

An aerial photograph of a suburban neighborhood with numerous houses and trees. In the background, a city skyline is visible under a sky with wispy clouds. The text is overlaid on the center of the image.

**A VARIETY OF HOUSING**  
**LESSONS FROM OUR OWN BACKYARDS**

Georgia Conservancy  
July 21, 2022

Why talk about housing, why now?

## GROWING POPULATION

GA population is projected to grow between 3-4 million by 2050, with most of that growth coming to the Atlanta Region.

## SUPPLY SHORTAGE

Nationally, the unit shortage is estimated to 3.8 million units.

## LACK OF AFFORDABILITY

Nationally, nearly a third of households are considered cost-burdened.

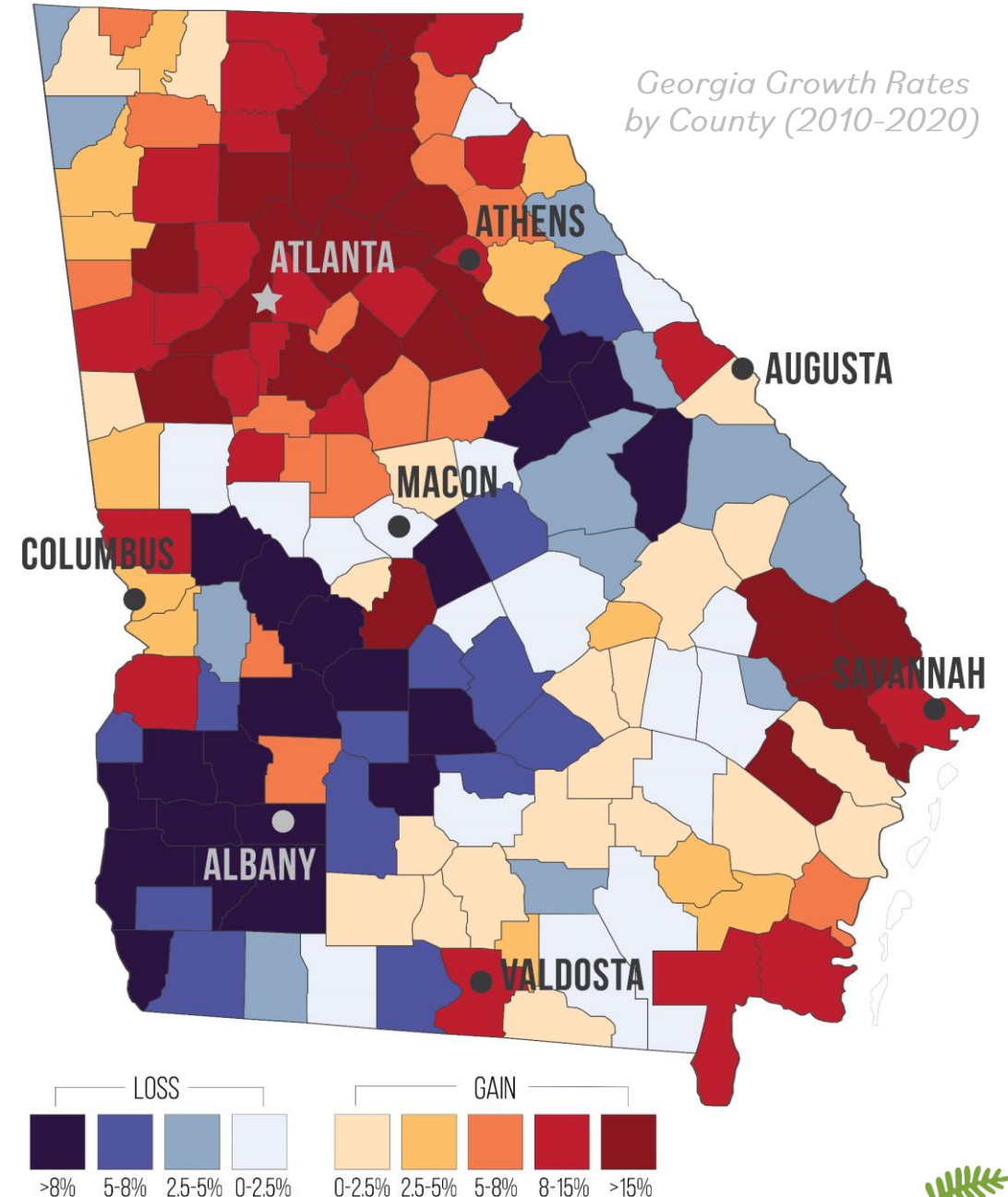
## DIMINISHING LAND AVAILABILITY

We estimate that Georgia's developed land cover has grown by 2.5 million acres between 1974 and 2016.

## QUALITY OF LIFE

In addition to the above stresses, our places lack walkability, access to public spaces, proximity to needs and amenities, and sustainability.

Sources: Governor's Office of Planning and Budget, The State of the Nation's Housing Report 2022, Georgia Now & Forever

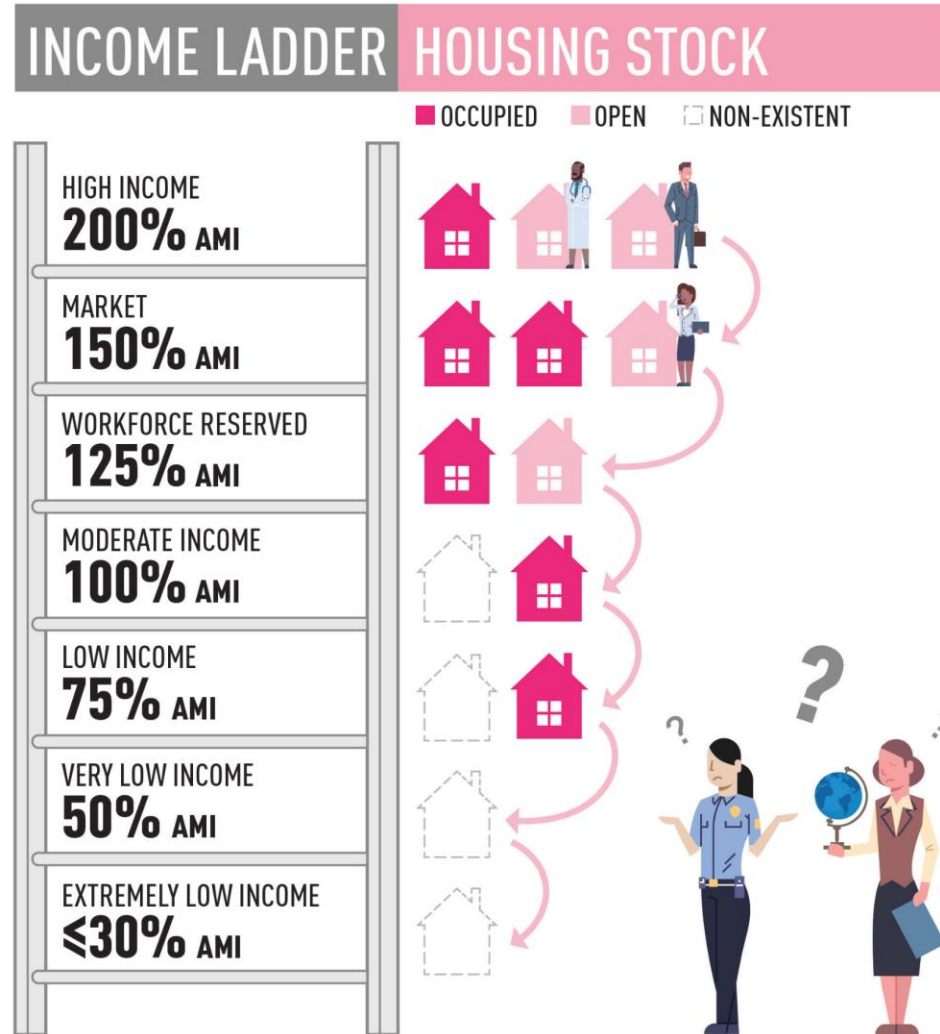


Undersupply of market-rate units is making the affordability crisis worse.

