Duplex	Permitted - R5, R5A, R6, DT, FT Special - DB
Duplex - Stacked	Duplex	Permitted - R5, R5A, R6, DT, FT Special - DB
Townhomes	Attached House	Permitted - R5, R5A, R6, DT, FT Special – B3, DB
Triplex - Stacked	Apartment / Condo	Permitted – R6, B1, B2, B3 Special – DC, DB, DT, FC, FB, FT
Fourplex – Stacked	Apartment / Condo	Permitted – R6, B1, B2, B3 Special – DC, DB, DT, FC, FB, FT
Cottage Courts	Single-family, Duplex, Attached or Apartment / Condo	P.U.D.
Courtyard Building	Single-family, Duplex, Attached or Apartment / Condo	P.U.D.
Multi-plex: Medium (5-10 units)	Apartment / Condo	Permitted – R6, B1, B2, B3 Special – DC, DB, DT, FC, FB, FT
Live-Work	Apartment / Condo	P.U.D.

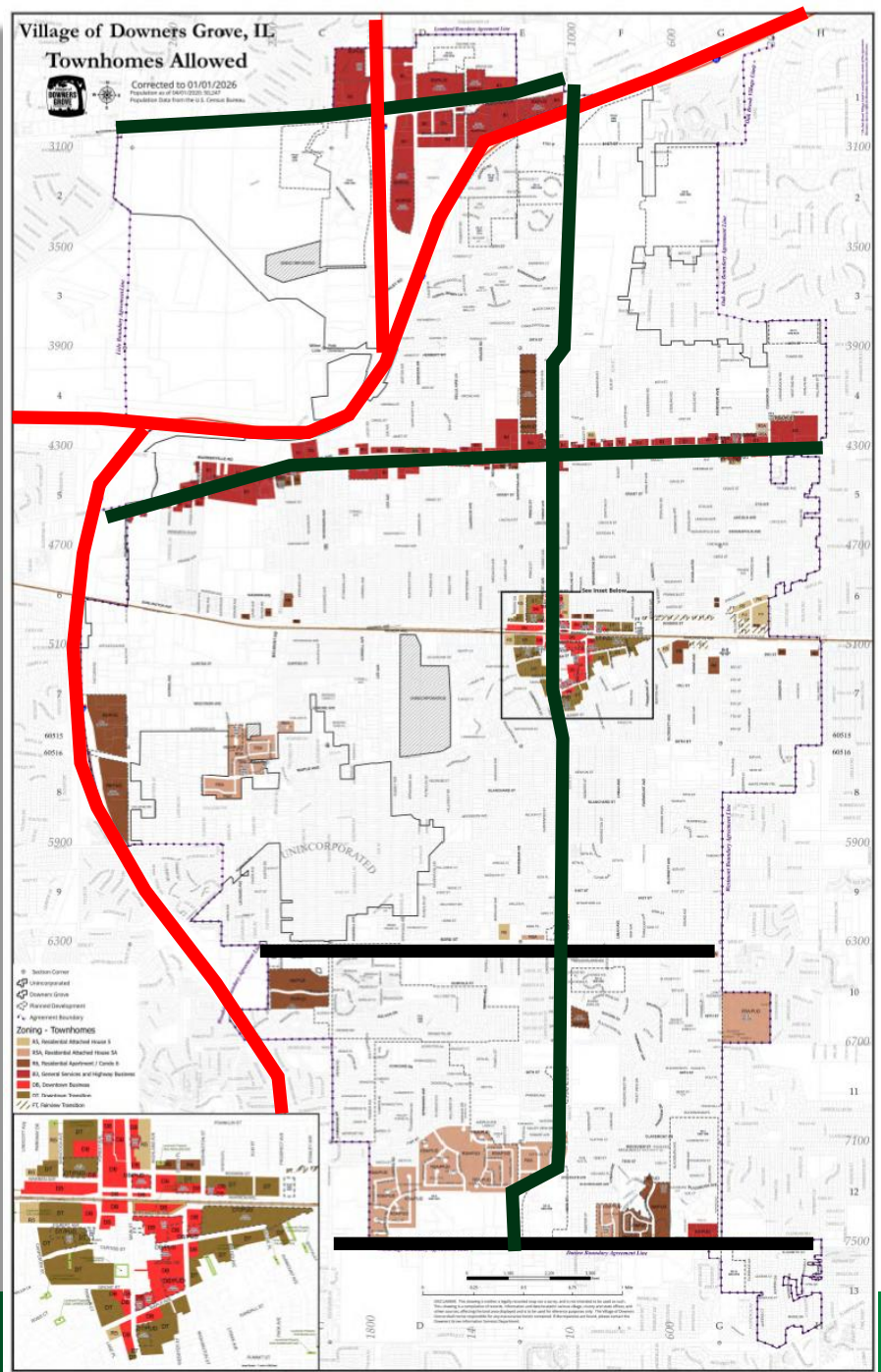
A large, two-story white house with a prominent front porch and a two-car garage. The house features a symmetrical design with a central entrance porch supported by columns. The roof is dark grey with white trim around the windows and eaves. The front yard is landscaped with green grass, shrubs, and a paved driveway leading to the garage. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds.



