CODE NEXT

SHAPING THE AUSTIN WE IMAGINE

With:
Peter J. Park
Lisa Wise Consulting
Cultural Strategies
McAnn Adams Studio
Health & Community Strategies
Group Solutions
Civic Collaboration
Urban Design Group
Fregonese Associates
ECO Northwest
Taniguchi Architects
Kimley Horn
McGuireWoods

OPTICOS

Initial Community Character Analysis

Daniel Parolek, Principal
Opticos Design, Inc.
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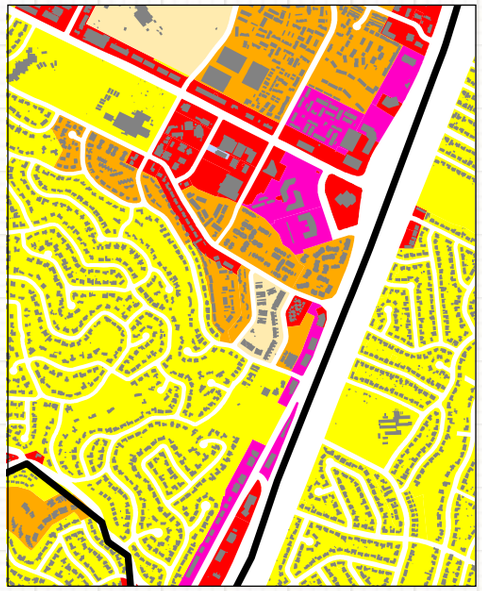
Peter Park, Principal
Peter J. Park, LLC
City Planning and Design

January 2014



An Out of Date Operating System

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1 Community Character Process

Creating a New Operating System that is Rooted in the Unique Aspects of Austin

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Why Are We Doing This?

Establishing a Foundation for a New Place-Based System

CODENEXT
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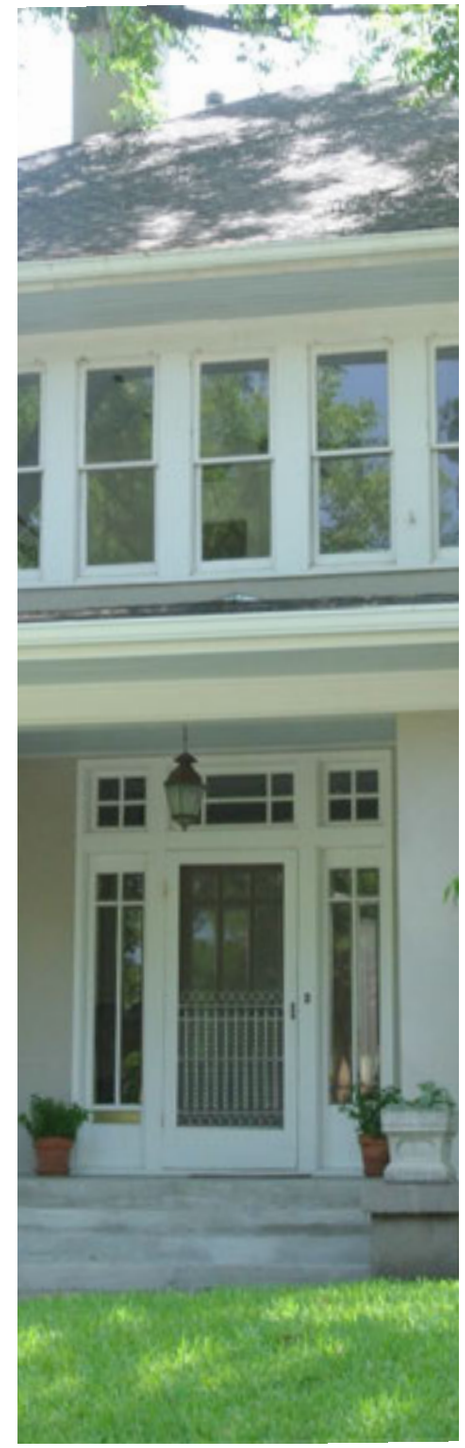
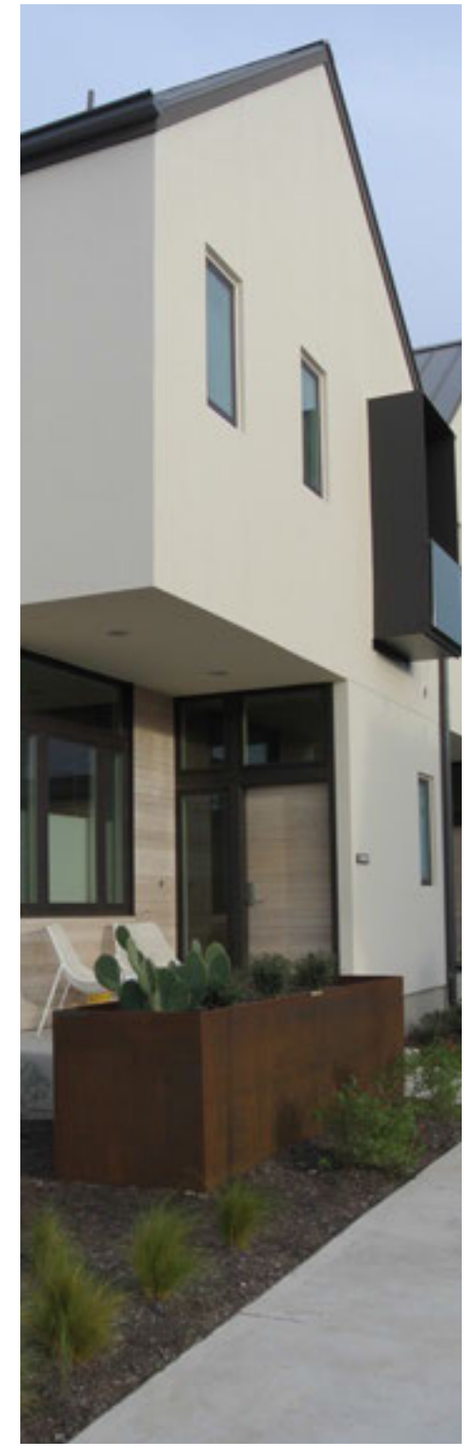
Different Places Require Different Solutions

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Different Places Require Different Solutions

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Extensive Process: What Are We Documenting?

Extracting the DNA of Austin's Diverse Places

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Photo Documentation: General Citywide Character

Draft

- Building Types
- Frontage Types

In-Progress

- Signage
- Contemporary Architecture
- Public Space, Trails and Nature

Detached House: Large

This Building Type is a large-sized detached structure on a large-sized lot that incorporates one unit. It is typically located within a primarily single-family residential neighborhood in a walkable urban setting, potentially near a neighborhood main street.

Detached House: Medium

This Building Type is a medium-sized detached structure on a medium-sized lot that incorporates one unit. It is typically located within a primarily single-family residential neighborhood in a walkable urban setting, potentially near a neighborhood main street.

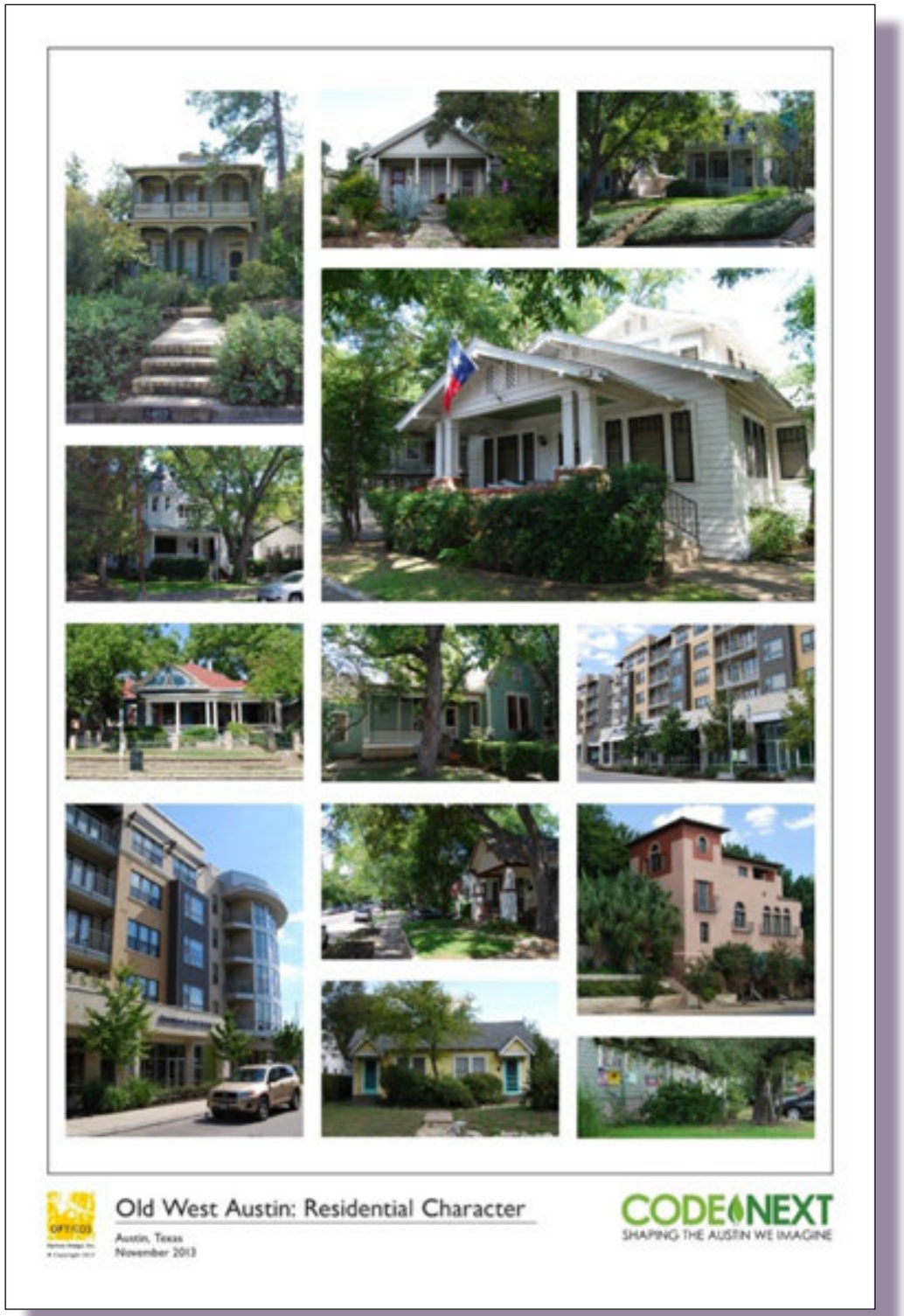
Detached House: Compact

This Building Type is a small detached structure on a small lot that incorporates one unit. It is typically located within a primarily single-family residential neighborhood in a walkable urban setting, potentially near a neighborhood main street. This Type enables appropriately-scaled, well-designed higher densities and is important for providing a broad choice of housing types and promoting walkability.

Building Types

Austin, Texas
November 2013

Photo Documentation: A Central Austin Neighborhood



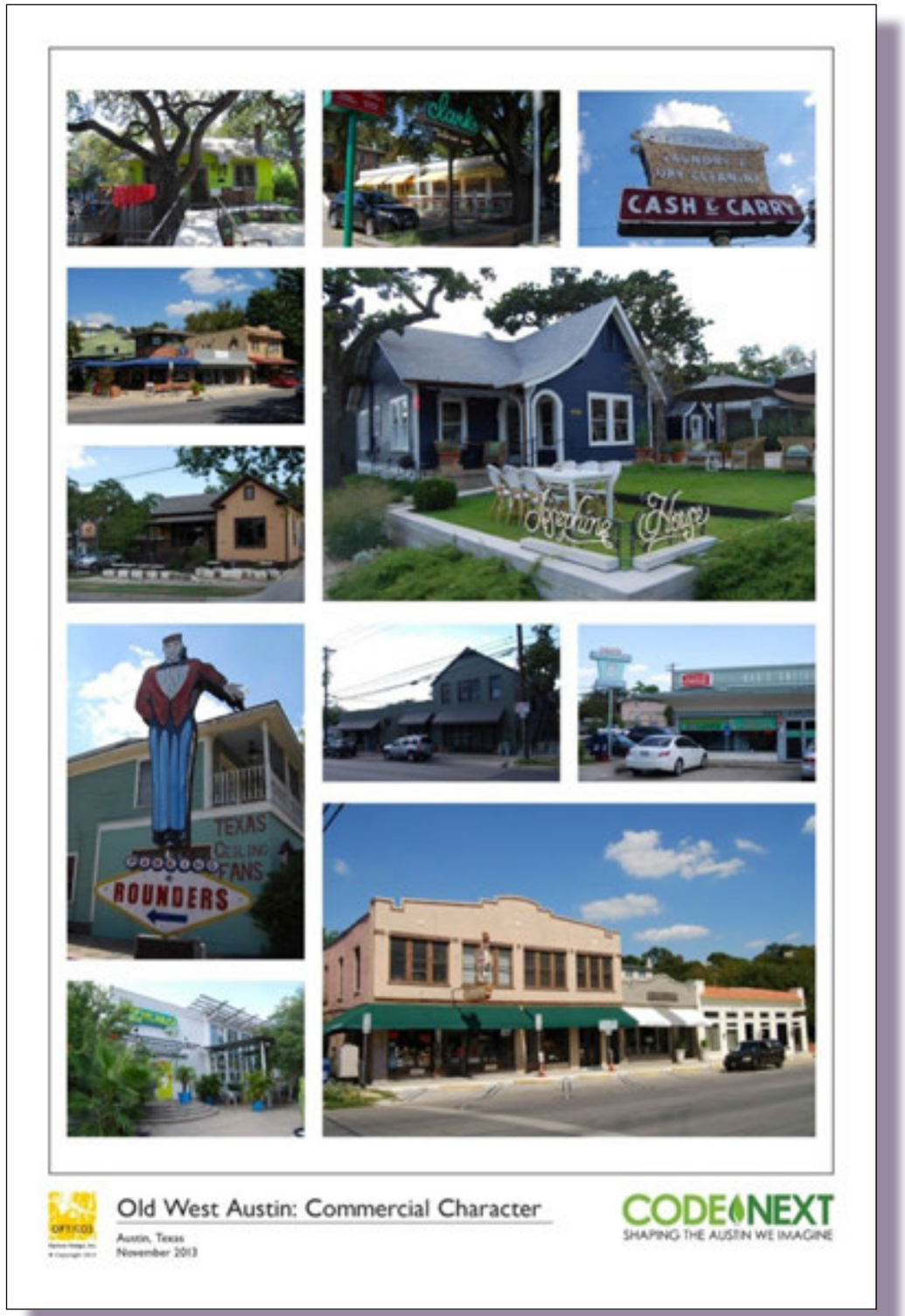


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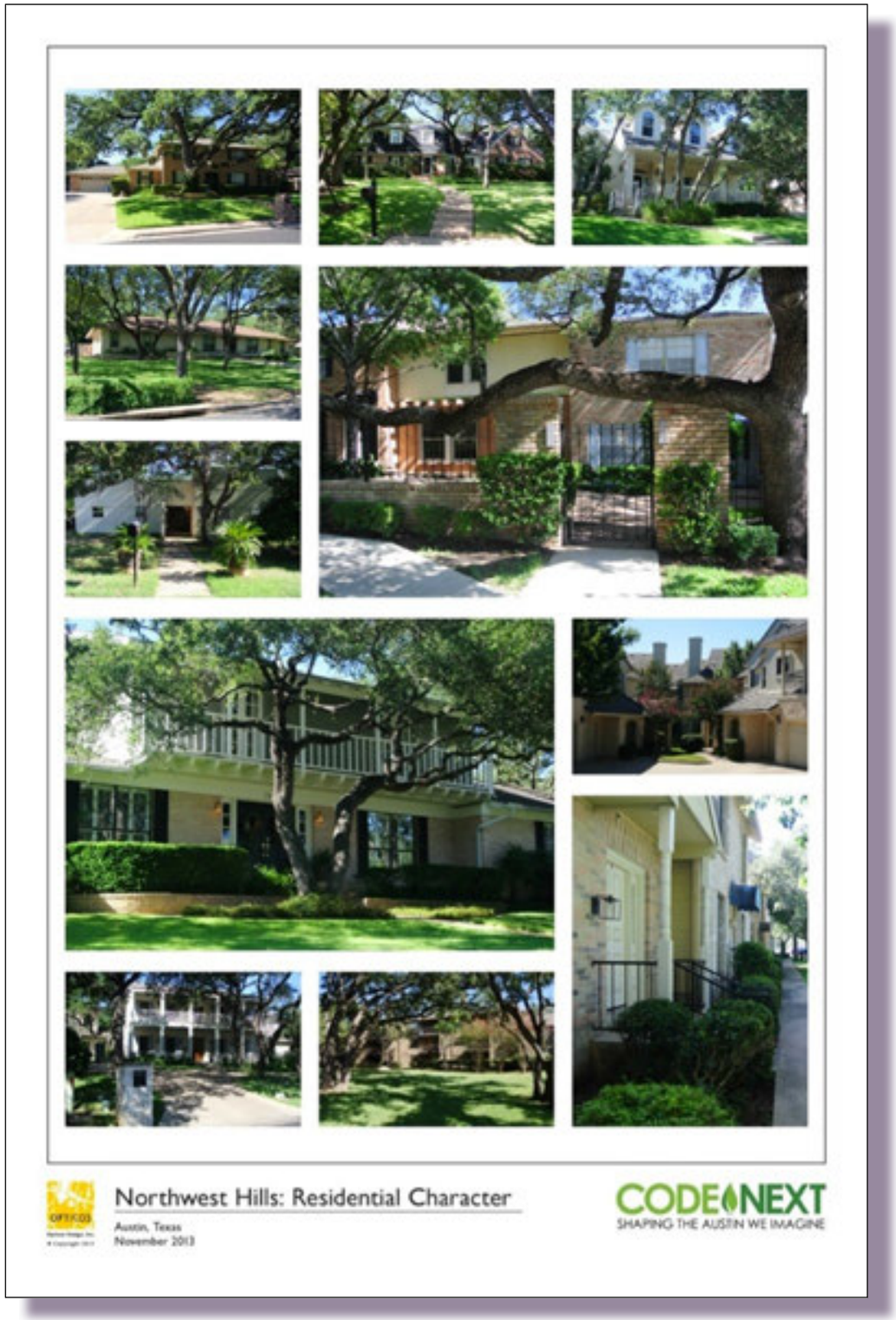
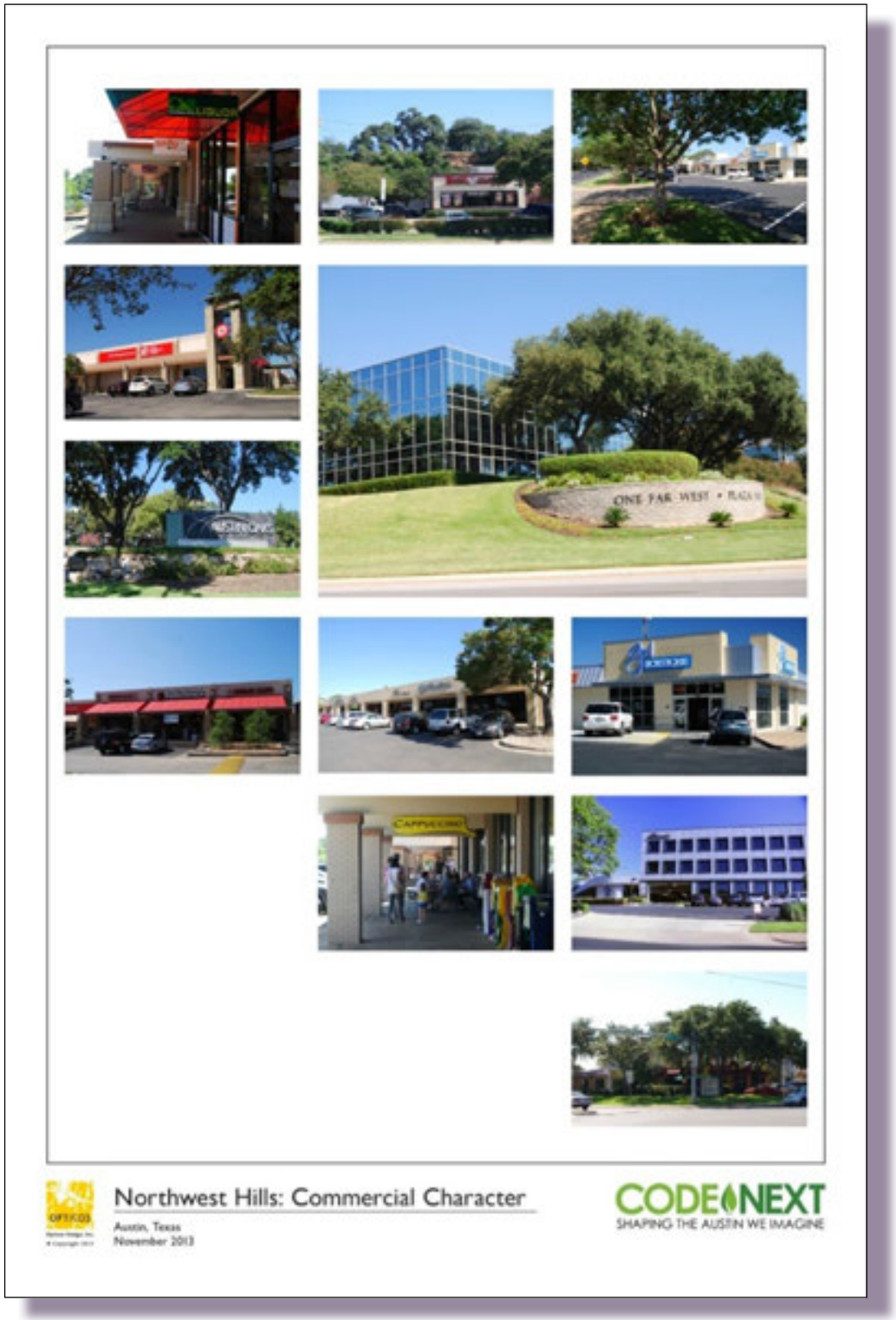
Photo Documentation: An Early Suburban Neighborhood