**WHEN THERE  
AREN'T ENOUGH  
HOMES,**

**EVERYBODY  
COMPETES FOR  
WHAT'S  
AVAILABLE.**

- SIGHTLINE INSTITUTE



**A lack of units at different price points leaves people of different income brackets with fewer options. The most vulnerable are left almost completely without.**

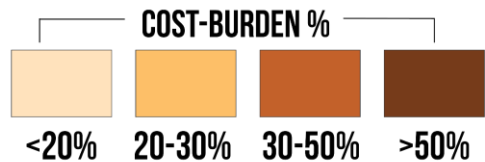
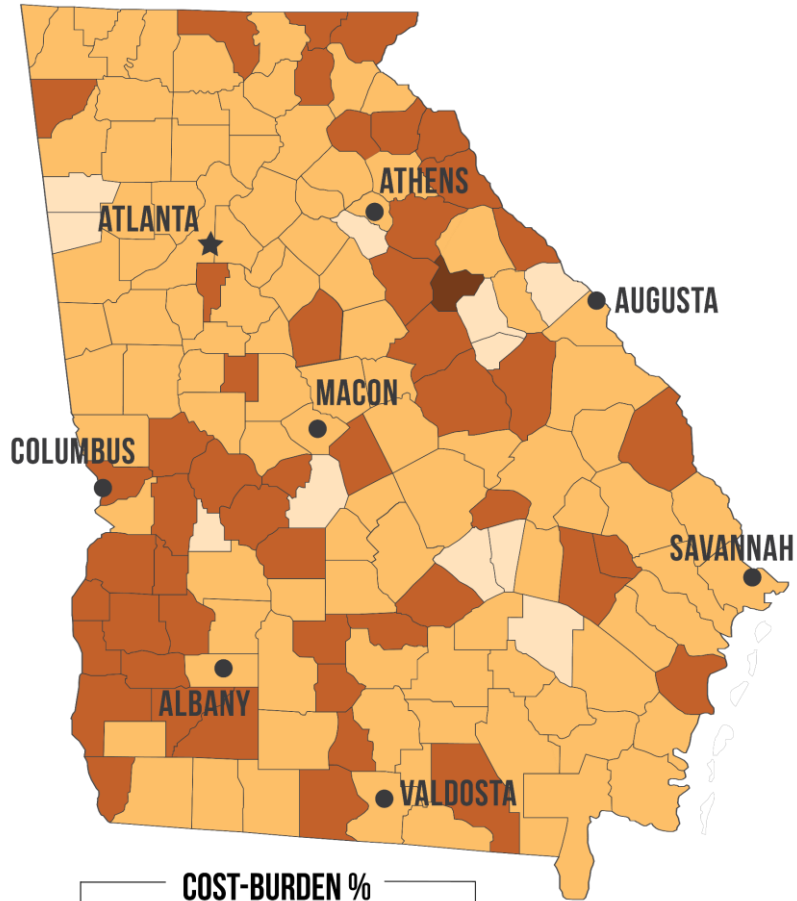
*When people must buy below what they can afford, we call it “buying down the ladder.”*