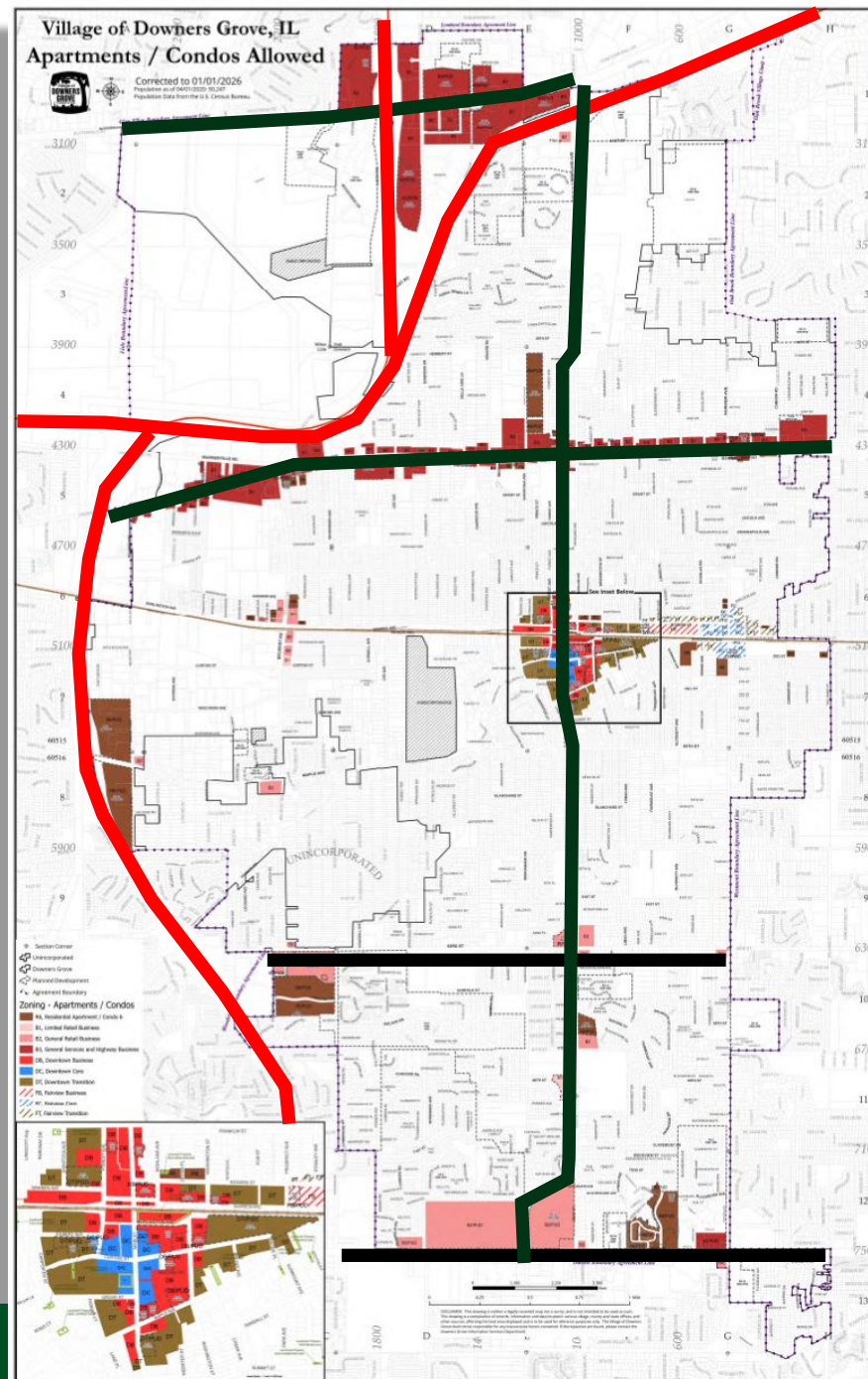
“Missing Middle” Housing – Duplexes Allowed