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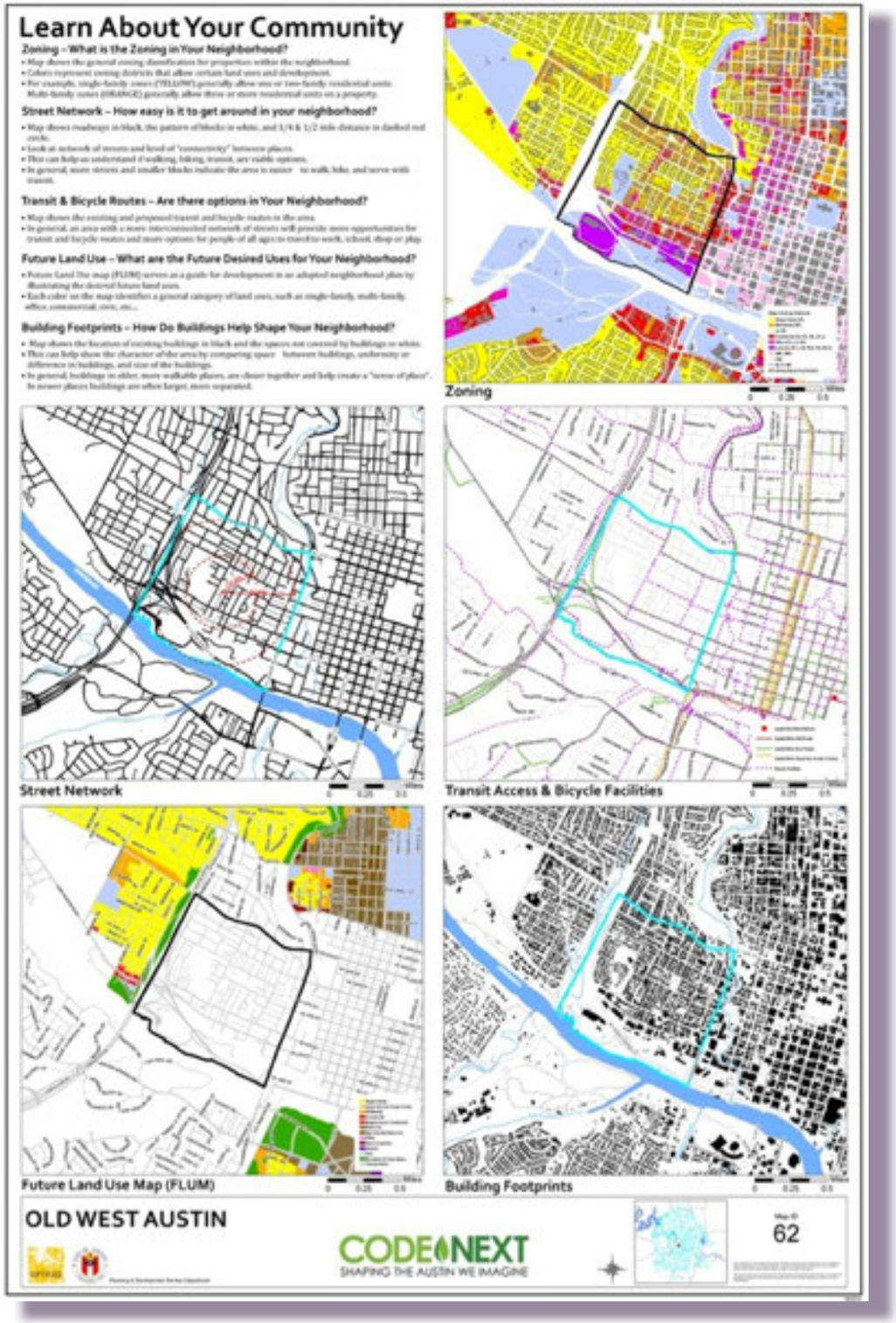
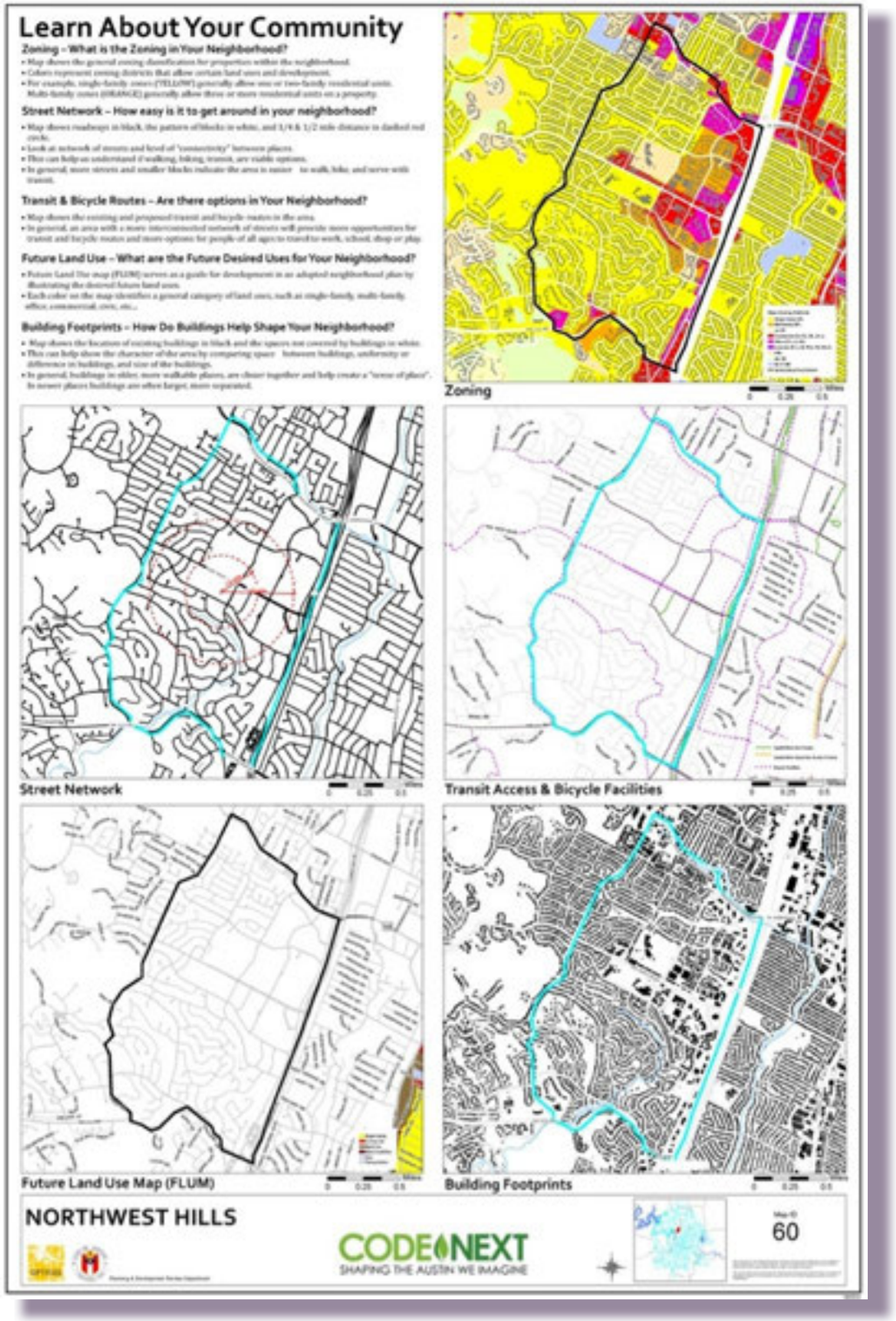
Mapping Typical Characteristics: Allows Comparison





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Aerial Map: Easiest for Everyone to Relate and Respond To

Old West Austin

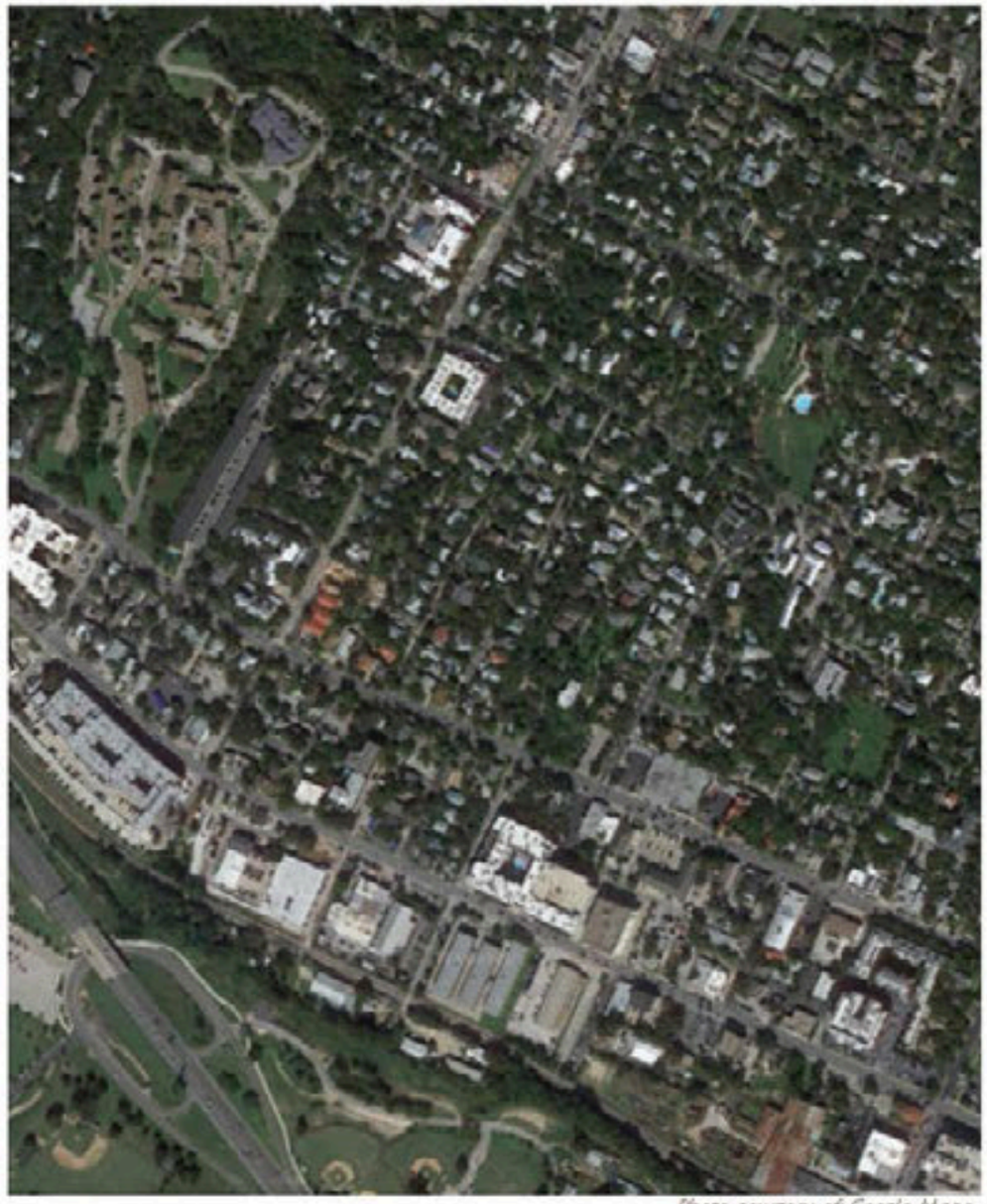

Photo courtesy of Google Maps

Northwest Hills

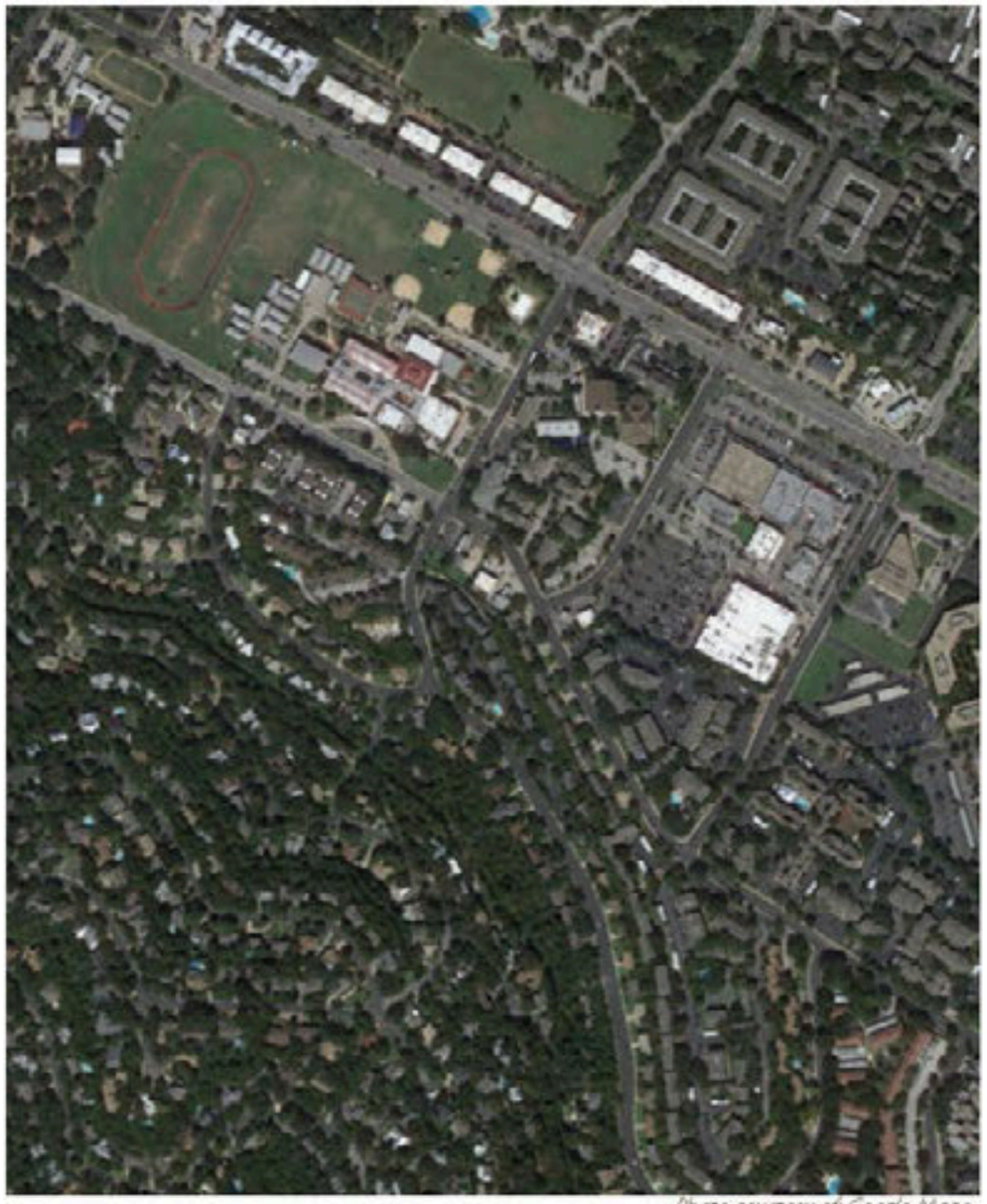

Photo courtesy of Google Maps

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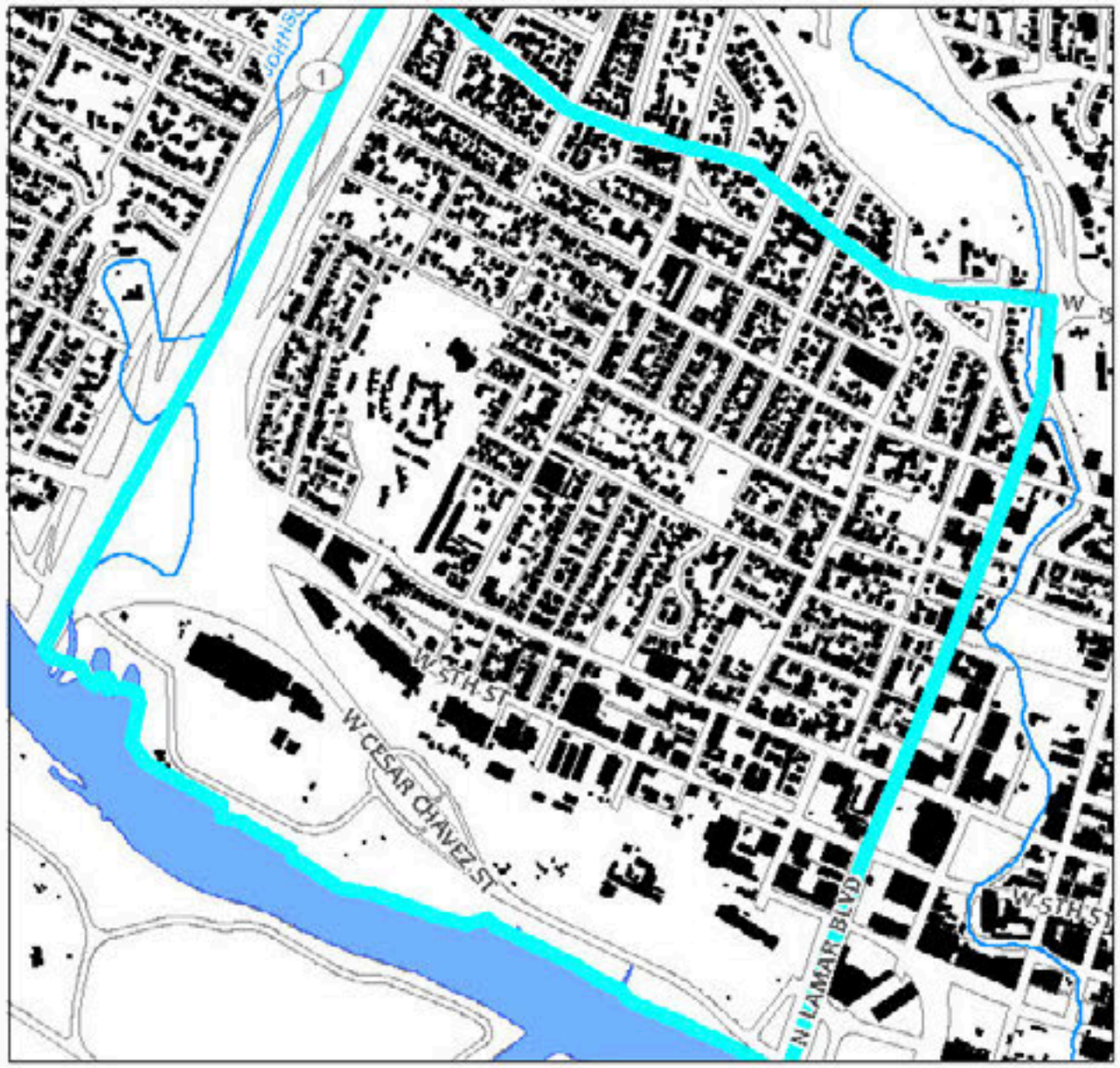
Building Footprints Map: What Are The Typical Patterns