KRONBERG  
URBANISTS  
ARCHITECTS

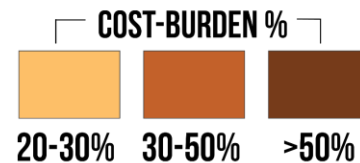
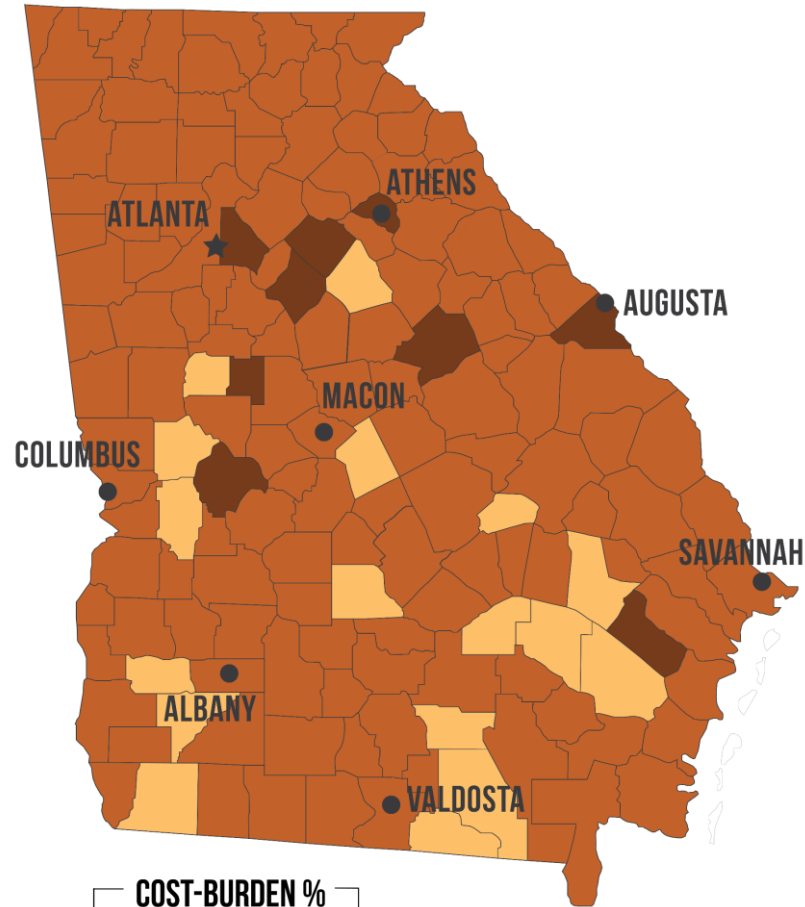
Credits: Image courtesy of Kronberg Urbanists & Architects

Georgia's residents are burdened by the high cost of housing, as is much of the nation.

## HHs w/ Mortgages



## HHs who Rent



Households are considered “cost-burdened” if they pay more than 30% of their income in housing costs.

Factoring in transportation costs exacerbates issues of affordability.

Households paying >45% of their income on housing and transportation (H&T) are considered H&T cost-burdened.

Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2019), Center for Neighborhood Technology



*How do our challenges compare across the nation?*

## **LACK OF AFFORDABILITY**

Nearly *a third of American households are cost-burdened*, with the challenge weighing disproportionately on renters

## **UNDERSUPPLY**

Nationally, we face an shortage of affordable and market-rate units. *There are not enough housing units in general.*

## **REGULATORY HURDLES**

Most *existing zoning regulations restrict the types of housing allowed to be built*, thus impacting supply and affordability...

...but that is starting to change.

# THE STATE OF THE NATION'S HOUSING

2022

*“State and local zoning reforms have in fact gained traction in recent years, allowing construction of other types of housing in areas previously limited to single-family homes.”*

JOINT CENTER FOR HOUSING STUDIES OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY

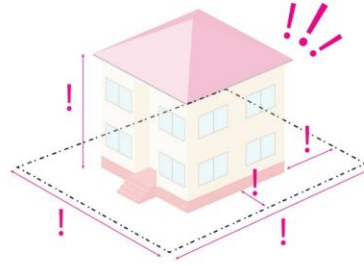


*Regulations can help or hinder our goals.*



**Restricts by-right development** of certain housing types.

## AS A BARRIER...

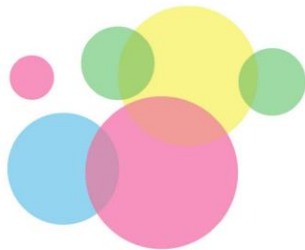


**Indirectly complicates or renders impossible development** of specific housing types, site designs, and densities.



Complicates development, permitting, and approval by **labyrinthine structure, lack of clarity, and inconsistency.**

## AS A HELPER...



Promotes **housing variety and a mix of uses.**



Regulates for different **building and urban forms suited for different contexts.**



Lays out a **clear and comprehensible set of instructions** for developers to produce desirable products in the context of a broader urban design.



