

Compact Housing Strategies

- Single Family Districts
 - ✓ Provide more small lot, secondary unit, duplex, and clustered opportunities
 - ✓ Keep agricultural parcels from becoming residential ranchettes
- Multifamily Districts
 - ✓ Provide broad range of density options
 - ✓ Include some multifamily area in all new larger subdivisions
- Neighborhood Center and Commercial Areas
 - ✓ Allow greater height and density close to shops, jobs, transportation
 - ✓ Provide attractive public realm and access by pedestrians and cyclists
- All Districts
 - ✓ Include a certain number of affordable units in all areas
 - ✓ Emphasize good design and predictable process including minimum densities.

Compact Housing in our Cities and Towns Helps Save the Countryside



- Cities and counties benefit by meeting future growth needs primarily within their existing urban service boundaries
- Jurisdictions and landholders benefit by conserving agriculture and natural landscapes

Compact Housing Helps Build a Better Future



- Compact housing consumes less land, water, and energy resources and maintain good air quality over their full life cycle.



- Compact and affordable housing contribute toward sharing the benefits and responsibilities of growth and conservation more equally within communities and regions.

Compact Housing is Part of our Valued Past



The term “density” has negative associations for many, compounded by the confusion between the statistical measure of density, and the visual perception of density. Density in the form of “historical homes” such as the mix of one and two unit Victorian structures in San Francisco may appear picturesque in someone else’s community. Yet a proposal for a new development of a similar density in one’s own neighborhood, described in the planners lexicon as “a multiple unit multi story development at 14 units per acre” will conjure images of out-of-scale monster structures, hordes of people, and constant streams of cars. This type of response is magnified when the proposed “dense” housing is revealed to be an affordable development whose inhabitants will have different incomes than their neighbors..

This fear is based on some common myths and apprehensions that interact when the terms “affordable housing” or “higher density housing” are used. These include some or all of the following:

1. Limited Personal exposure:

- For the last 45 years, America has primarily been a suburban nation. The majority of adult Americans have been born and raised in suburbs and primarily in single family detached homes.
- For many adults, the first and only experience of living in “higher density housing” may have been college dorms or speculatively developed “collgetown apartments”, lacking in good design qualities
- For adults, the older models of small lot homes, townhouses, and garden apartments found in the pre-1950’s neighborhoods were “run down” or “in the wrong neighborhood” for much of their lives.