Old West Austin



Northwest Hills

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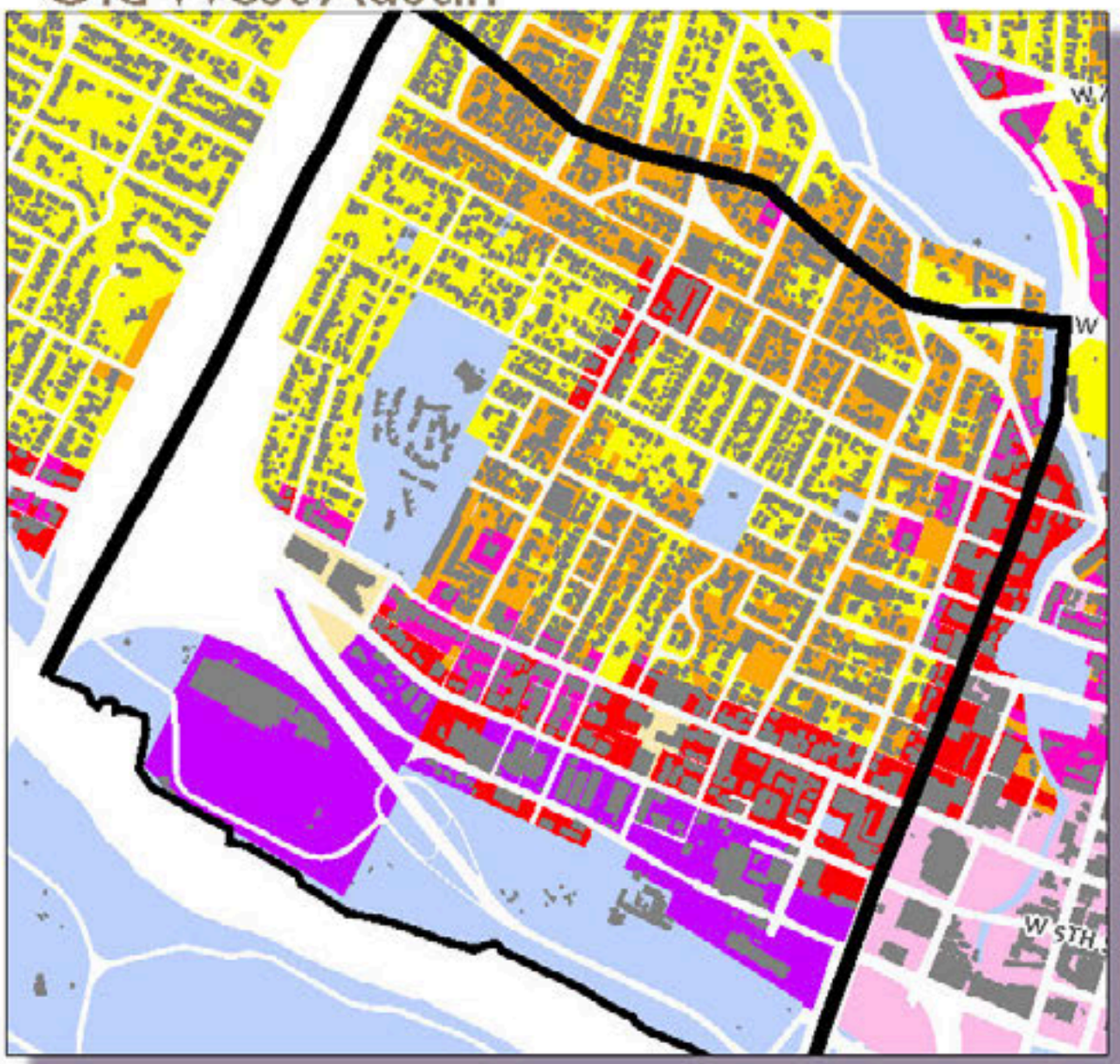
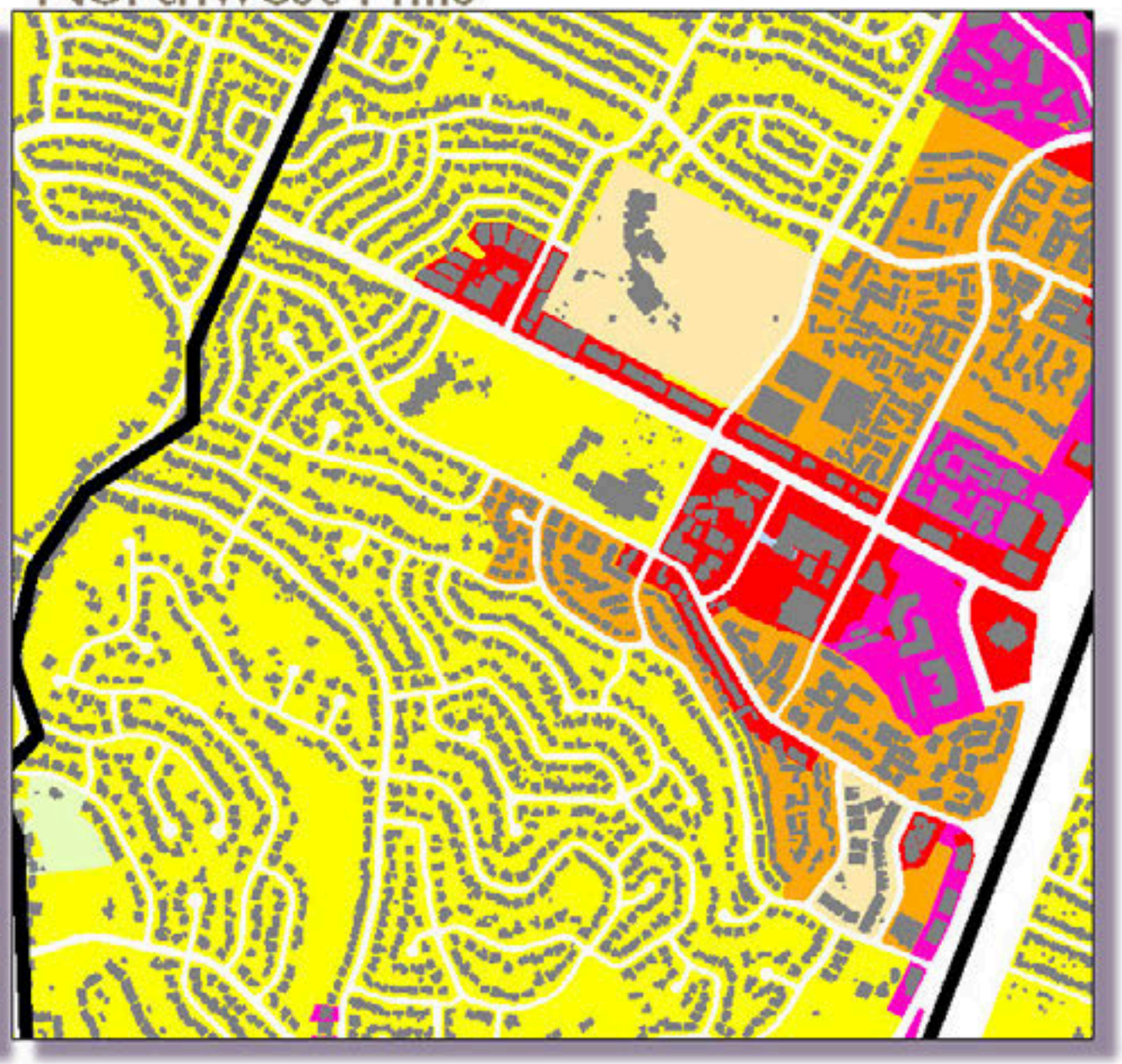
Zoning Map: Which Zones are Regulating Which Types of Places?

Old West Austin



Northwest Hills



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Street Network Map: What is the Level of Connectivity?

Old West Austin

Northwest Hills

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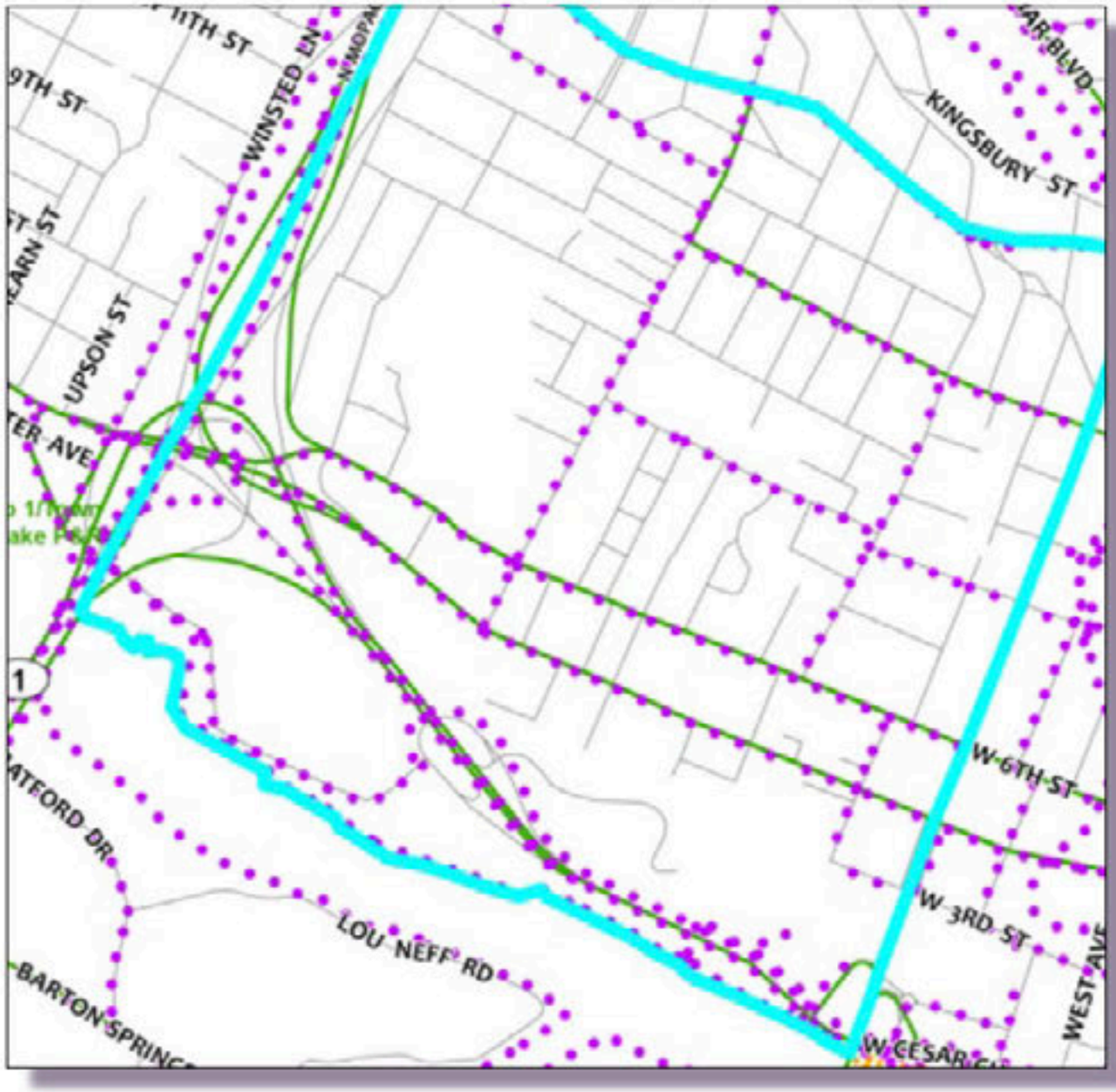
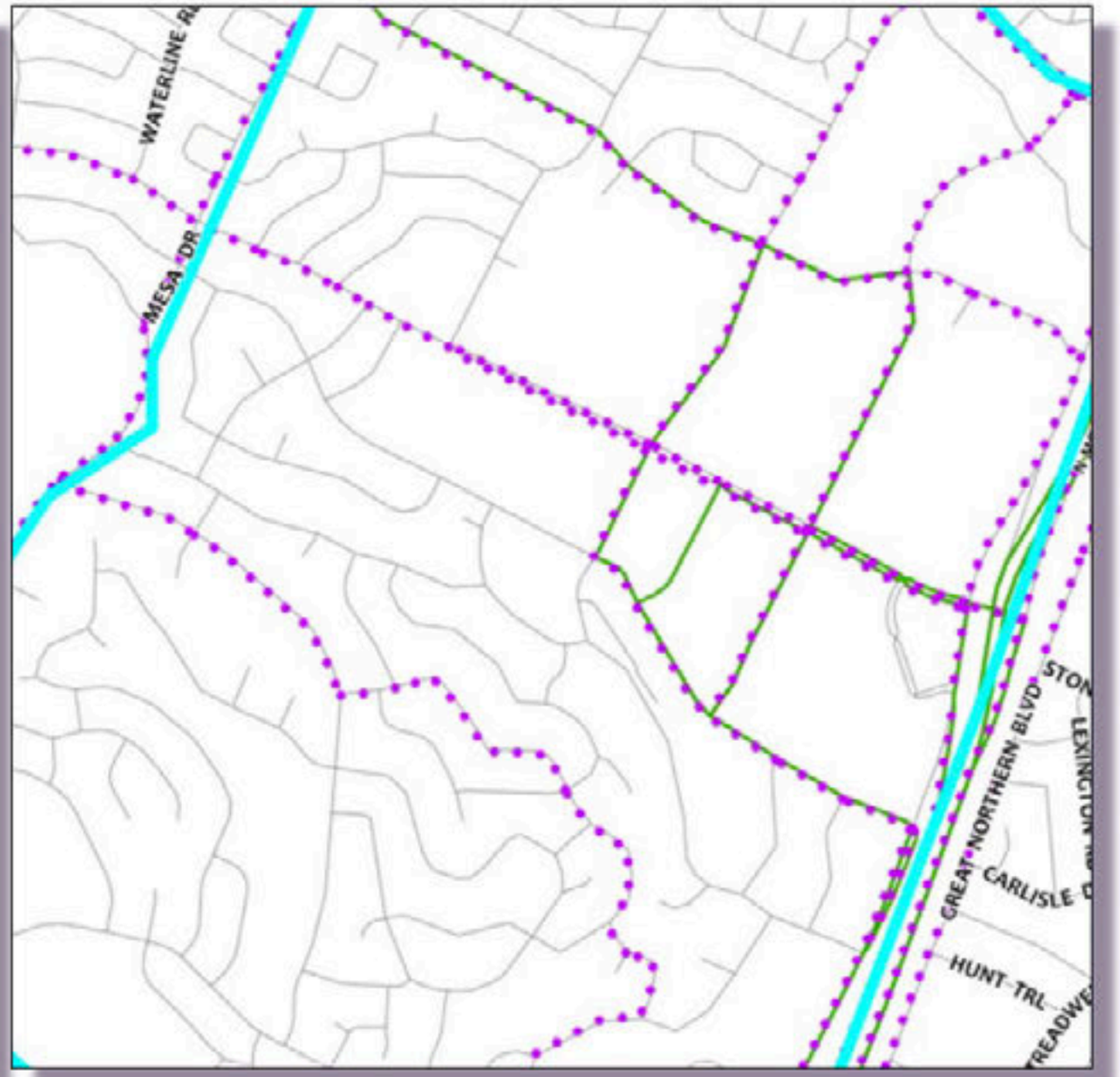
Transit Access and Bicycle Facilities Map: Connectivity

Old West Austin



Northwest Hills



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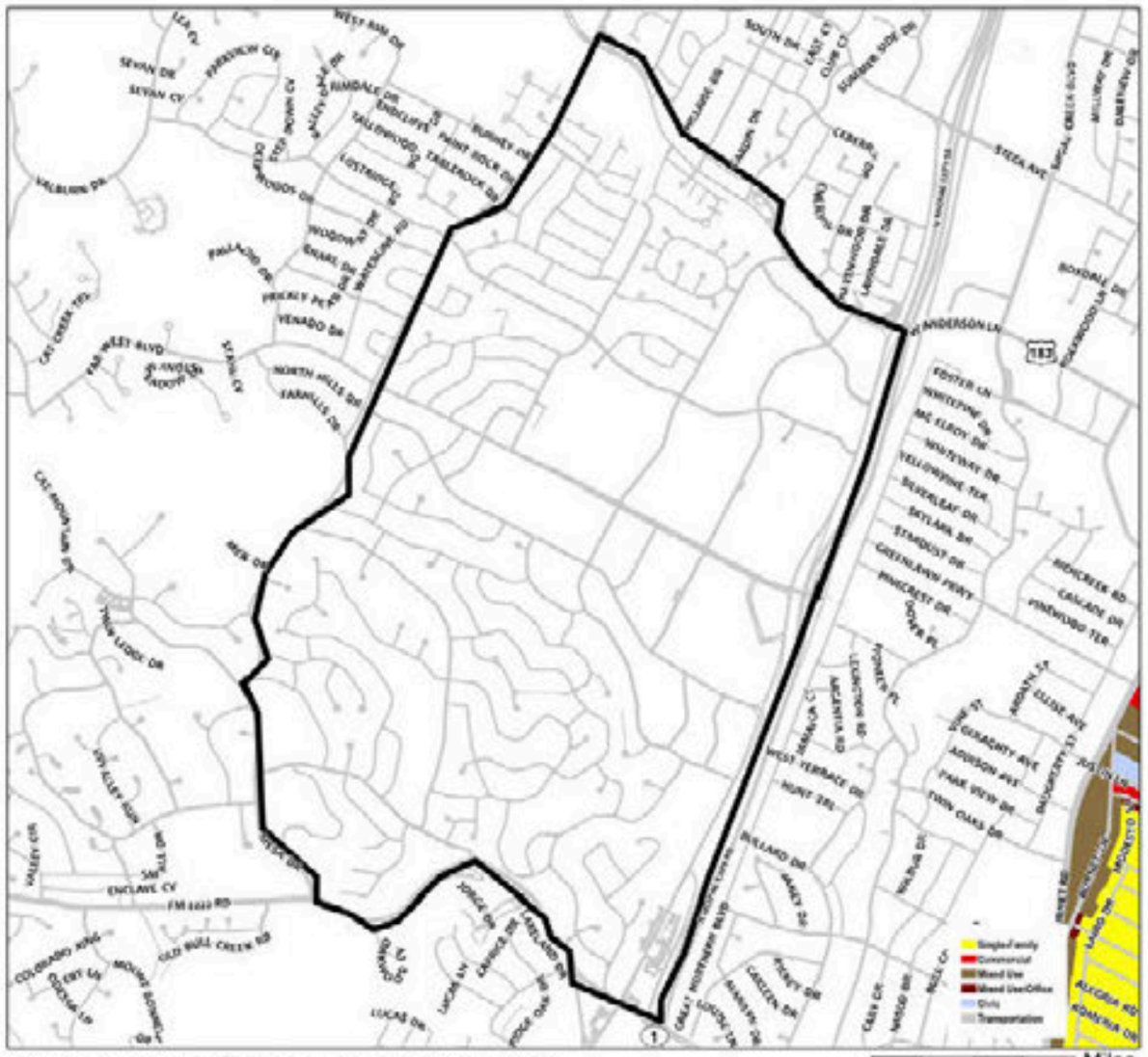
Future Land Use Map: Provides a Link Back to Neighborhood Plans

Old West Austin

Future Land Use Map (FLUM)

Miles 0 0.25 0.5

Northwest Hills



Future Land Use Map (FLUM)

Miles 0 0.25 0.5

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What is the Extent of the Documentation?

Goal: Ultimately Have Every Neighborhood Reporting Area Documented

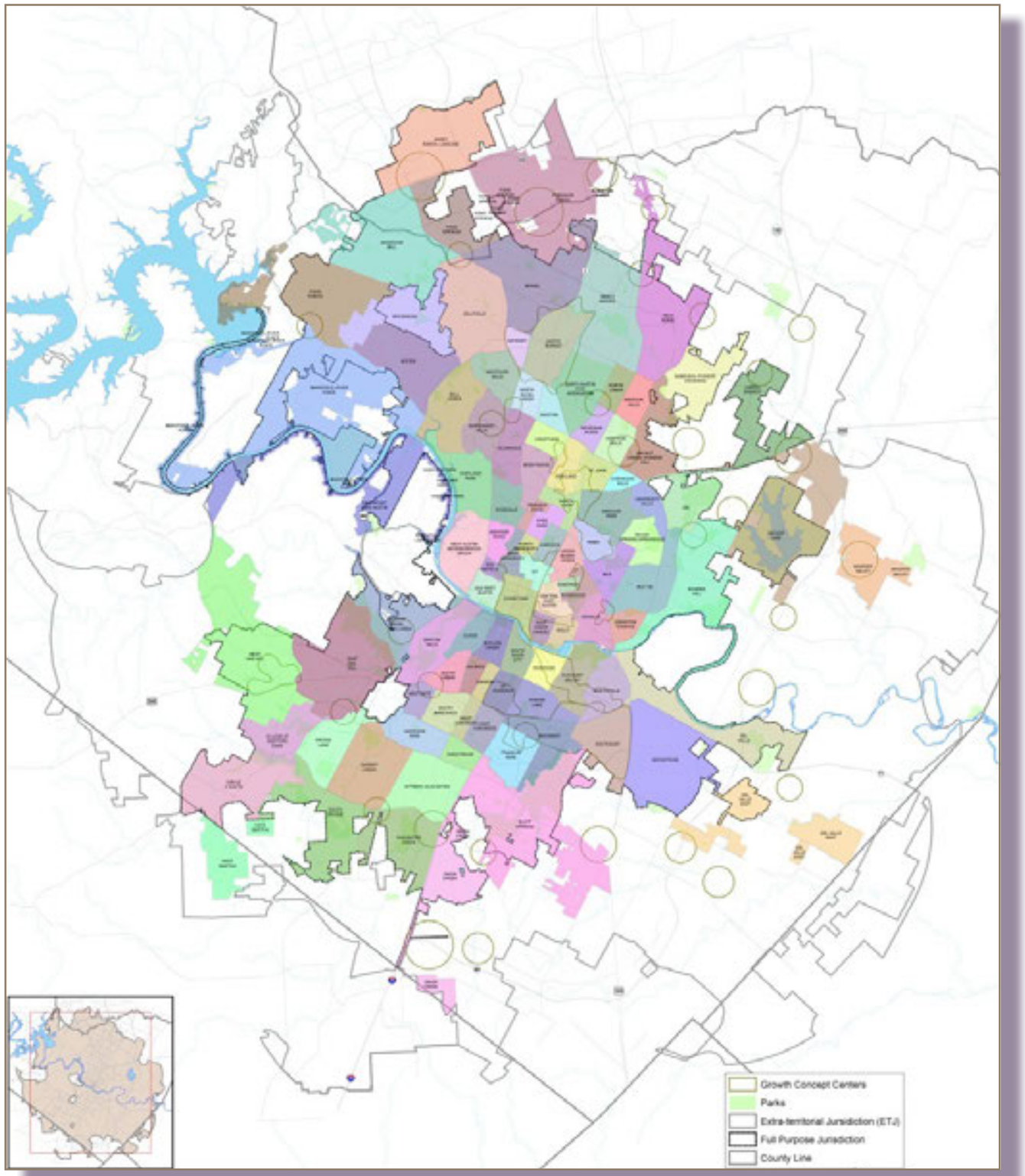
Documentation Underway

Draft

1. Airport Boulevard
2. Brodie/Cherry Creek
3. Georgian Acres
4. Montopolis
5. Mueller
6. Northwest Hills
7. Oak Hill
8. Old West Austin
9. Rosedale
10. South Austin Combined
11. Zilker

In-Progress

12. Chestnut
13. Colony Park
14. Gracy Woods
15. Holly



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103 Neighborhood Reporting Areas

Allandale
Anderson Mill
Avery Ranch Lakeline
Barton Creek Mall
Barton Hills
Bergstrom
Bluff Springs
Bouldin Creek
Brentwood
Brodie Lane
Bull Creek
Central East
Cherry Creek
Chestnut
Circle C South
Coronado Hills
Crestview
Davenport Lake Austin
Dawson
Decker Lake
Del Valle East
Del Valle
Dittmar Slaughter
Downtown
East Cesar Chavez
East Congress
East Oak Hill
Four Points
Franklin Park
Galindo
Garrison Park
Gateway
Georgian Acres
Govalle
Gracy Woods
Hancock
Harris Branch
Hays Wartha
Heritage Hills
Highland
Highland Park
Holly
Hyde Park
Jester
Johnston Terrace
Jollyville
LBJ
Mansfield River Place
McKinney
McNeil
MLK 183
MLK
Montopolis
North Burnet
North Lamar
North Lamar Rundberg
North Loop
North Shoal Creek
North University
Northwest Hills
Old Enfield
Old West Austin
Onion Creek
Parker Lane
Pecan Springs Springdale
Pleasant Valley
Pond Springs
Riverside
RMMA
Robinson Ranch
Rogers Hill
Rosedale
Rosewood
Samsung Pioneer Crossing
Slaughter Creek
South Brodie
South Lamar
South Manchaca
South River City
Southeast
Spicewood
St. Edwards
St. Johns
Sweetbriar
Tech Ridge
Triangle State
University Hills
Upper Boggy Creek
UT
Village at Western Oaks
Walnut Creek Pioneer Hill
West Austin NG
West Congress
West Oak Hill
West University
Westgate
Westover Hills
Whisper Valley
Windsor Hills
Windsor Park
Windsor Road
Wooten
Zilker

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Why Are We Doing This? How Will it Inform the Code Update?