Permitting housing variety can boost housing supply, suit a spectrum of lifestyle needs, and gradually add affordable housing stock.

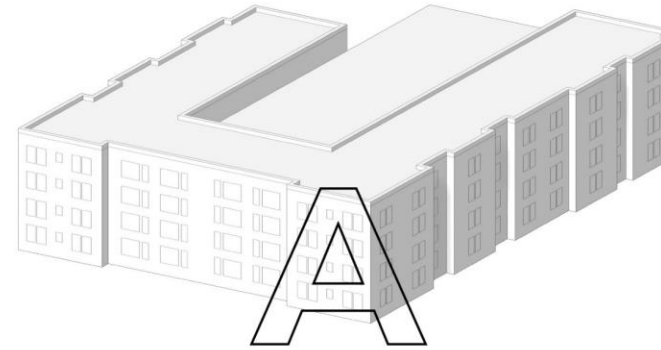
## Variety & Supply



### “a” ffordable (adj.)

creating more affordable, attainable housing by boosting housing **supply** and housing **variety**, gradually, and **preserving** existing housing stock

## Supply Only



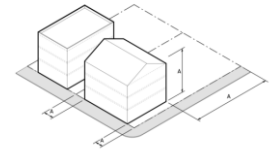
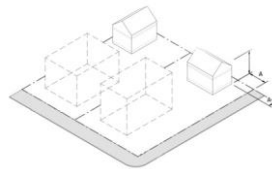
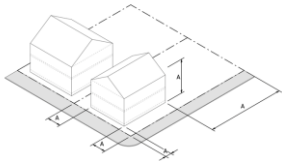
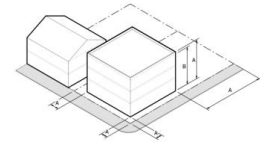
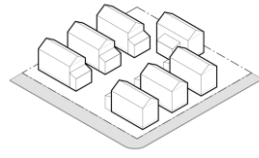
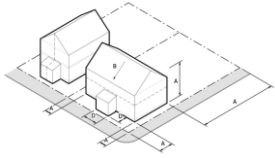
### “A” ffordable (adj., n.)

creating a large and sudden influx of units at more affordable price points through one-time subsidies and incentives

“Not only does Atlanta have an overall housing supply problem, it also has a housing variety problem.” – Atlanta Department of City Planning



We can find many different housing types across our state. Most are non-conforming structures, but new construction is making a comeback.





And there are multiple variations among a single housing type. For example, a duplex.