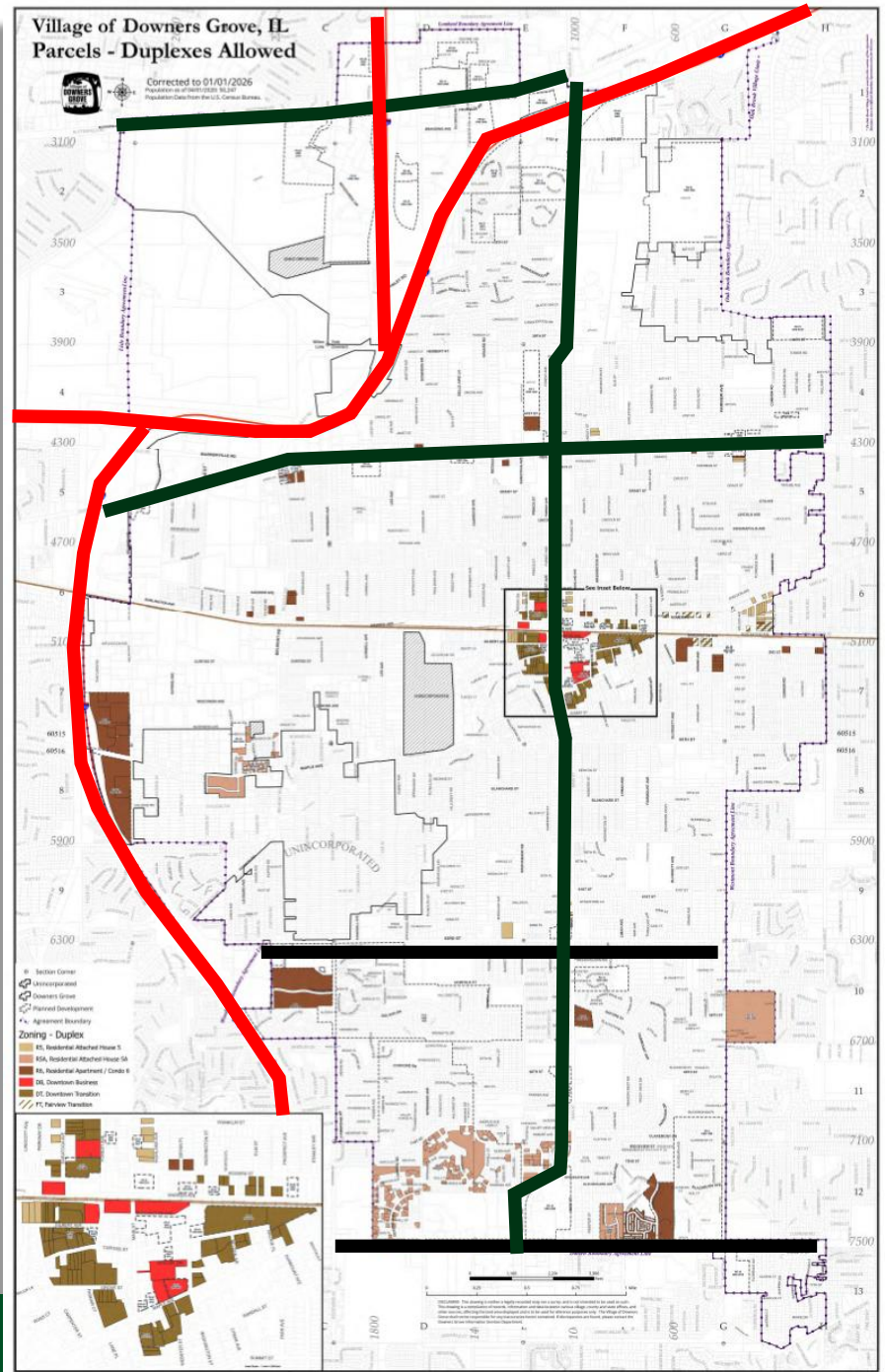
“Missing Middle” Housing – Townhouses Allowed