Foundation for a New Place-Based System

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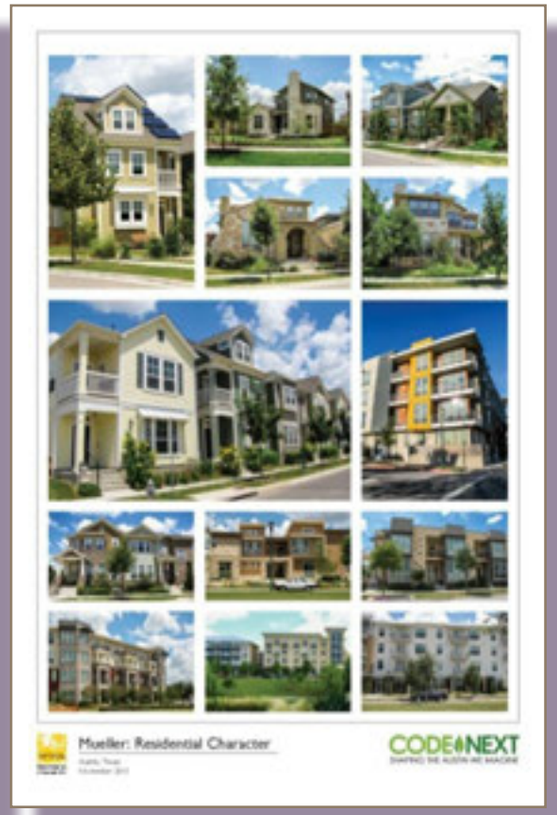
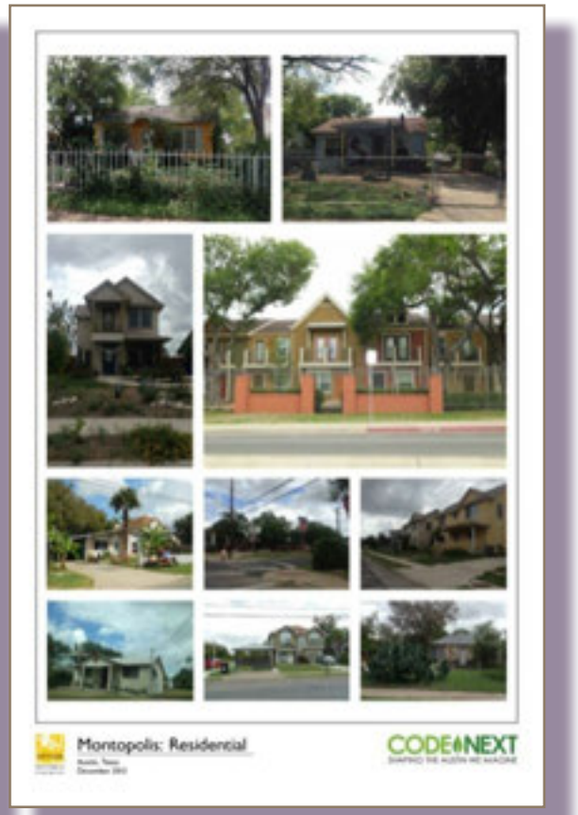
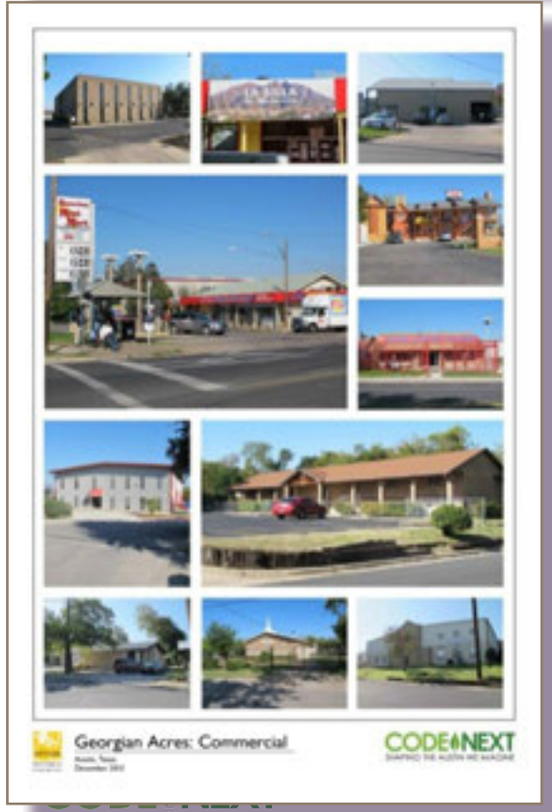
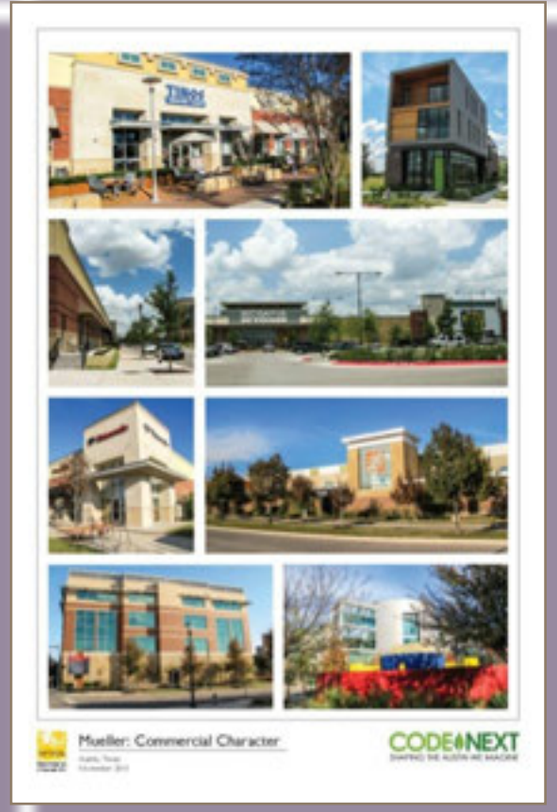
Compiled Into A Community Character Manual







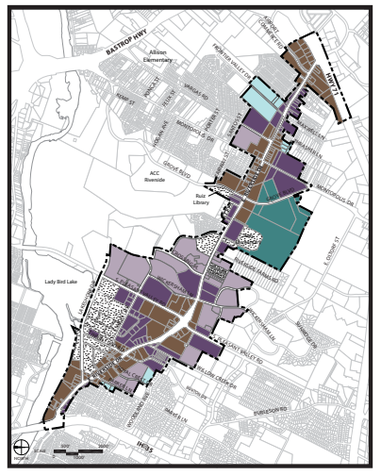


Establish a System to be Applied to Future Planning Efforts

REGULATING PLAN
for the
Lamar Blvd./Justin Lane TOD
Station Area Plan (SAP)
Austin, Texas

Adopted: December 11, 2008
Effective: March 1, 2009

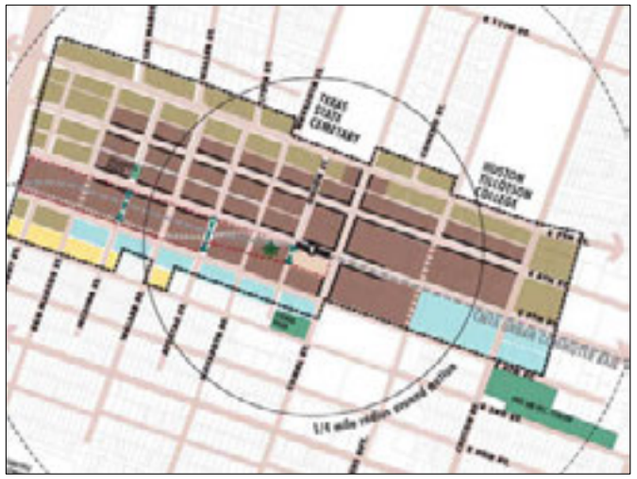
Regulating Plan
for the
EAST RIVERSIDE CORRIDOR
ZONING DISTRICT



DATE ADOPTED: May 9, 2013
DATE EFFECTIVE: May 20, 2013

BASED ON THE EAST RIVERSIDE CORRIDOR MASTER PLAN:
Adopted February 25, 2010

REGULATING PLAN
for the
Plaza Saltillo TOD Station Area Plan (SAP)



Adopted: December 11, 2008
Effective: March 1, 2009

REVISED May 25, 2013 via Ordinance NO 20130425-106

Based on Type of Place, Desired Form, and Context

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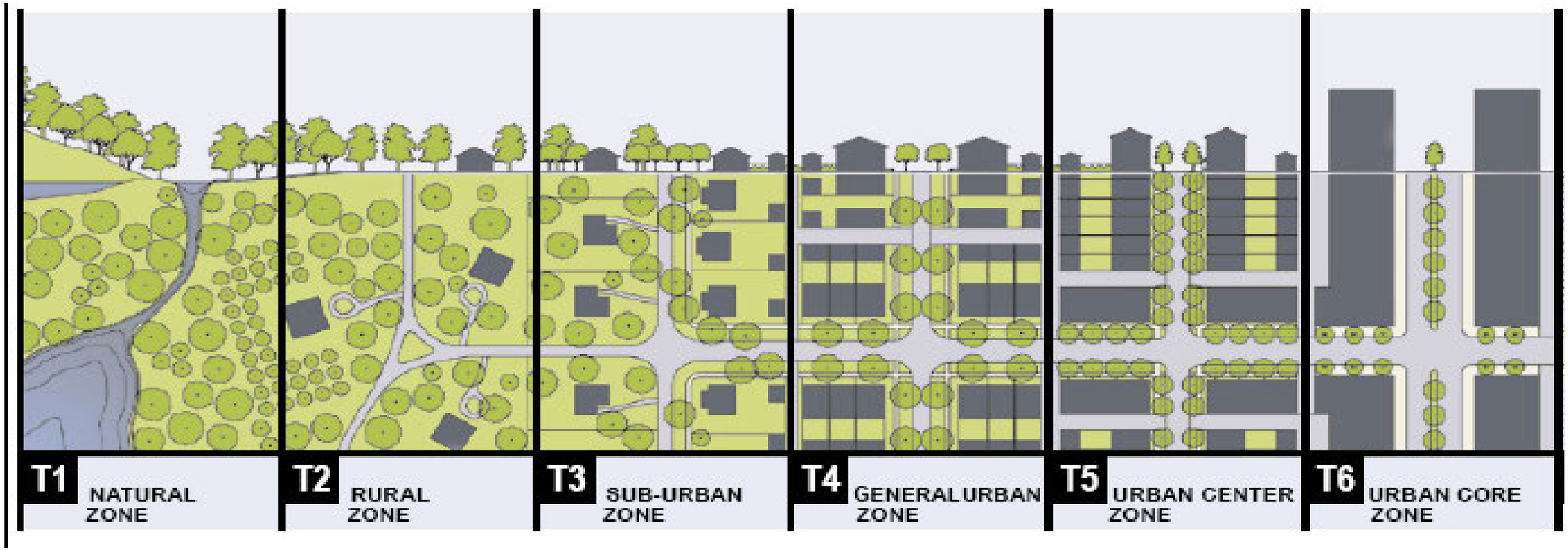
Provide a Foundation for Initial Hierarchy of Intended Form



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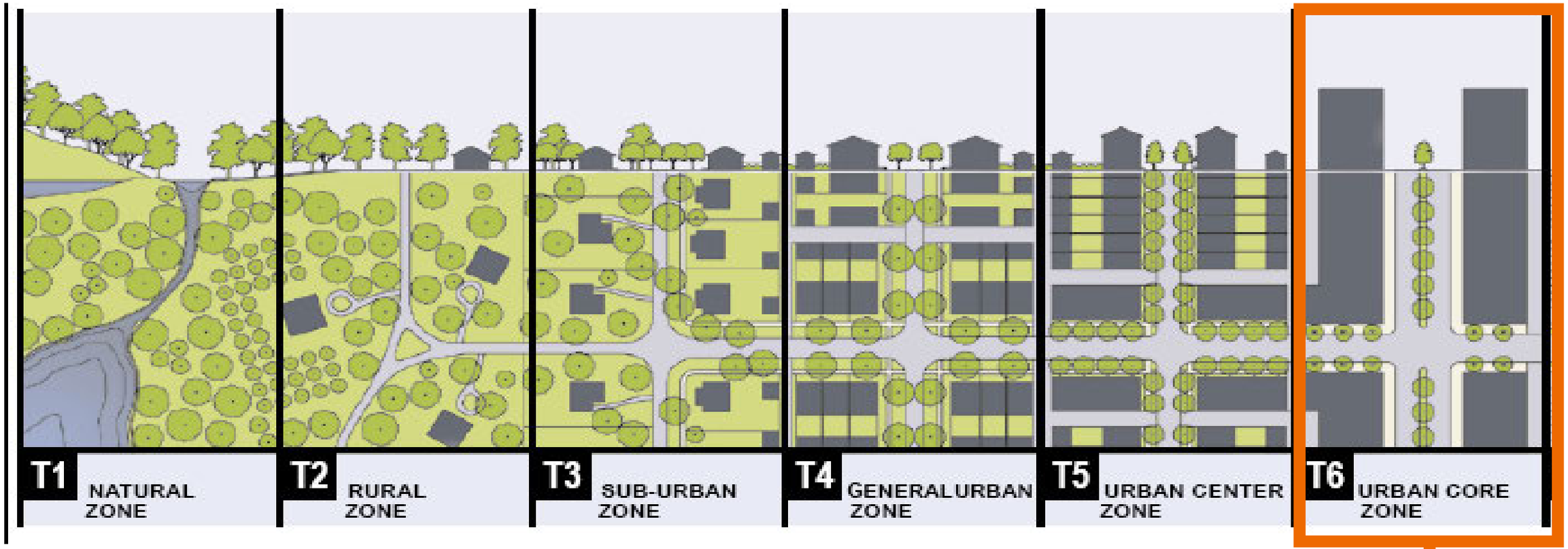
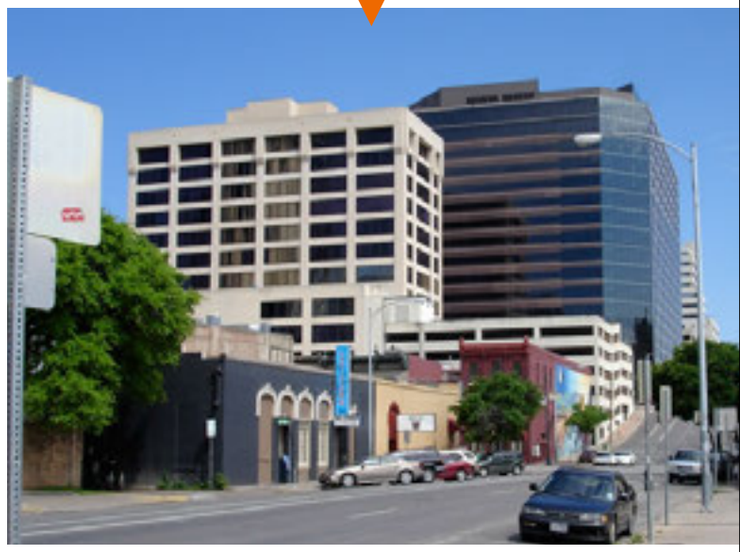
Provide a Foundation for Initial Hierarchy of Intended Form





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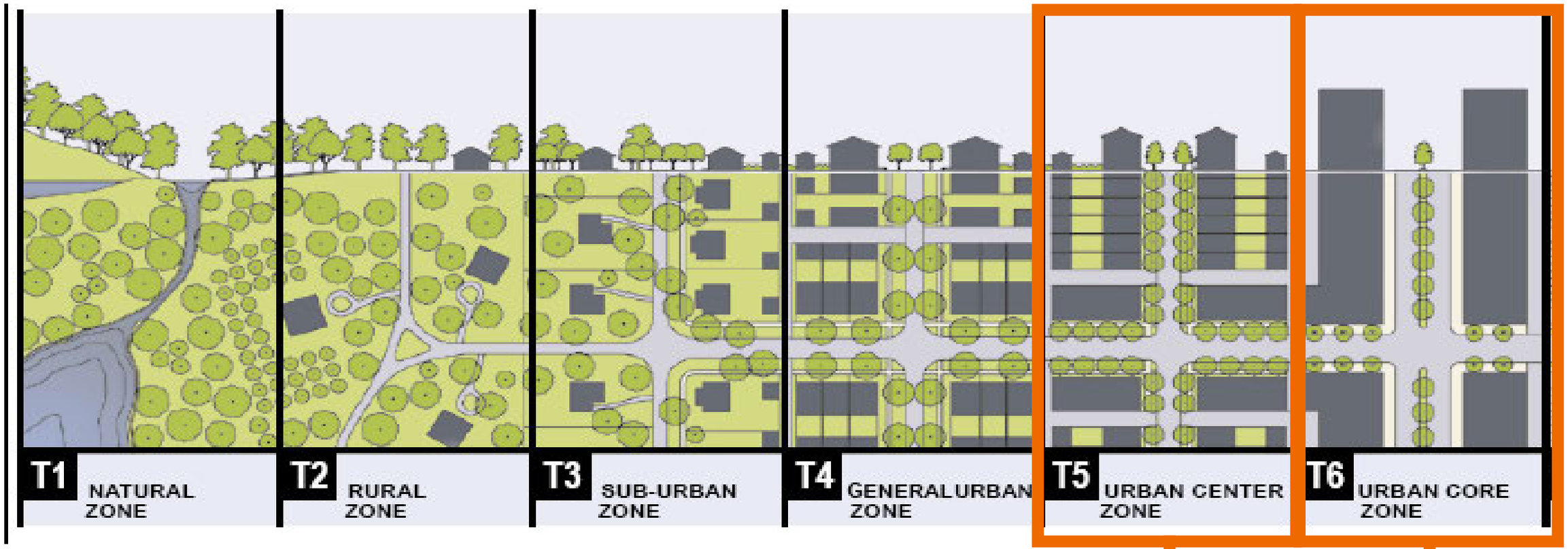
Provide a Foundation for Initial Hierarchy of Intended Form



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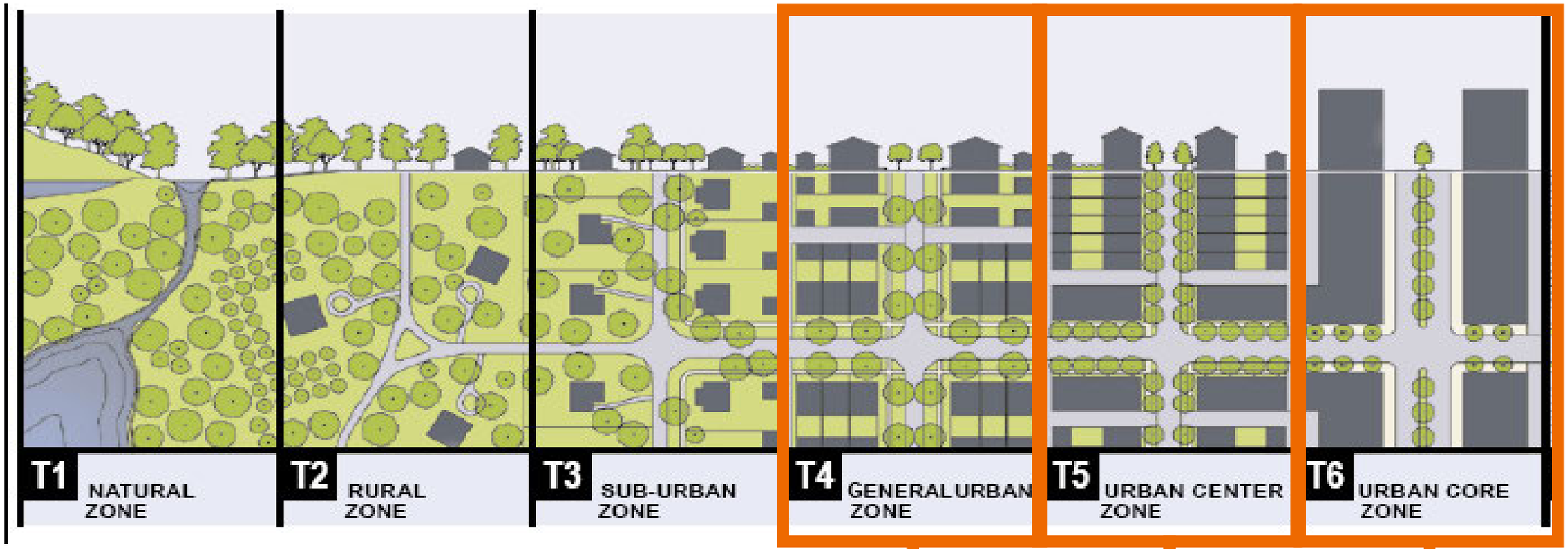
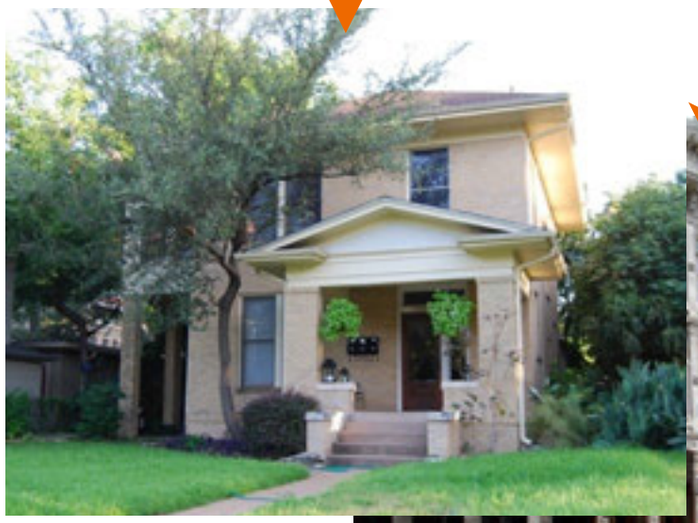
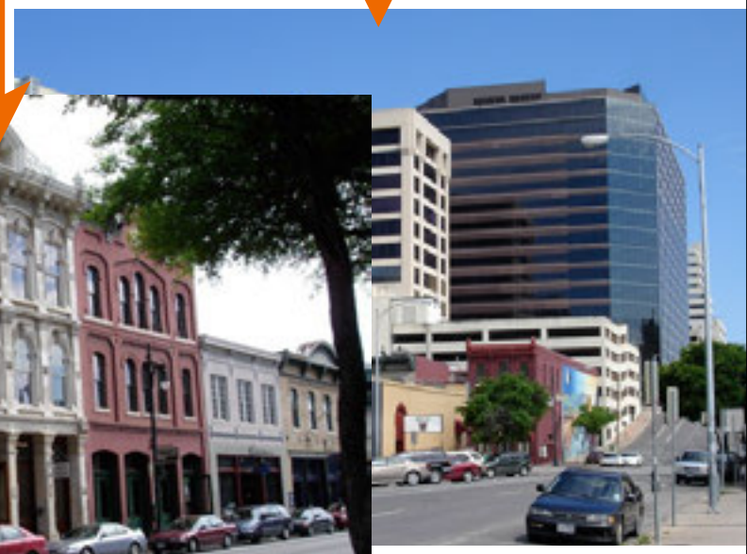
Provide a Foundation for Initial Hierarchy of Intended Form