**Ranch-Style Duplex**  
One-story, accessible, horizontal orientation in a suburban style.

Lagrange



**Mill-Style Duplex**  
Reminiscent of housing built in mill villages in Georgia.

Porterdale



**Two-Story Duplex**  
Two-story, suburban style. Horizontal proportions.

Clarkesville



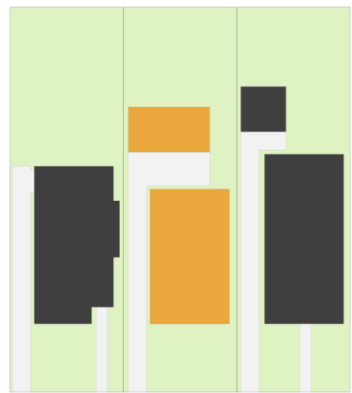
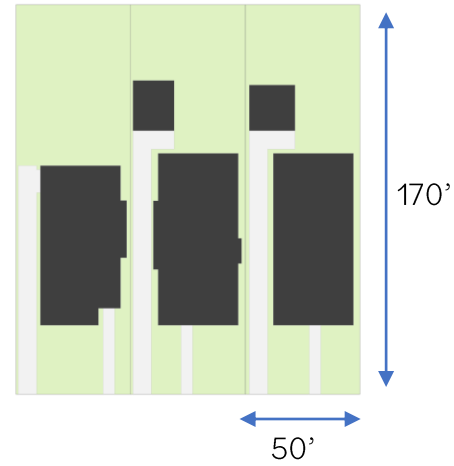
**Stacked Duplex**  
One unit on top of another. Square or vertical proportions.

Atlanta

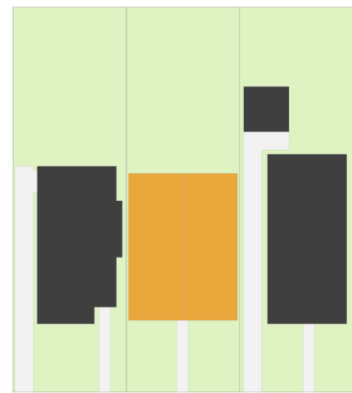


Typical lots in Atlanta can be retrofitted or filled in with different housing types in a variety of ways that play on the orientation, size, and unit arrangement of the building.