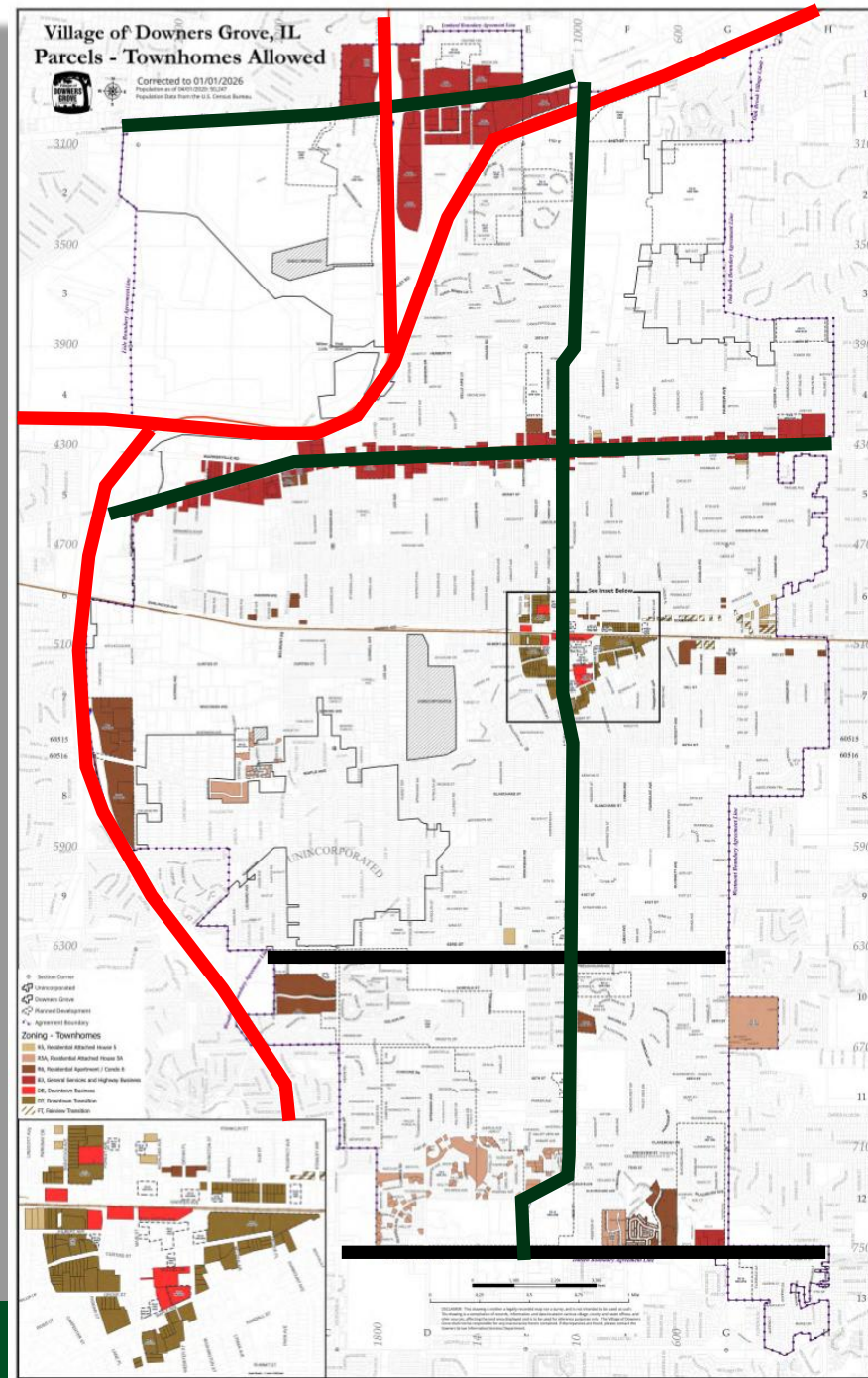
A row of modern, multi-story townhomes with light beige siding, white trim, and balconies, set against a clear blue sky. The townhomes feature a mix of large windows, some with white shutters, and arched entryways. The architecture is contemporary with a touch of traditional gabled rooflines. The balconies have white railings, and the overall design is clean and bright.