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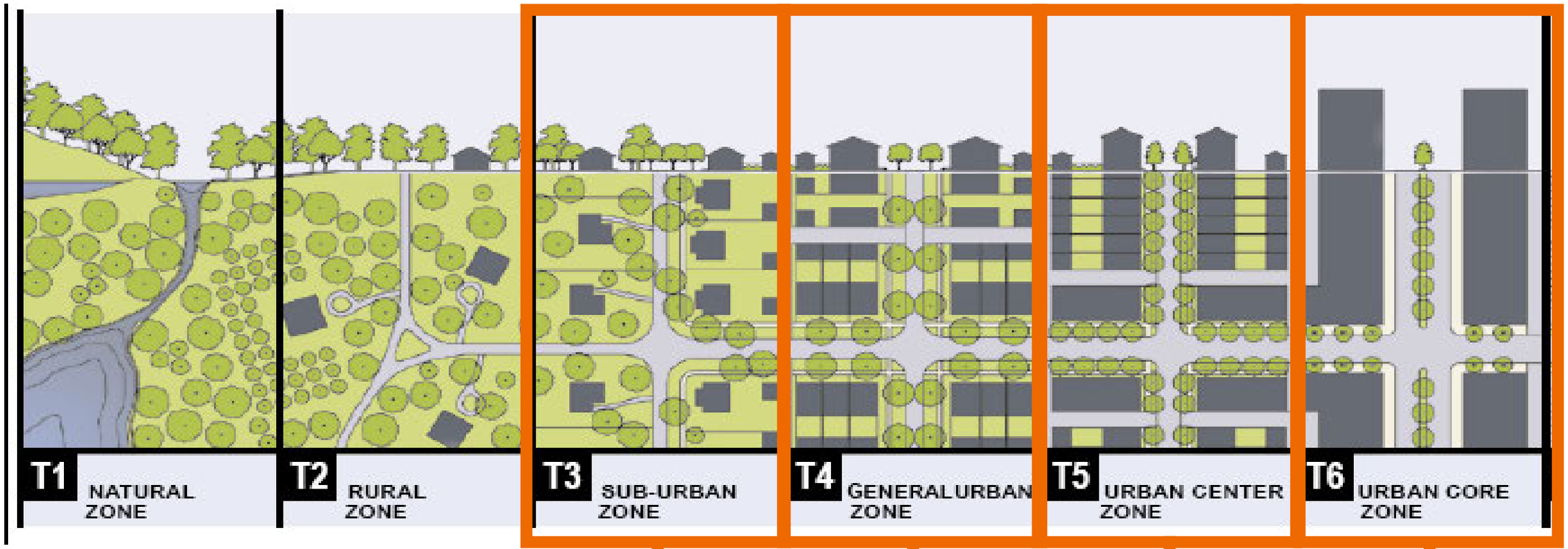
Provide a Foundation for Initial Hierarchy of Intended Form



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Provide a Foundation for Initial Hierarchy of Intended Form

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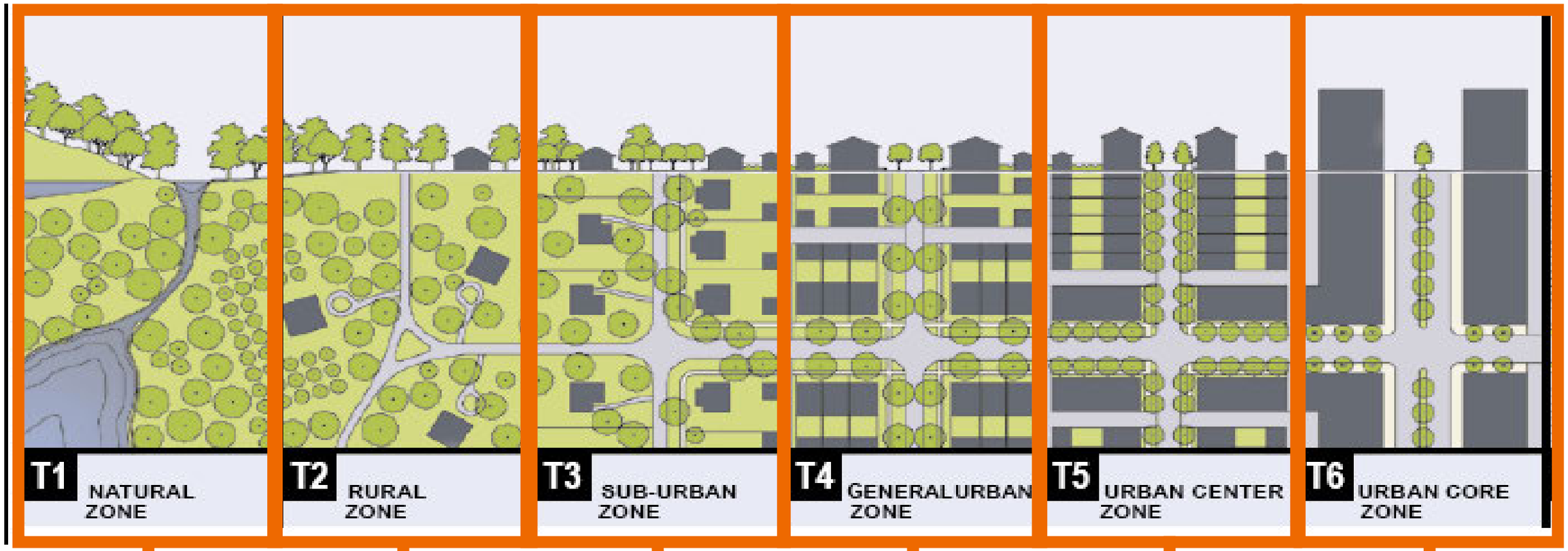
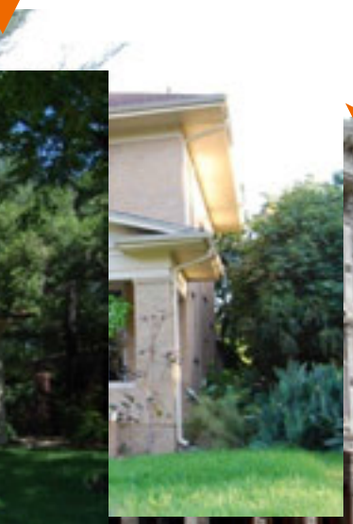
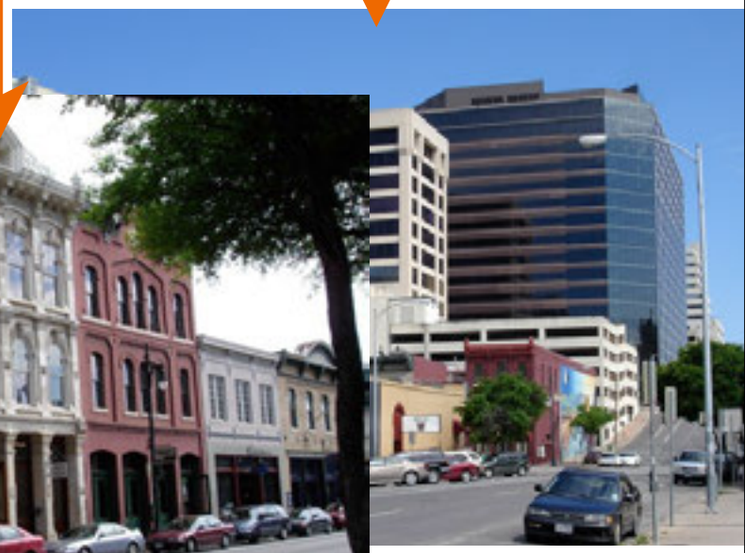
Provide a Foundation for Initial Hierarchy of Intended Form







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Implement Imagine Austin

- Compact & Connected
- Creative Economy
- Sustainable Water
- Household Affordability
- Workforce & Education
- Healthy Austin
- Green Infrastructure
- Development Regulations

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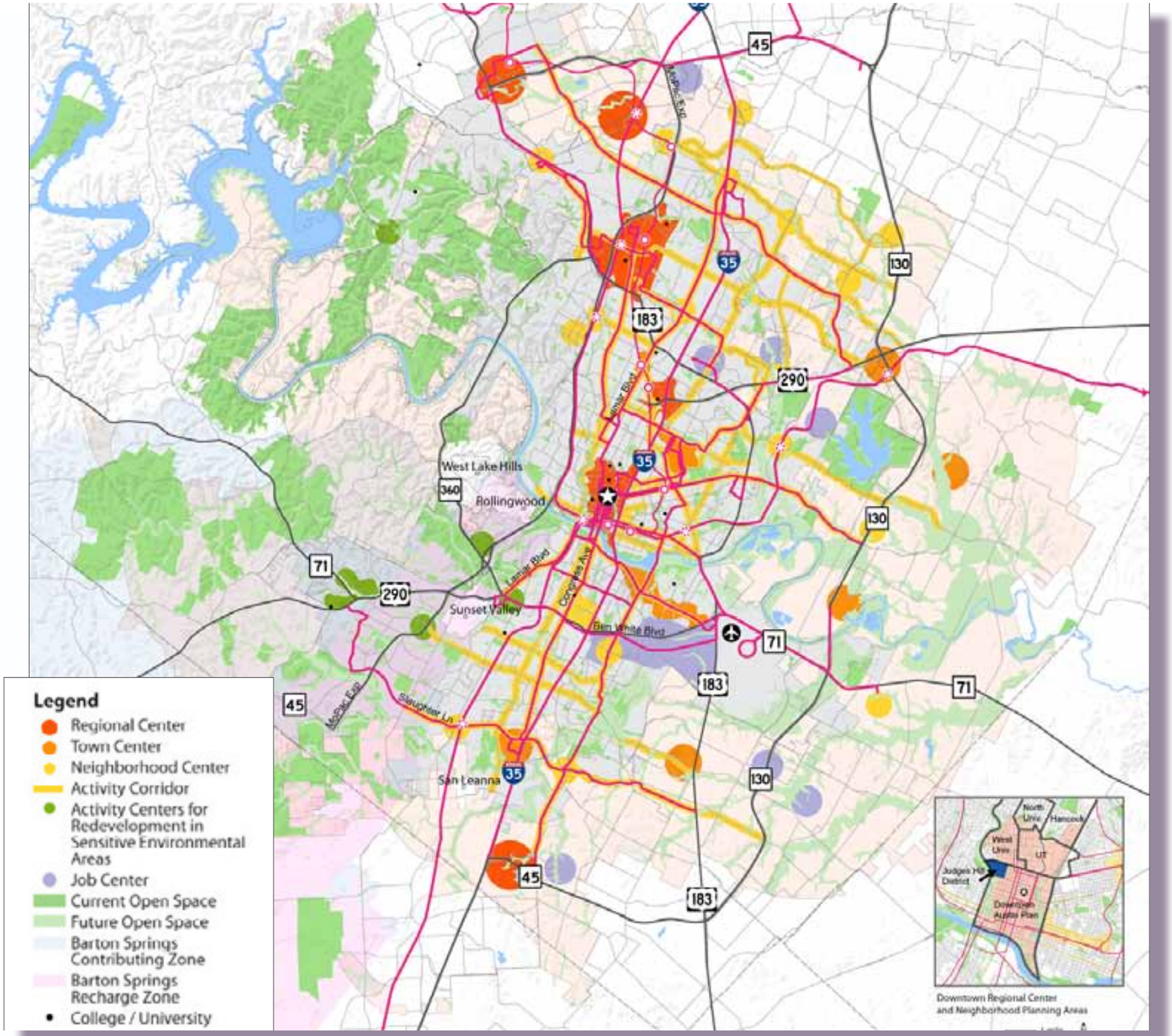
Understand what Compact and Connected Means for Different Places?



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Initial Findings: Understanding the Different Types of Places in Austin

Initial Categories of Different Types of Places

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Initial Findings / Types of Places

Natural

Agricultural/Rural

Developed

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Developed places can be further broken down

Developed

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Developed places can be further broken down

Walkable Urban

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Developed places can be further broken down

Walkable Urban

Transitional

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Developed places can be further broken down

Walkable Urban | Transitional | Suburban

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Types of Urban Character: Walkable Urban

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Types of Urban Character: Transitional

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Types of Urban Character: Suburban

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We Need Your Help: "Community Character in a Box"

Goal: To Ultimately Have Every Neighborhood Reporting Area Documemted

Step 1: Community Mapping

Step 1: Community Mapping

Your community's input is essential in the development of CodeNEXT because the Code aims to capture and build upon what makes your part of Austin distinct. Help the team understand what is important to you in your community - you are the local experts!

COMMUNITY MAPPING IN A NUTSHELL

Mapping your community can be quick, easy, and fun. On the community map provided, mark those locations that you feel are strengths, or assets, to your community with a green dot, those that are negatives, or constraints, with a red dot, and those locations that are opportunities in the community - places to improve or grow - with a blue dot. Make sure to include brief notes to explain why you've marked these areas.

A group discusses their community's assets, constraints, and opportunity sites; the community places sticky-dots on a base map.

MATERIALS PROVIDED IN YOUR BOX

- Pens/Markers
- Three colors of sticky-dots; green for assets, red for constraints, and blue for opportunity sites.
- Base map(s) of your community

HOW TO MAP YOUR COMMUNITY

1. As a group, discuss what you feel are assets, constraints and opportunity sites; mark the map accordingly. Write additional notes directly on the map to explain your choices.
2. After about 30 minutes, ask if there is anything missing from what you have indicated with sticky-dots? Should anything more be brought to the attention of the Project Team?
3. Remember to take photos of your community members hard at work. Submit these photos along with your basemap and notes.

EXAMPLES OF PLACES TO LOCATE ON YOUR MAP:

Locate the following items on the maps provided:

Assets

- Places where everyone in the community goes, such as favorite restaurants, bars, stores, and public spaces
- Amenities (services or places) that you like in your community
- Civic institutions (schools, libraries, churches, museums, etc.)
- Parks or natural beauty you wish to preserve

Constraints

- Abandoned building(s)
- Empty lot(s)
- Dangerous routes
- Eye-sore(s)
- Environmental hazards
- Land uses or activities you wish would relocate

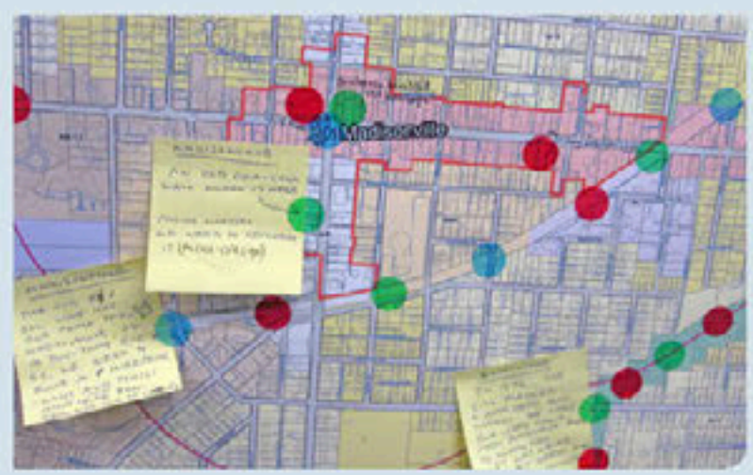
Opportunities for Improvement

- Empty lot(s)
- Public space that needs improving
- An amenity (service, business, or improvement) that your community needs (food market, coffeehouse, etc.)
- A good spot for public art or a community garden
- *You tell us!*

Areas to Photograph

- Mark on the maps where you might want to go take pictures. This is good planning for Step 2 Photographic Documentation.

Maps to be replaced



Community members write notes on community maps.

HOW TO SUBMIT MAPS

- Return your Community Map to the City in your Box; make sure that all notes are submitted with the maps.
- Be sure to document your community name, the person responsible for the Box, and the number of people who participated.
- Collect all of the supplies provided in the Box, and return the Community Character in a Box to:

City of Austin Planning Department
505 Barton Springs Road
Austin, Texas 78704

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Step 2: Photo Documentation

Step 2: Photo Documentation

Photo documentation is a key tool in capturing the character of a community. Be sure to take photos of typical types of buildings and streets, as well as what makes your area unique. These photos will inform the CodeNEXT team what should be maintained in the community, and what could be improved.

WHAT TO PHOTOGRAPH IN A NUTSHELL

Walk around your community, and photograph what you feel are both good and bad examples of the buildings in your area, the sidewalk conditions, any public spaces, and pictures of different street widths.

MATERIALS TO BRING WITH YOU:

- Camera or phone with a camera
- Pens/Markers
- Map of the area you will cover (one per group)

A group meets to photo document their community, later splitting up to cover different areas.

HOW TO DOCUMENT WITH PHOTOGRAPHY?

1. Split the group into pairs of 2-4 people, decide who will cover different parts of the community to not overlap.
2. Make sure you have maps and cameras for each team. Plan to spend 1-2 hours taking lots of photos, refer to the blue box for examples of what kinds of photos to take.
3. As you cover parts of your neighborhood, mark on a map your route to document where your photographs were taken.

WHAT TO AVOID:

Try to avoid taking pictures with:

- Trash cans
- Light poles and utility/power lines overhead
- Traffic interrupting what you are trying to photograph

This is a great exercise to do on foot; try not to take photos from a moving vehicle. And remember to be careful to respect private property.

EXAMPLES OF PHOTOGRAPHS TO TAKE

The light orange highlight on the photos below shows what to look for in each type of picture.

Residential | Commercial

Elevation

Take front, or elevation, photos to show how tall and wide a building is.

- Look for unique details in the architecture
- Capture shots of important landmarks or historic structures.

45-degree Angle

Take 45-degree angle photographs to show how deep a building is.

Proximity of Buildings

Take photographs of buildings together, to show how far apart buildings are, and to show how tall a building is compared to a nearby building.

Sidewalks

Take photographs looking down the sidewalk to show how a building relates to the public street (front yard, porch, stoop, outdoor seating, etc.).

- How far back from the street is the building?
- Take photos of parks and civic spaces too.

Streets

Take photographs of streets to show what kind of streets are in your area.

- Look for street trees and landscaping.
- Take photos of the street furnishings (like lamp posts or trash bins).
- Notice how the street follows the hills, creeks, or other features in your area.

TIPS ON TAKING PHOTOS

- Try to take pictures from different angles of buildings, including straight on, and at a 45-degree angle.
- When possible, use a good quality camera, like a digital SLR camera to capture crisper images, at a wider angle.
- If your camera has a GPS setting, turn it on to automatically record the location of the image.

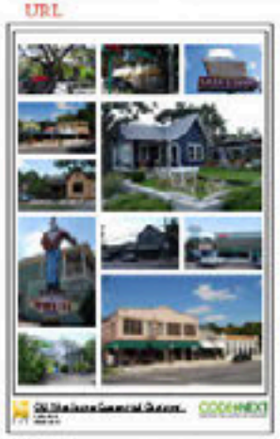
HOW TO SUBMIT PHOTOS:

If you used the camera provided in the Box:

- Simply return the camera to City Staff in the Box.

If you used your personal camera:

- Place your photos into a folder on your computer with your community name.
- Organize your photos into good examples and bad examples.
- Submit your photographic documentation by uploading them here: URL



These are examples of photo boards that describe the character of residential and commercial buildings in one community.

WHAT DO WE DO WITH YOUR PHOTOS?

Wondering what we are going to do with your Community Character photo documentation? The Project Team will:

- Refer to them to help understand the unique qualities of your community.
- Sift through the photos, and place the best examples onto photo boards. This will quickly and virually tell a story of your community.
- Show the photo boards at community meetings to ask residents if the team captured what makes your place unique.
- Compare similar types of buildings and spaces from different communities across the City to understand similarities and differences.

Prepared by Opticos Design, Inc.

Draft: December 19, 2013 | 4

CODENEXT
SHAPING THE AUSTIN WE IMAGINE

2 Code Diagnosis: Initial Thoughts

Initial Thoughts on Why the Code is So Dysfunctional?

