

“Missing Middle” Housing

Description of Issue

Our community’s Comprehensive Plan, EnvisionCR, calls for the city’s housing stock to accommodate residents at all life stages, incomes, and preferences. This includes providing for “missing middle” housing. The “missing middle” refers to those housing types that are in between single-family homes and large-scale, multi-family developments and integrated into neighborhoods with a variety of housing types. Examples of “missing middle” housing include duplexes, townhomes, rowhouses, and bungalow courtyards. Data shows that achieving a diverse housing stock could be difficult to achieve under our current zoning code.

Here are the facts:

- Only 4% of the city is zoned for multi-family housing.
- Of the land that is vacant, very little (2.17%) is zoned for multi-family housing.
- Nearly 40% of the city is zoned for single-family housing.

This issue requires discussion for several reasons:

- Demand is growing for housing options other than single-family housing, primarily amongst millennials, young professionals, and empty nesters.
- The current amount of land zoned for multi-family housing (including townhomes, row homes, etc.) may not adequately meet the demand for this type of housing.
- Creating vibrancy and equity in our community requires a variety of housing options. This includes offering single-family, two-family, and multi-family housing options that are both for sale and for rent at a variety of price points and in a range of locations.
- Providing a variety of choices helps to attract and retain residents and contributes to overall community vitality and economic well-being.
- Neighborhoods that offer a variety of housing types, including single-family, “missing middle”, and others, is attractive to residents who desire to stay in the same neighborhood over time.



Relationship to EnvisionCR, the City’s Comprehensive Plan



- Create a healthy and desirable place to live.
- Strengthen the quality of Cedar Rapids’ neighborhoods. Create housing options for all.



- **StrengthenCR Goal 3.** Adopt policies that create choices in housing types and prices throughout the city.
- **StrengthenCR Goal 4.** Create a city that is affordable and accessible to all members of the community.