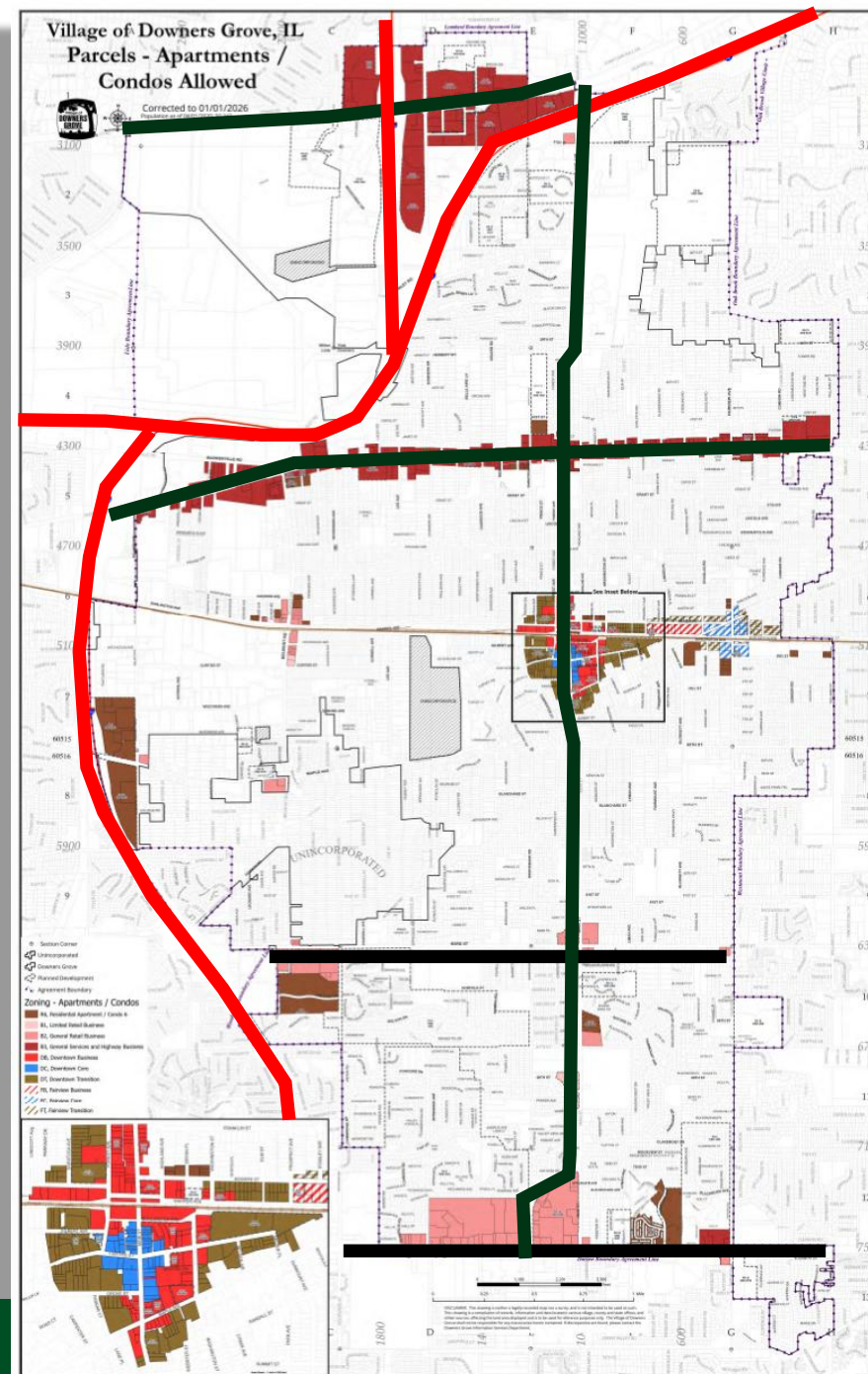
“Missing Middle” Housing – Duplexes Allowed with Current Density Requirements



“Missing Middle” Housing – Townhouses Allowed with Current Density Requirements



“Missing Middle” Housing – Apartments / Condos Allowed with Current Density Requirements