The Old Operating System: Seeing Austin Through a Use-Based Lens

Hard Time Differentiating Different Places

CODENEXT
SHAPING THE AUSTIN WE IMAGINE

Current System Recognizes by Use Not Form or Context

Both are Single Family Use, but Very Different Forms & Contexts

Allandale

Central East Austin

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Current System Recognizes by Use Not Form or Context

Both are Commercial Use, but Very Different Forms & Contexts

Neighborhood Main Street

Strip Mall

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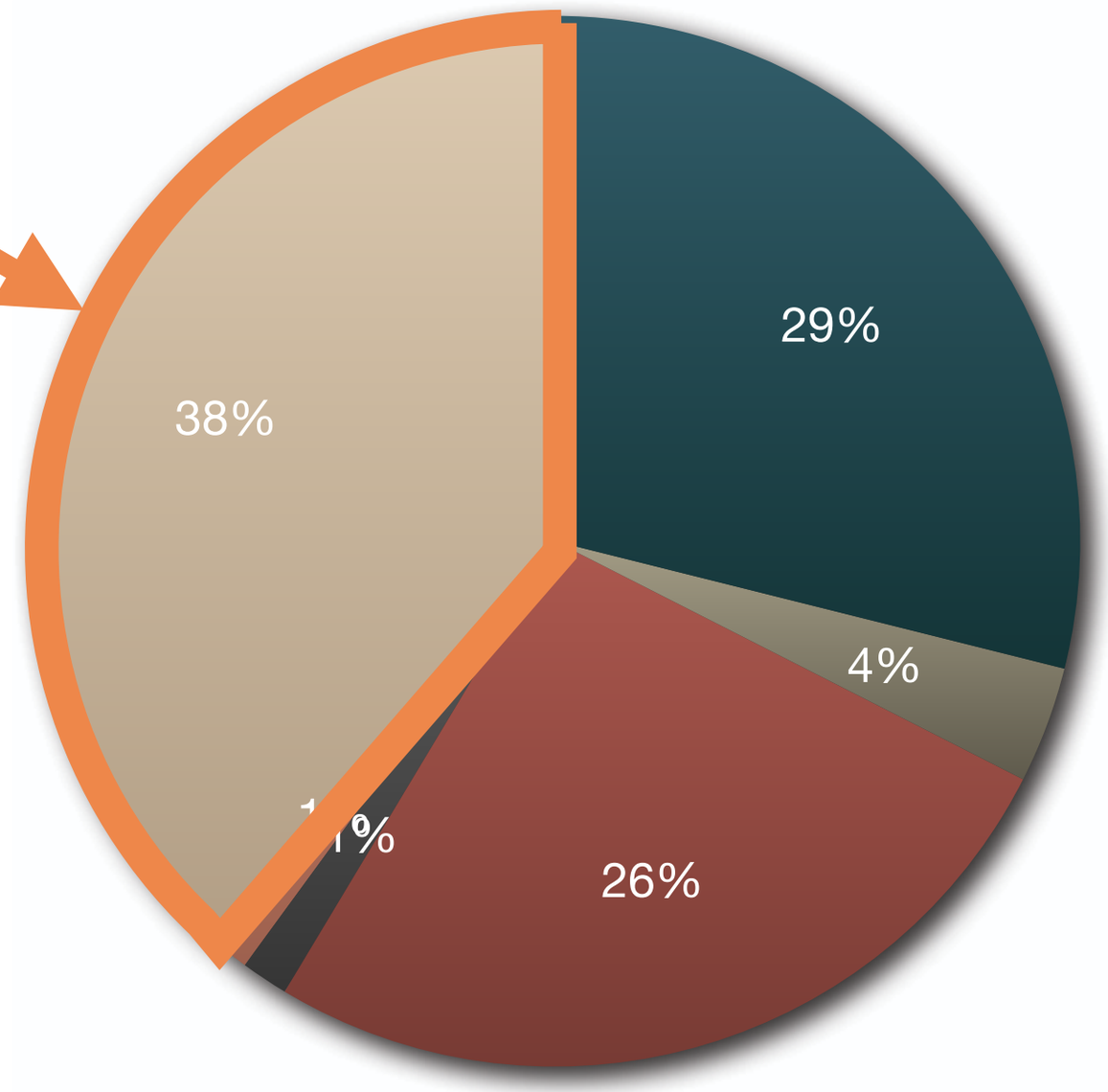
Your Base Zones are an Ineffective System

Do Not Effectively Regulate the Diverse, Complex Types of Places in Austin

Nearly 40% of City Requires Overlays

Regulated with Overlays/ Combining Districts



- Residential
- Commercial
- Special Purpose
- Industrial
- Other
- Base Zone + Overlay(s)

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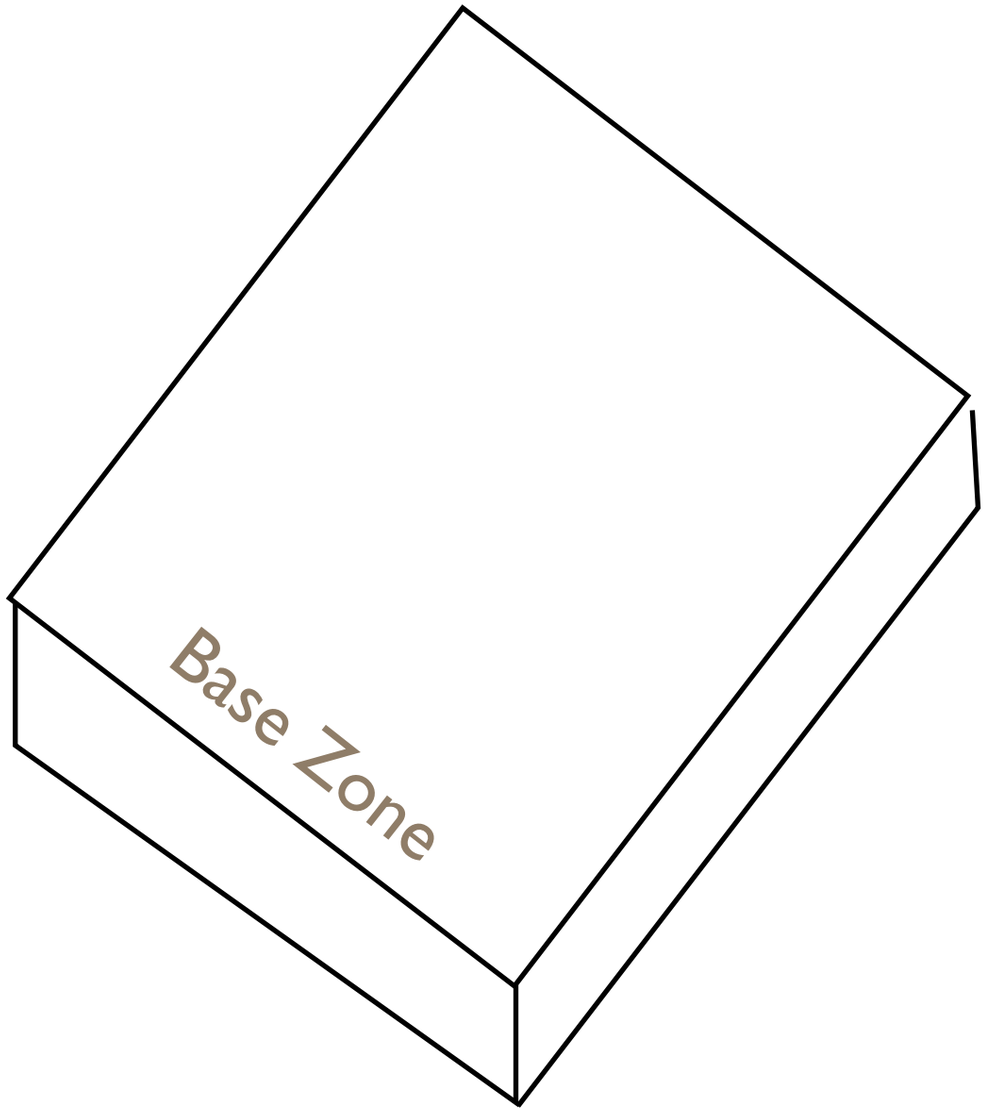
Too Many Layers of Competing Regulations and Systems

Impossible to Understand and Use - Often Conflicting

The Response: Add Layers of Regulations



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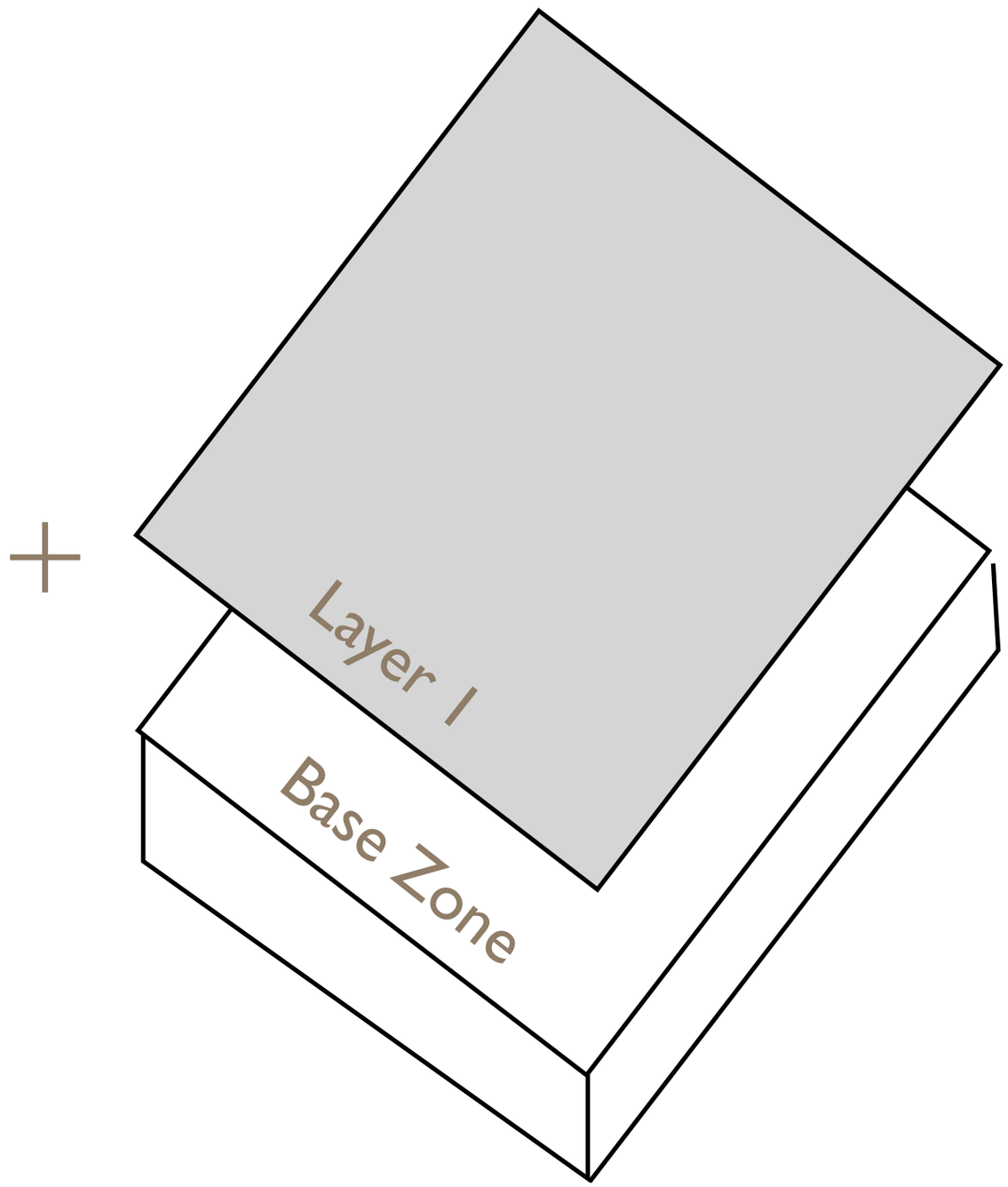
The Response: Add Layers of Regulations



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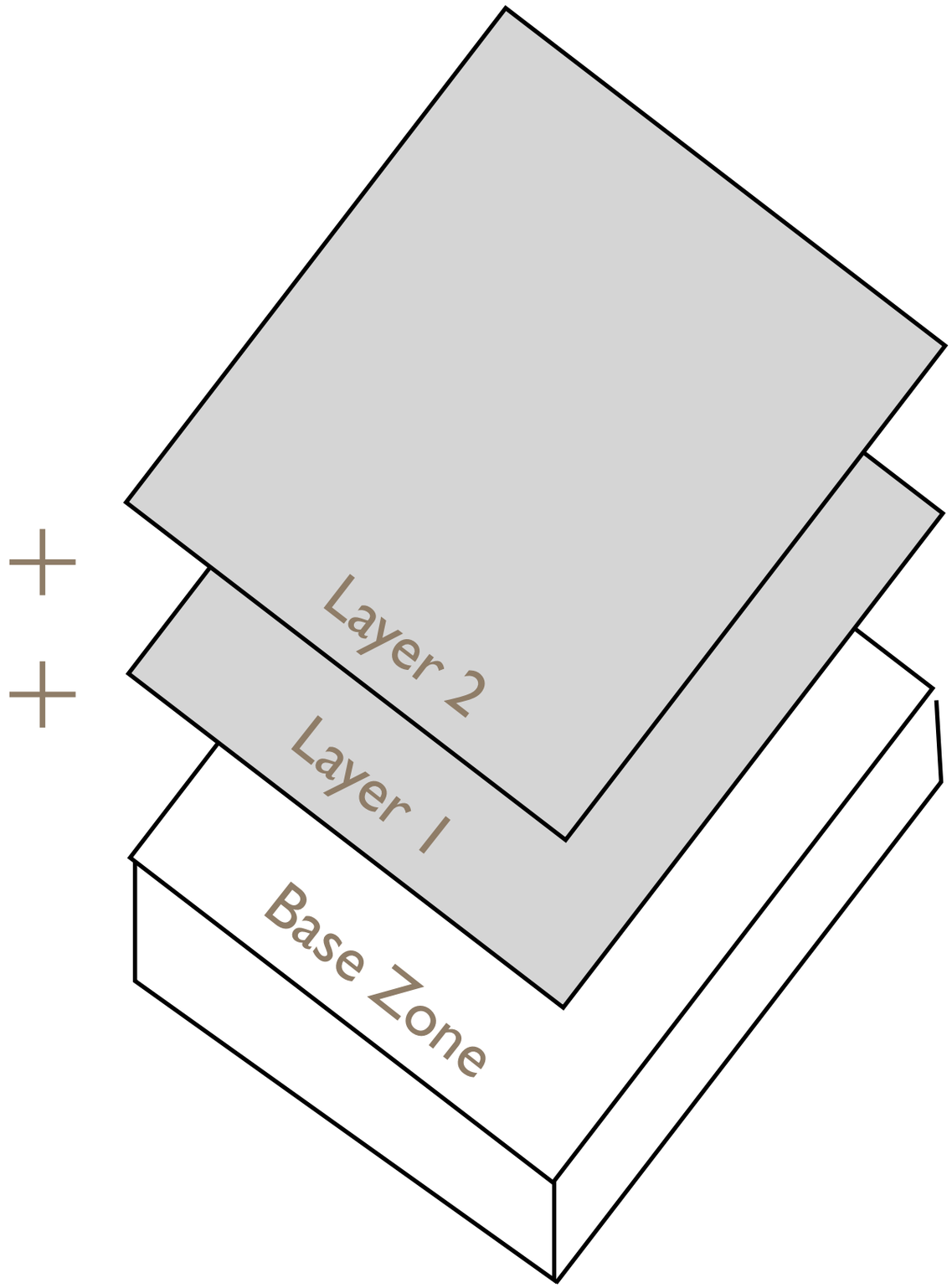
The Response: Add Layers of Regulations



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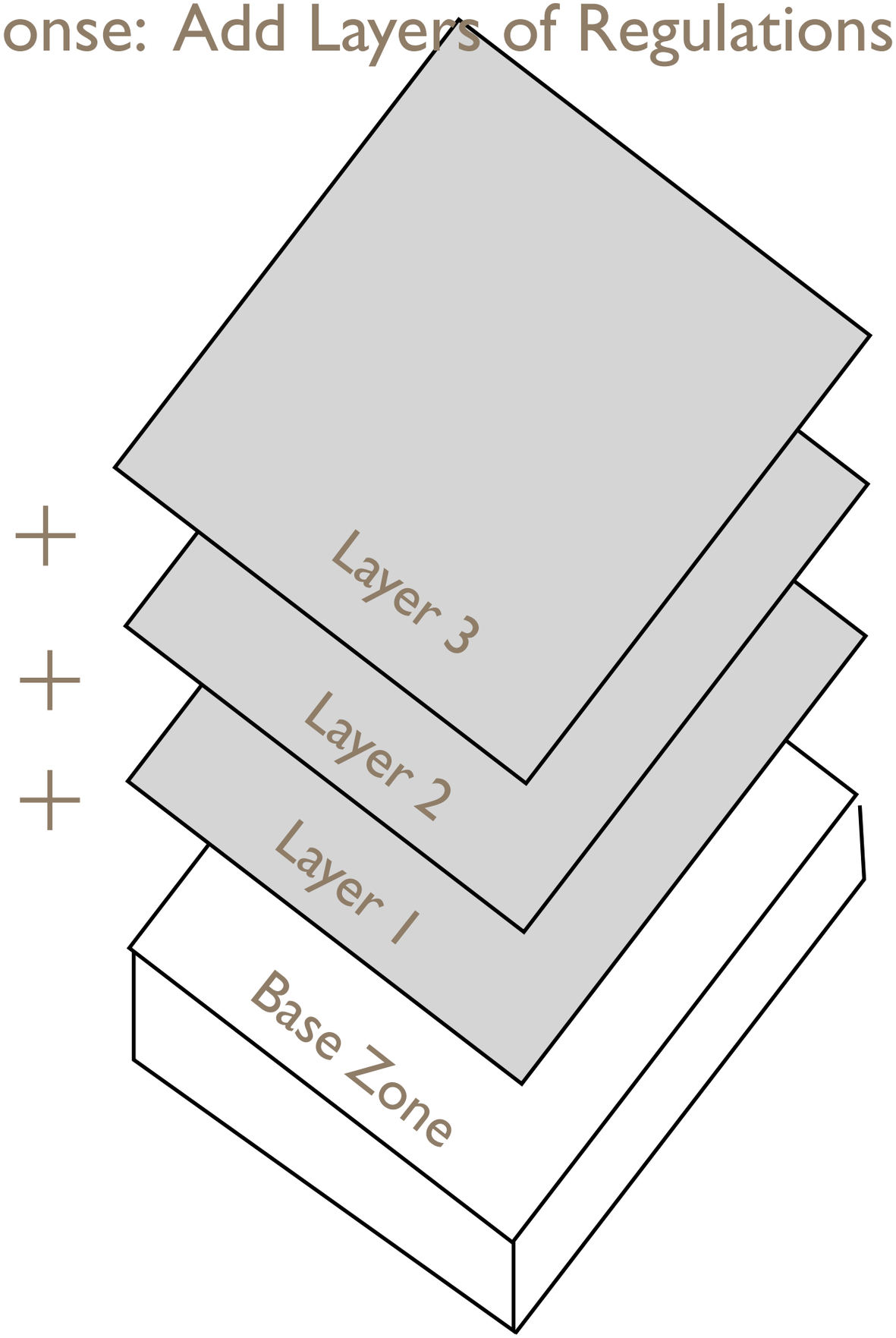
The Response: Add Layers of Regulations



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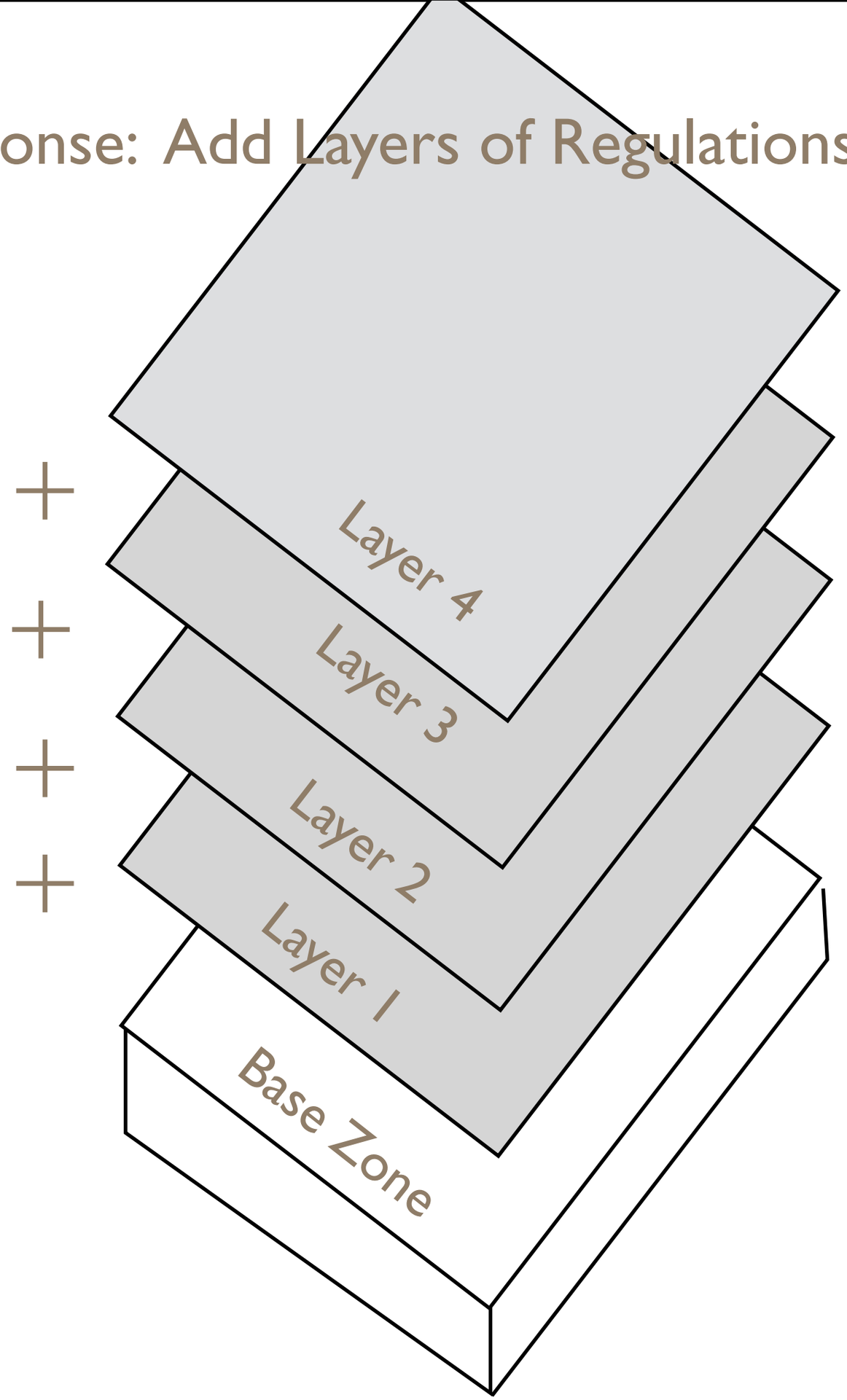
The Response: Add Layers of Regulations



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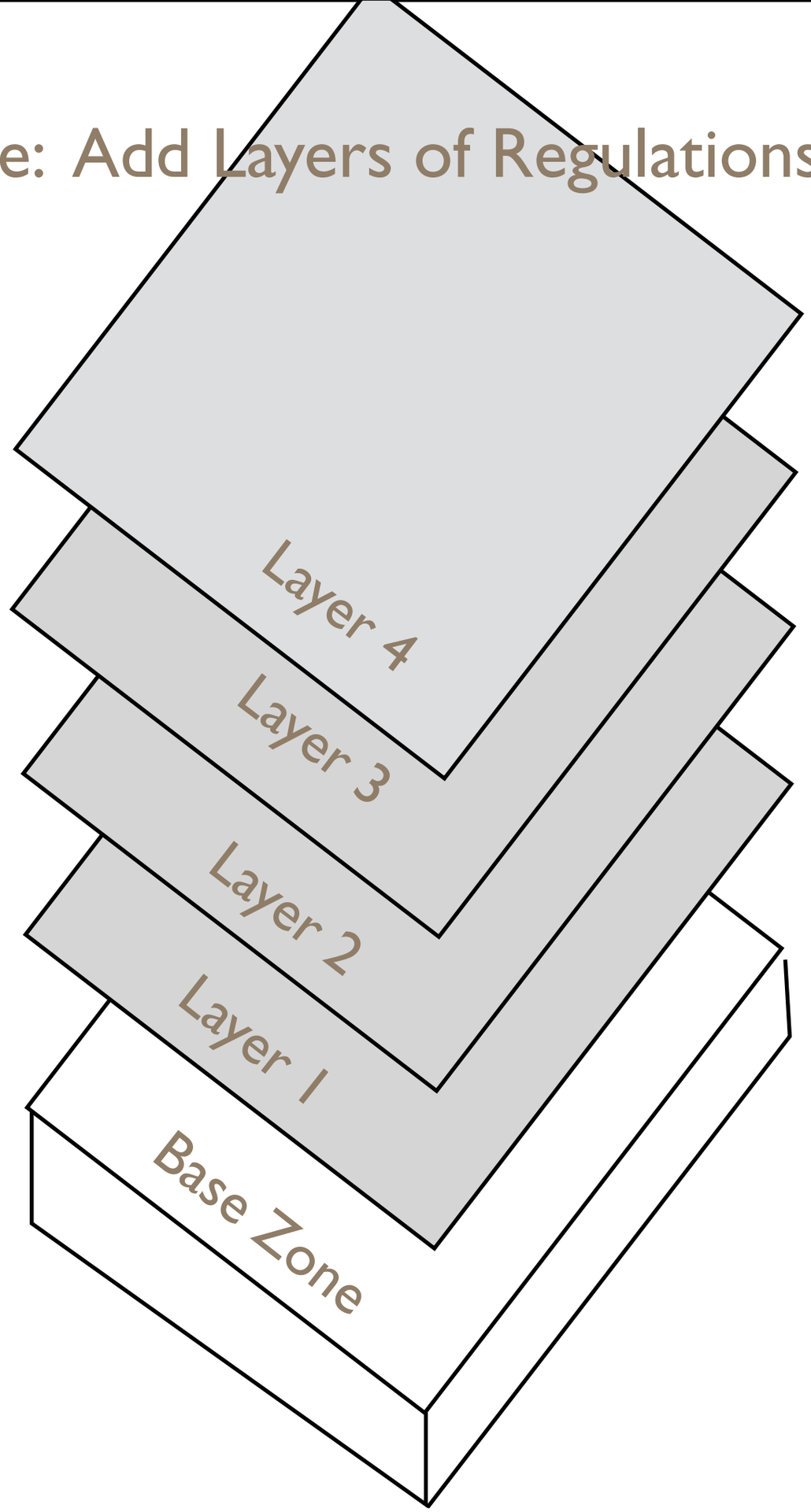
The Response: Add Layers of Regulations

Many Added to Address Compatibility:

Combining Districts
Neighborhood Plans
Compatibility Standards
SubChapters E & F



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SHAPING THE AUSTIN WE IMAGINE

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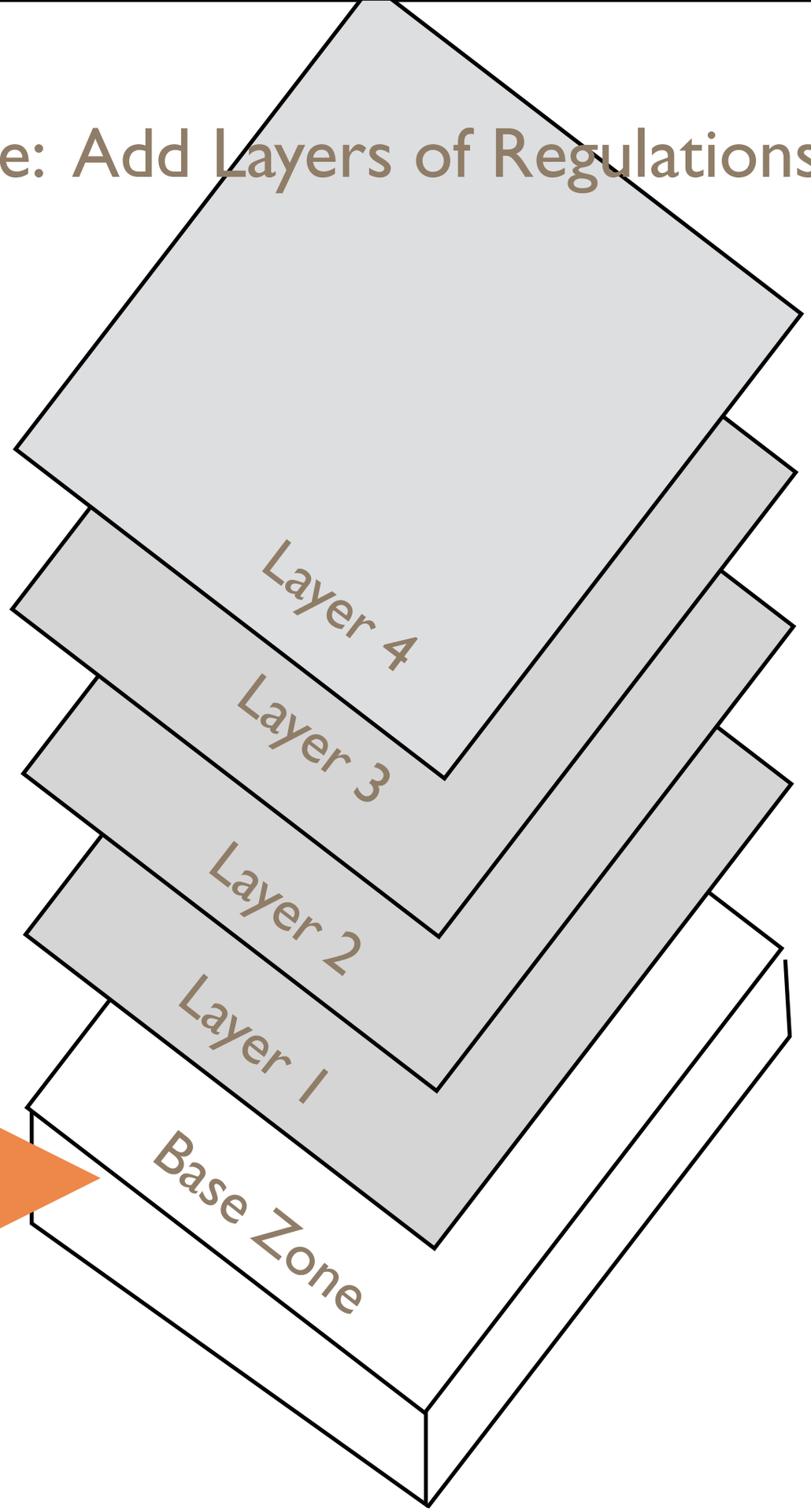
The Response: Add Layers of Regulations

Many Added to Address Compatibility:

+ Combining Districts
+ Neighborhood Plans
+ Compatibility Standards
+ SubChapters E & F



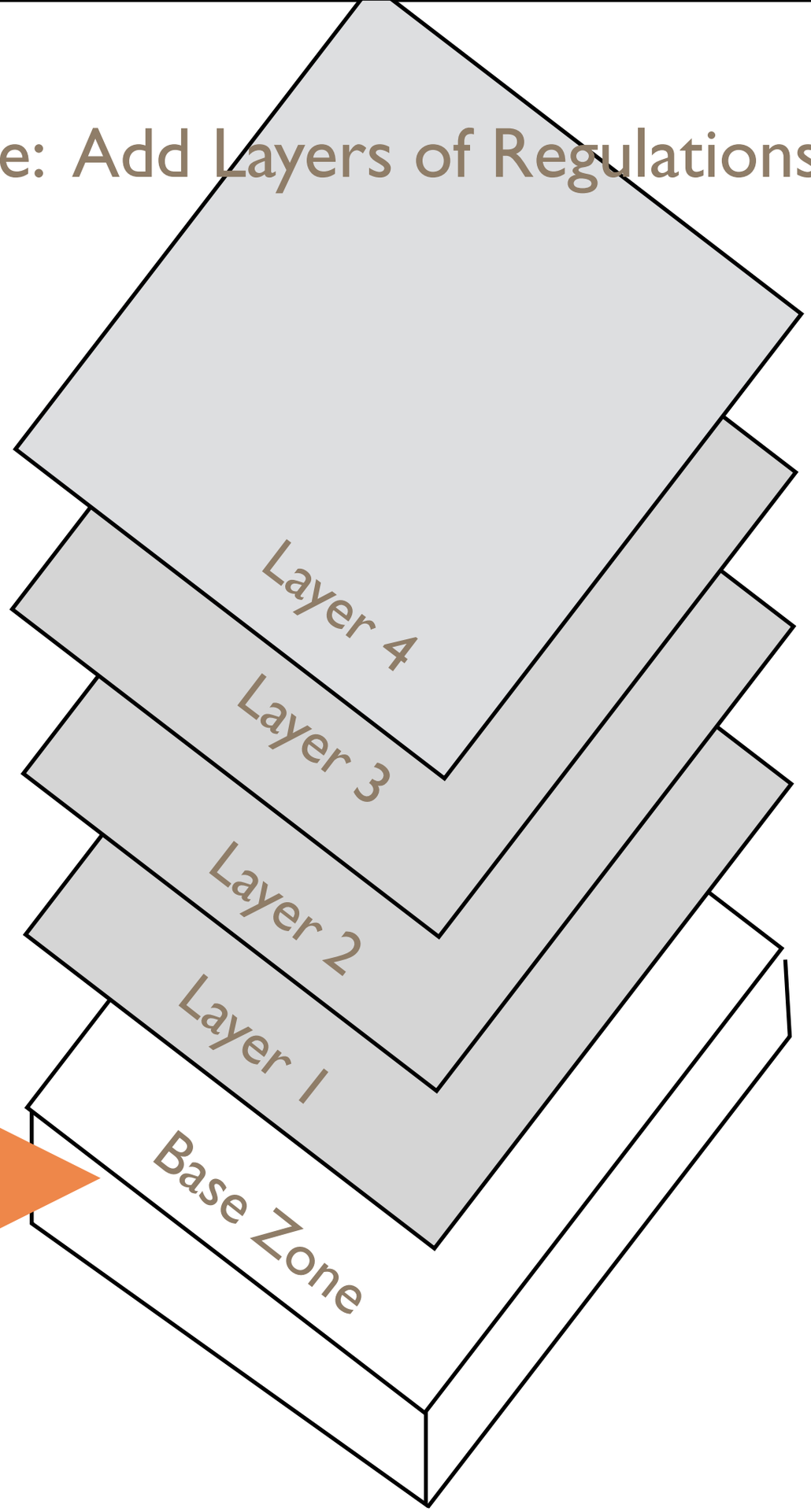
Never Fixed the Root of the Problem

CODE NEXT
SHAPING THE AUSTIN WE IMAGINE

The Response: Add Layers of Regulations

Many Added to Address Compatibility:
Combining Districts
Neighborhood Plans
Compatibility Standards
SubChapters E & F

Never Fixed the Root of the Problem



Typical:
10-15% of regulations in overlays/combining

Typical:
85-90% of regulations in base zones

CODE NEXT
SHAPING THE AUSTIN WE IMAGINE

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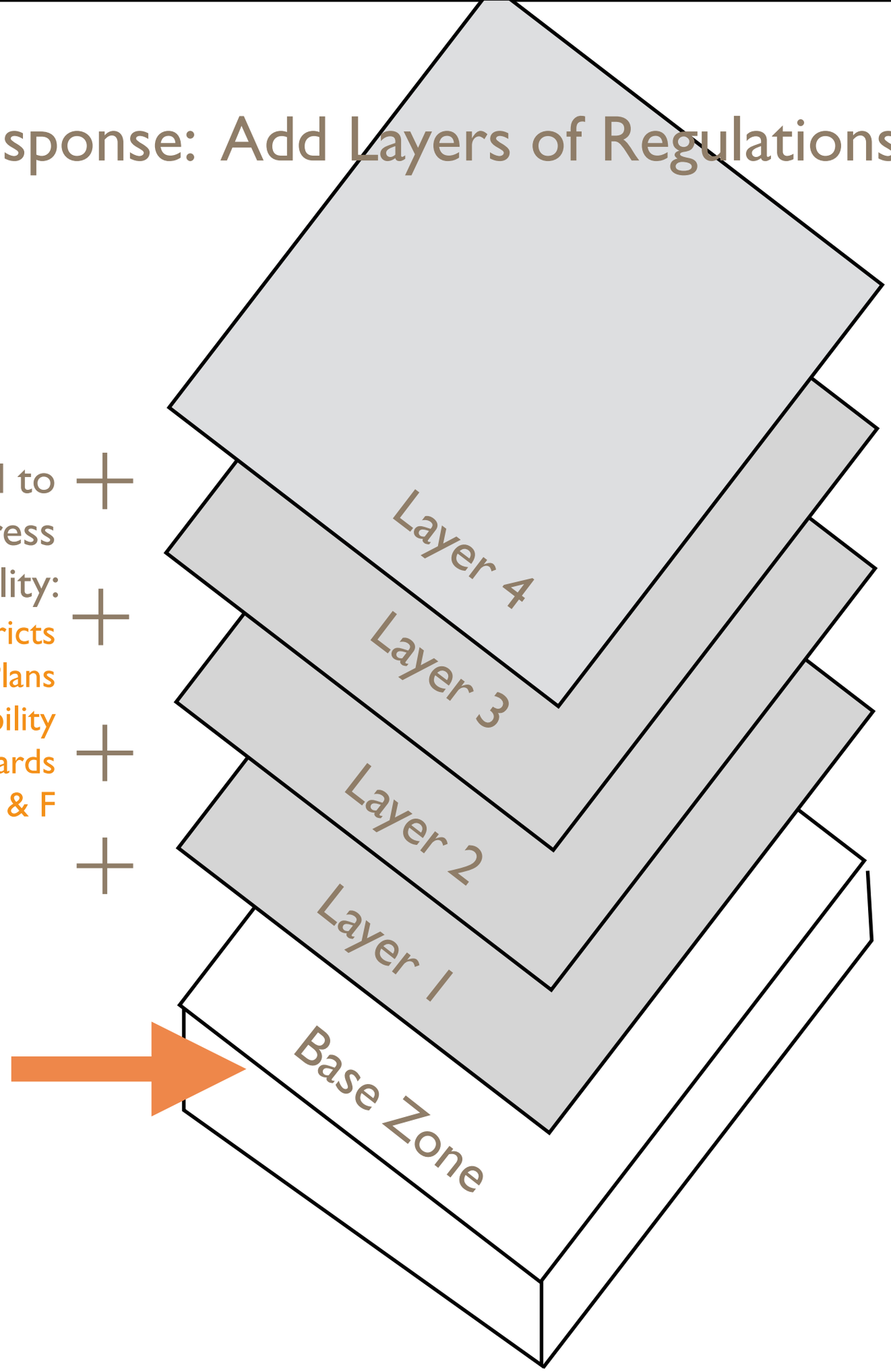
The Response: Add Layers of Regulations

Many Added to Address Compatibility:
Combining Districts
Neighborhood Plans
Compatibility Standards
SubChapters E & F

Never Fixed the Root of the Problem



Typical:
10-15% of regulations in overlays/combining

Austin:
40-50% of regulations in overlays/combining

Typical:
85-90% of regulations in base zones

Austin:
50-60% of regulations in base zones

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Limited Housing Choices (Less Affordability)

Not Encouraging Missing Middle Housing

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MF Zones Encouraging and Have Created This

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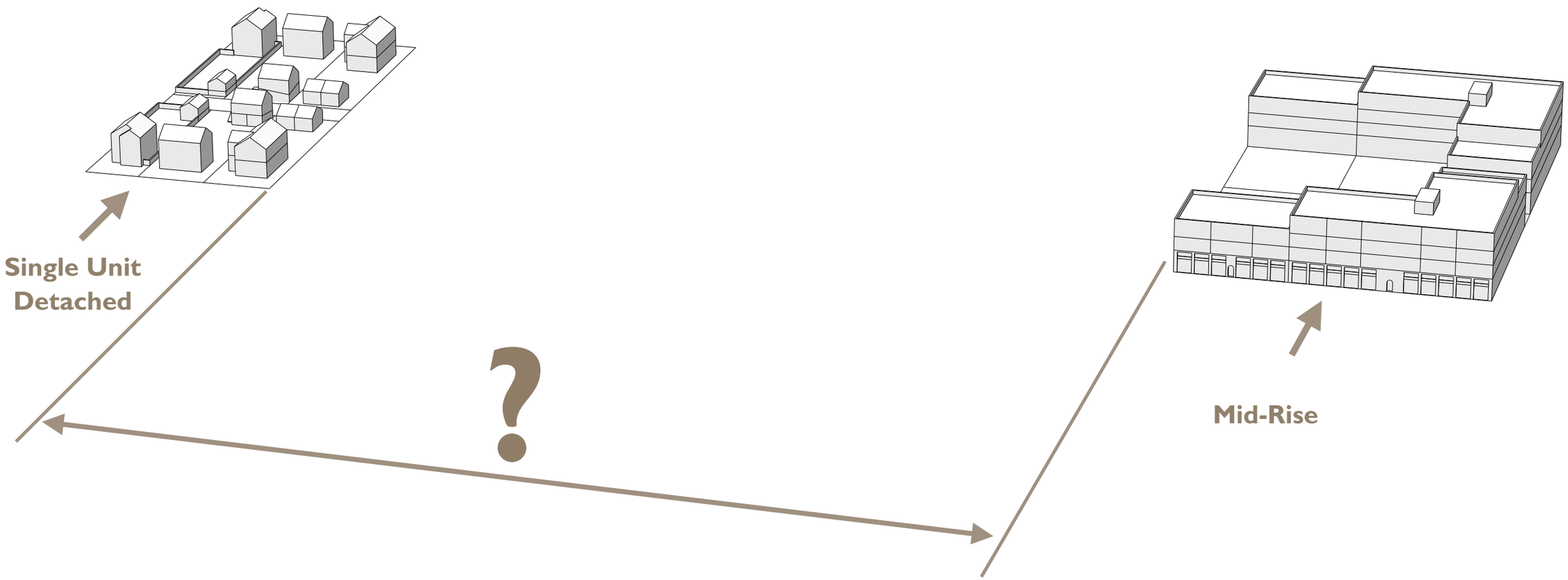
What is Missing Middle Housing?