“Missing Middle” Housing – Planned Unit Developments

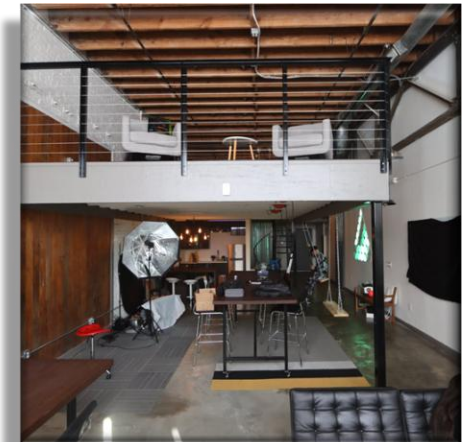
Cottage Court



Courtyard Building

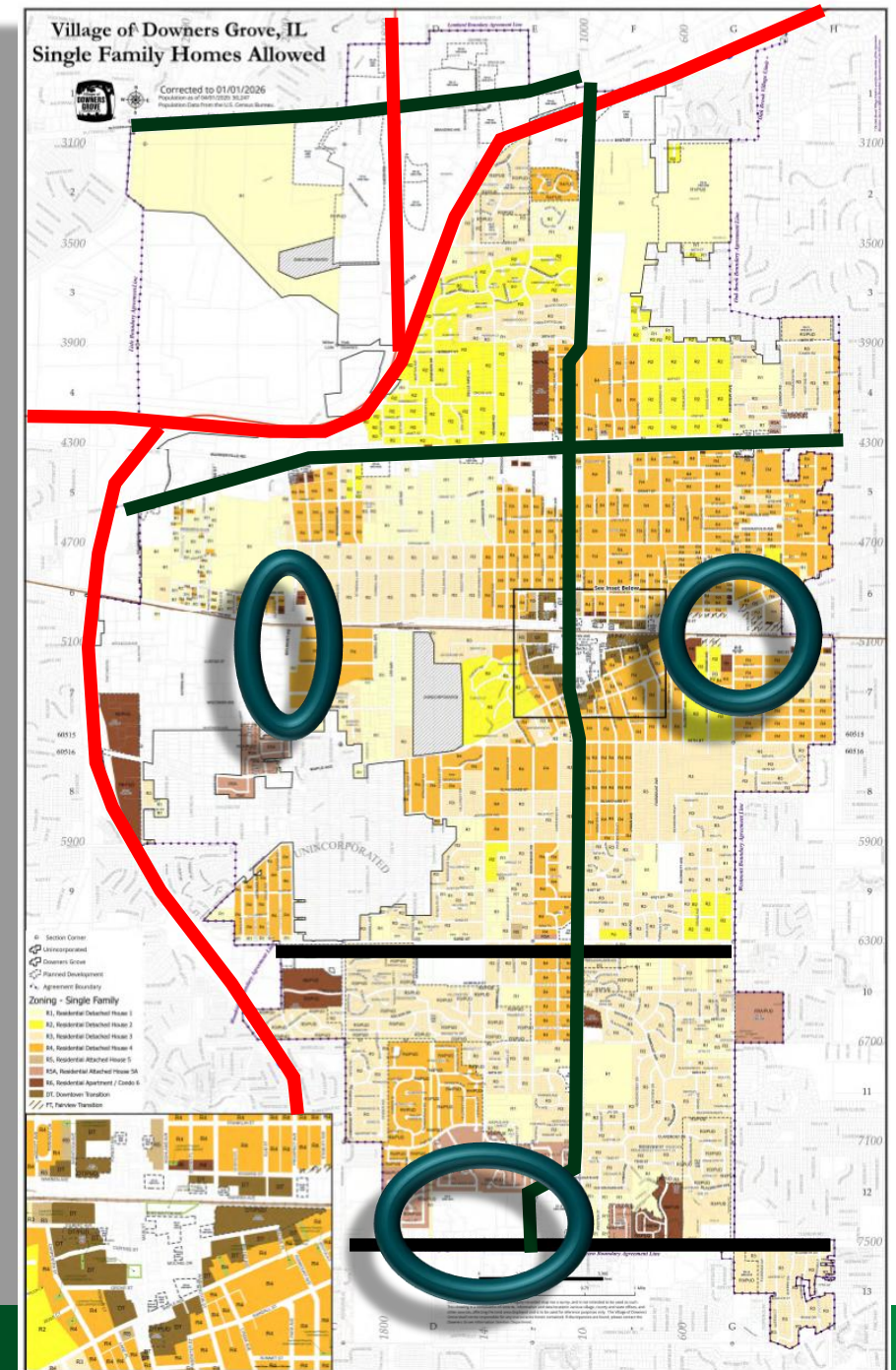


Live-Work



Zoning Ordinance Update – “Missing Middle” Housing – Discussion Question

- Where would you like to see these housing types:
 - Duplexes
 - Townhouses
 - Triplex
 - Fourplex
 - Cottage Courts
 - Courtyard Buildings
 - Multiplex
 - Live-Work



Schedule

- ✓ Environmental
- ✓ Parking
- ✓ Minor Clarifications and Modifications
- ✓ Digital Signs, ADUs and Home Day Care check-in with Village Council
- ☐ “Missing Middle” Housing check-in with Village Council
- ☐ Use Table / Digital Signs / Housing