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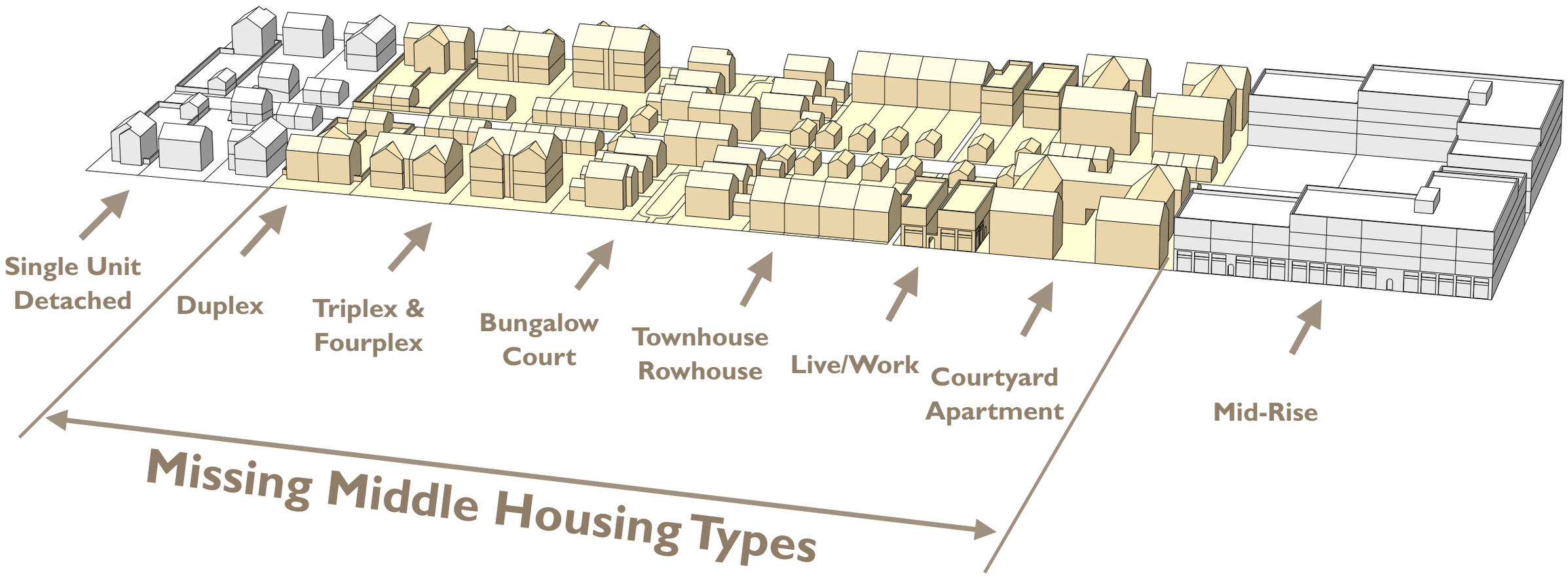
Buildings That are Between Single family Homes and Large Apartments



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Austin's Missing Middle Housing

Duplex

Townhouses

Triplex-Fourplex

Mansion Apartment

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Organization is Unclear and Inconsistent

Impossible to Understand and Use - Often Conflicting

Somehow its Working, but There is a Better System

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3 Community Character Approach Applied

Success of Context-based approaches in Denver

CODENEXT
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Context-based Approach

Suburban Neighborhood

Urban Edge Neighborhood

Urban Neighborhood

General Urban Neighborhood

Urban Center Neighborhood

Downtown Neighborhood

Context Based

Typology A1

Snapshot Area - Key

Snapshot Area - Aerial Photograph

Snapshot Area - Building Placement Diagram

Extract of the Snapshot Area - Aerial Photograph (Left)

Extract of the Snapshot Area - Building Placement Diagram (Right)

Description

This area typifies many of the earlier single family residential neighborhoods of the City. The development pattern in this area has particularly high lot coverage, with long street blocks concentrating consistently narrow lots. Detached sidewalks and mature street trees contribute a maturity and consistency to an already relatively cohesive pattern of housing. Front set backs tend to be consistent while the building form varies considerably either between lots or within the block. Building height is also relatively consistent. This would seem to be the most consistent of the residential typologies.

Differs from other traditional typologies:-

- Very high lot coverage and narrow streets
- No front accessed parking
- Very consistent pattern of street trees

The photograph of Congress Park above shows the shallow front yards, consistent front setback and general two story character prevalent within typology A1.

The photograph of a duplex in Congress Park above shows how many traditional multi-family structures fit within the general character of the single-family structures around them.

The photograph of Congress Park above shows the consistent pattern of front porches and lack of front vehicle use areas prevalent in typology A1.

As shown in the photograph of Congress Park above, A1 tends to have the most consistent pattern of street trees among typologies.

As shown above, side setbacks are small and lot coverage is generally high in typology A1.

As shown above, traditional multi-family development in typology A1 often recognize the general scale and character of nearby single-family development.

The defining elements of typology A1 are not always recognized in contemporary infill projects.

As shown above, there is usually a consistent pattern of detached alley-loaded garages in typology A1.

Framework Features

Street Pattern:	REGULAR RECTILINEAR GRID
Street Width:	MEDIUM AVENUES & NARROWER STREETS
Sidewalk Location:	DETACHED
Alleys:	CONSISTENT
Street Trees:	Yes - Regular Pattern
Block Width:	RELATIVELY CONSISTENT 300' BY 600'
Consistency/Diversity:	RELATIVELY CONSISTENT

Lot Features

Lot Size:	35/40' BY 145'
Lot Shape & Orientation:	LONG, NARROW, PERP. TO STREET
Lot Width:	NARROW, WITH SOME EXCEPTIONS
Lot Coverage:	50% & GREATER
Building Orientation:	GEN. WITH LOT
Building Placement:	FORWARD
Parking Access/Location:	GEN. REAR ACCESS

Building Placement

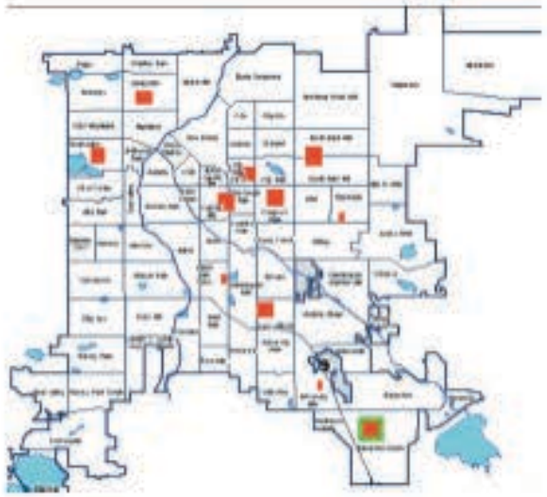
Front Setback:	20'
Side Setbacks:	5'
Rear Setback:	20'

Building Form

Building Height:	2-2.5
Plate Height:	15'-22'
Roof Ridge Height:	25'-35'
Roof Form:	FRONT GABLE, SOME HIP
Entry (Porch/Door Orientation):	CONSISTENT FRONT PORCH
Transparency (Window Location & %):	30-50% Transparency

Context Based

Typology D2



Snapshot Area - Key

Snapshot Area - Aerial Photograph

Extract of the Snapshot Area - Aerial Photograph

The photograph of Hampden South above shows the typical pattern of attached sidewalks and driveways in typology D2.

Most structures in the typology are 1-2 stories in height with front facing garages as shown in the photograph above.

As shown in the photographs of Hampden South above and at right, most streets in the typology follow a classic curvilinear pattern.

Description

This area combines a curvilinear or modified grid with cul-de-sac elements of the classic curvilinear, which becomes more common in later residential development. Here the connectivity provided by the street network is still relatively high, while block length although variable tends to be very long. Sidewalks are attached and trees in private yards convey an impression of sporadic street trees. Lot size and shape vary in response to the street alignments and are relatively disparate. Building plan is generally long axis parallel to the street, although in many cases a protruding garage element presents a gable to the street in an 'L' or 'T' shaped plan. Architectural form varies considerably, as does building height or mass, creating a strong sense of diversity. Some blocks however exhibit a greater sense of architectural cohesion. Where there is a consistent front set back this also contributes a greater sense of order.

Differs from D1 typology:

- Introduction of cul-de-sacs
- Curvilinear grid form is retained but more pronounced.
- Higher lot coverage and larger structures

Snapshot Area - Building Placement Diagram

Extract of the Snapshot Area - Building Placement Diagram

Most streets in the typology are relatively wide as shown in the photograph above.

Although expansion and reconstruction in relatively uncommon in the typology, some homes are undergoing renovation as shown in the photograph above.

Framework Features

Street Pattern:	CURVILINEAR GRID WITH CUL-DE-SACS
Street Width:	WIDE
Sidewalk Location:	ATTACHED
Alleys:	NONE
Street Trees:	NONE. TREES IN NARROW FRONT YARDS
Block Width:	250' BY 1200' AVE. VARIABLE
Consistency/Diversity:	BOTH

Lot Features

Lot Size:	75' BY 125'
Lot Shape & Orientation:	RECT. TO SQUARE
Lot Width:	75' AVE BUT VARIES WITH ST. PATTERN
Lot Coverage:	40-50%
Building Orientation:	LONG AXIS PARALLEL TO STREET
Building Placement:	CENTRAL & FORWARD
Parking Access/Location:	FRONT, ATTACHED PROTRUDING GARAGES

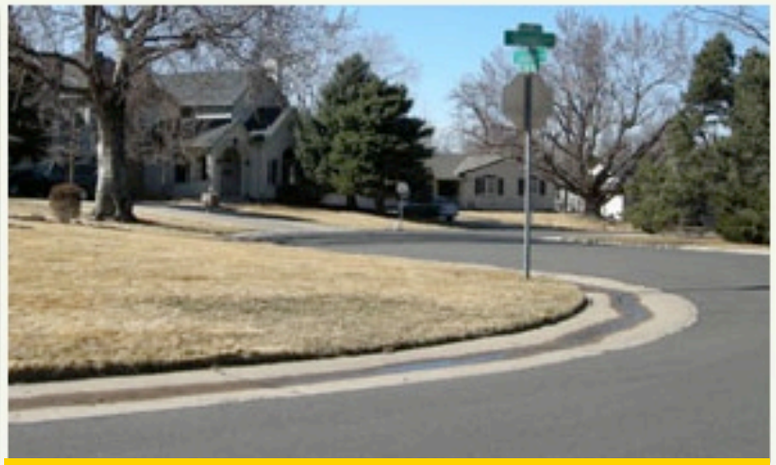
Building Placement

Front Setback:	25' BUT VARIES
Side Setbacks:	5'
Rear Setback:	VARIES - RELATIVELY LARGE

Building Form

Building Height:	1-2 STORIES - VARIES
Plate Height:	8'-18'
Roof Ridge Height:	14'-25'
Roof Form:	GABLED OR PYRAMIDAL
Entry (Porch/Door Orientation):	FRONT, BEHIND GARAGE
Transparency (Window Location & %):	20-35% TRANSPARANCY

Context Based



Suburban Neighborhood

Urban Edge Neighborhood

Urban Neighborhood

Curving Streets and
Cul-de-sacs

Mixed Street Pattern

Grid and Alley

Shopping Centers

Shopettes

Main Streets

Context Based

General Urban Neighborhood

Urban Center Neighborhood

Downtown Neighborhood

Grid and Alleys

High Pedestrian Activity

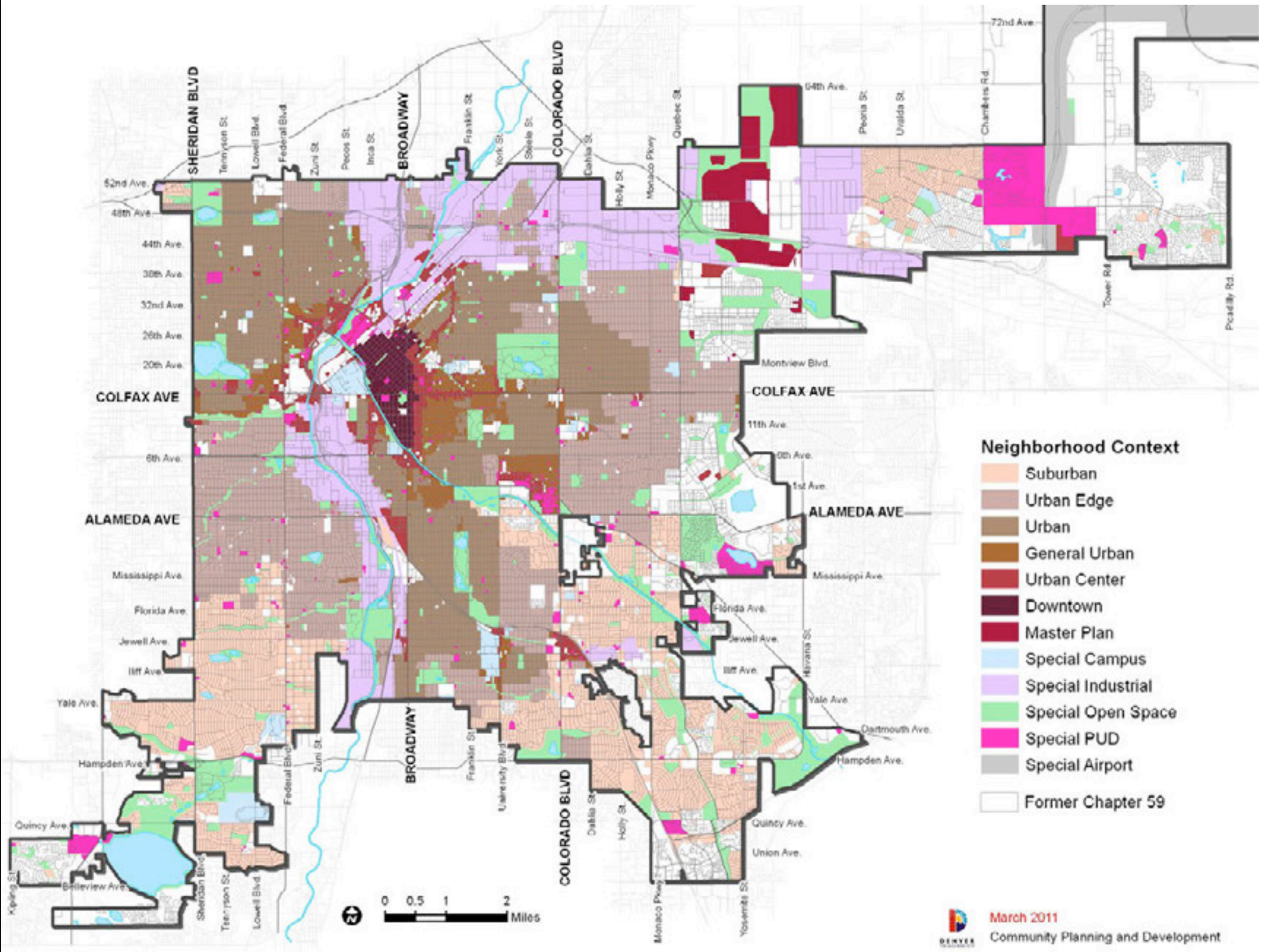
Transit Hub

Main Streets

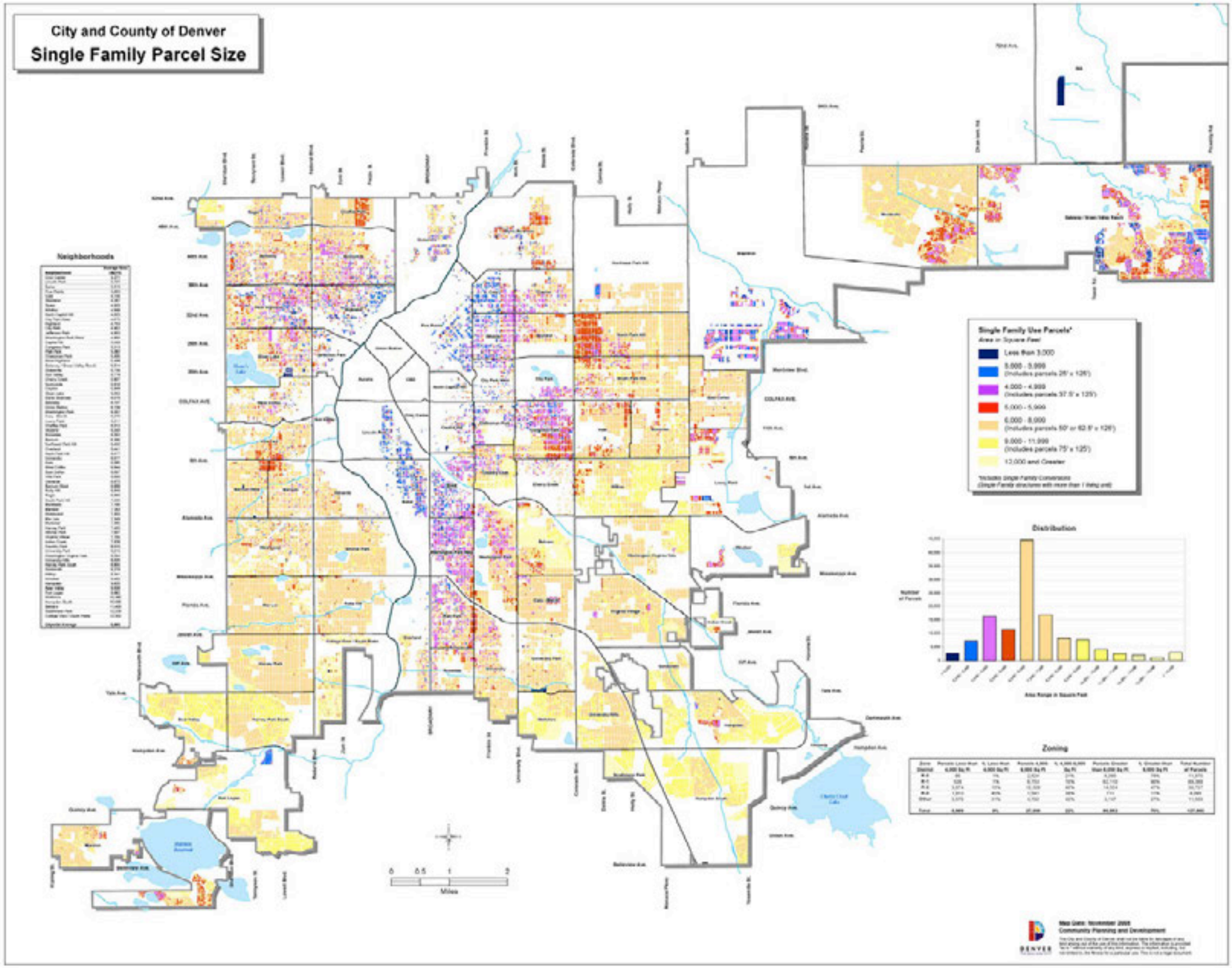
Mixed Use

Structured Parking

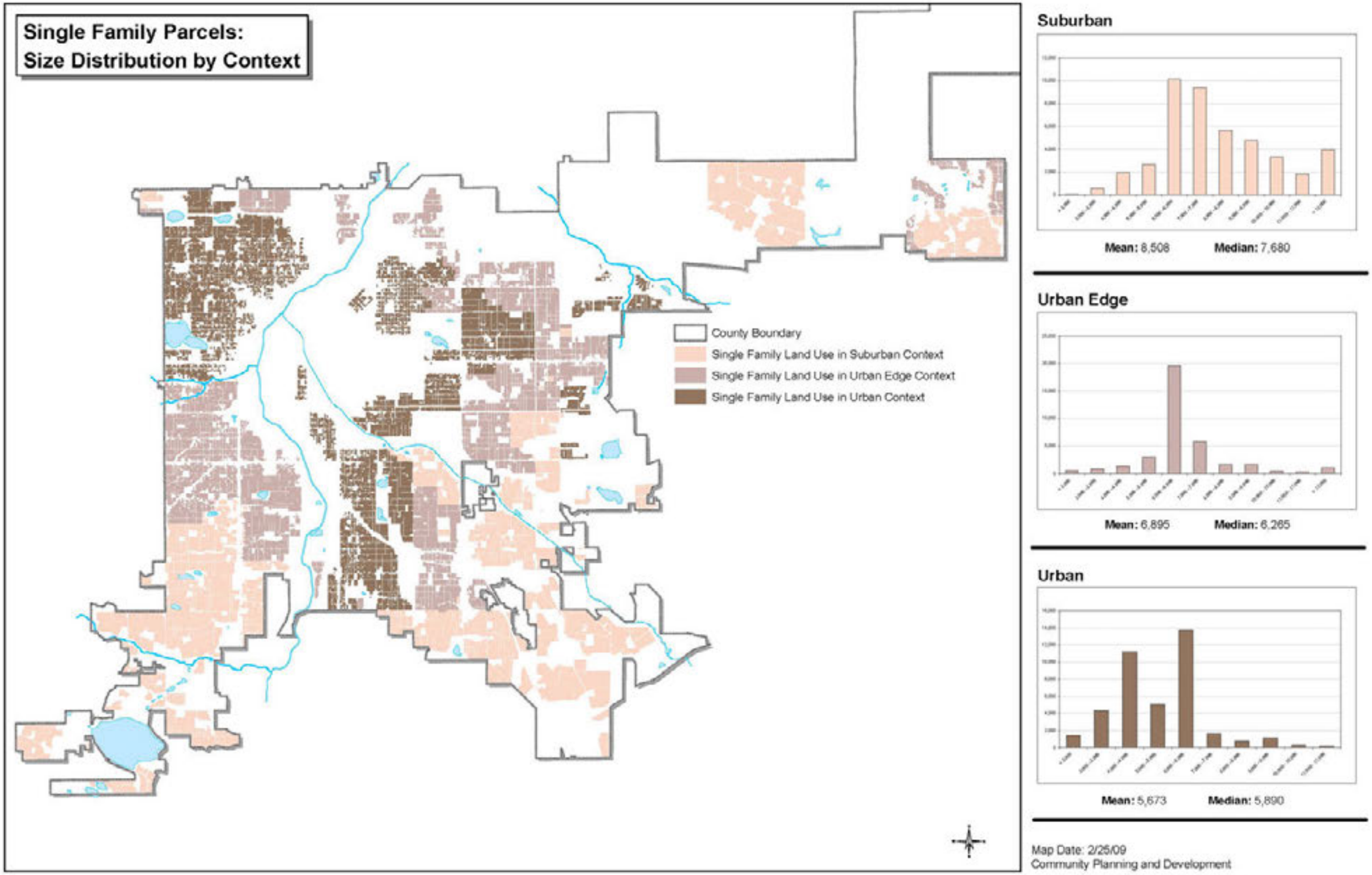
Context Based



Context Based



Context Based



IT'S ALL ABOUT CONTEXT

3 Conclusion

Learning from Past Experience

Next Steps

1. Listening to the Community Report: March 2014
2. Community Character Manual: March 2014
3. Code Diagnosis: April 2014
4. Code Structure Alternatives: May 2014
5. Annotated Outline: June 2014
6. Public meetings: Throughout the next 6 months

CODE NEXT

SHAPING THE AUSTIN WE IMAGINE

http://austintexas.gov/event/code-next-listening-sessions

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CODE NEXT

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http://austintexas.gov/event/code-next-listening-sessions

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