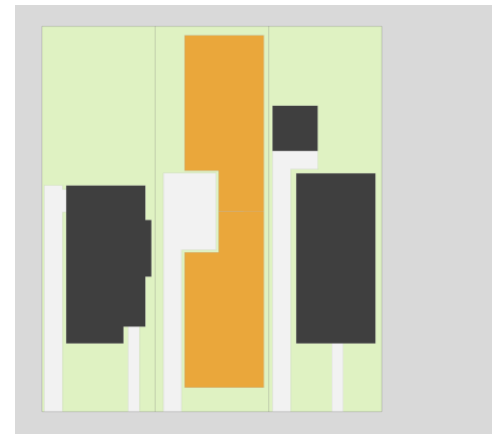
Prototypical Atlanta lot



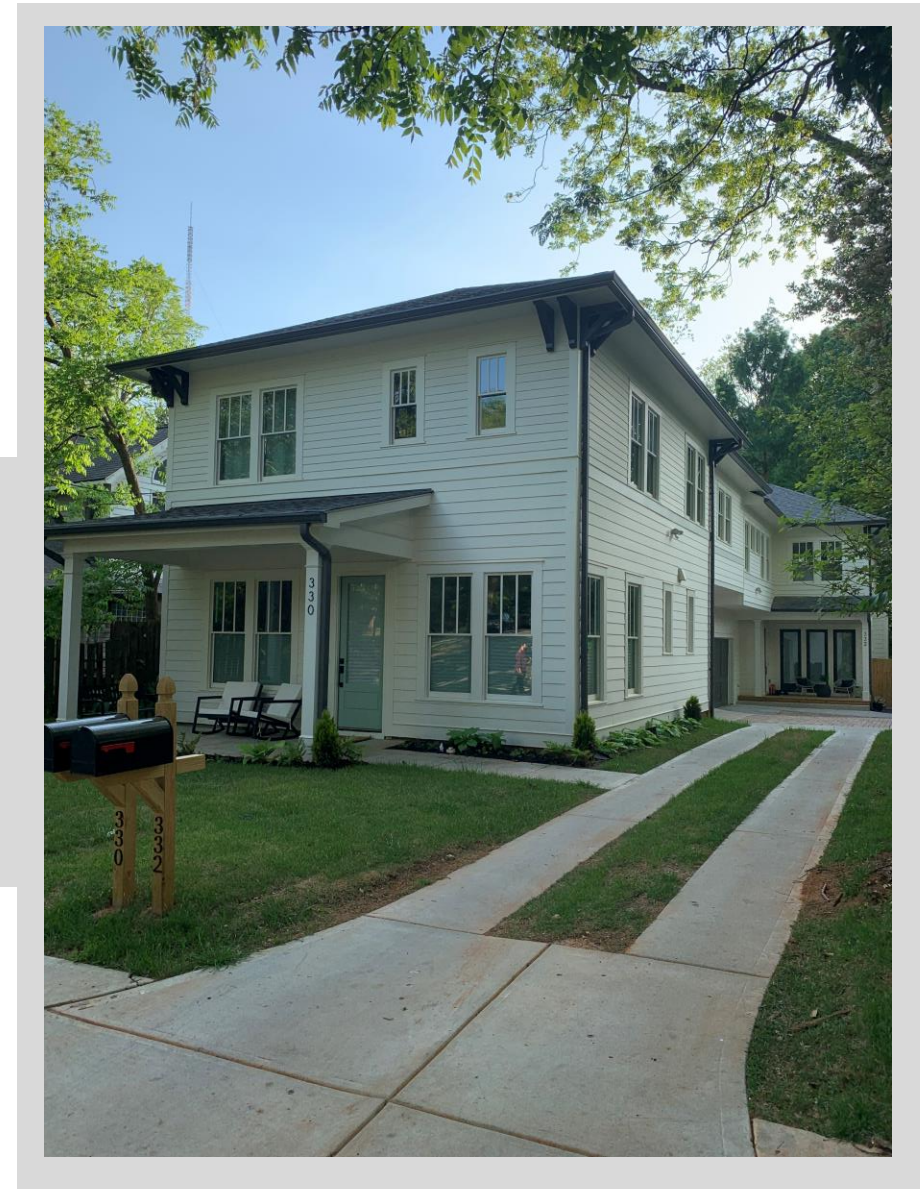
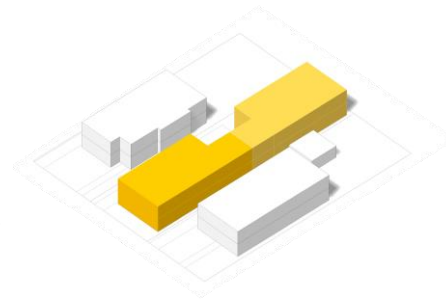
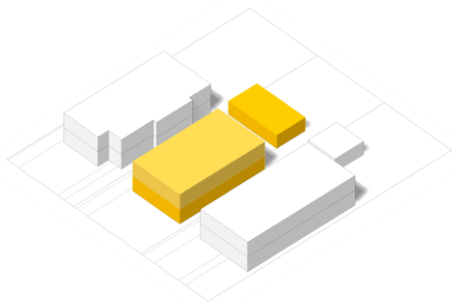
Stacked Duplex



Imitation Chicago Two-Flat

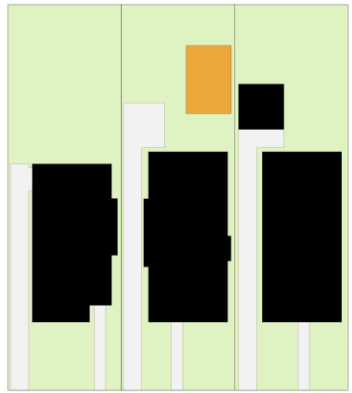
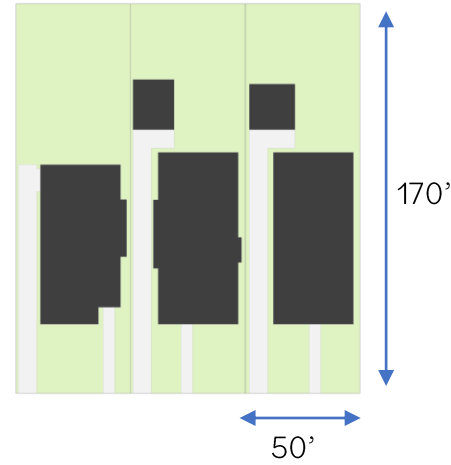


Horizontal Orientation

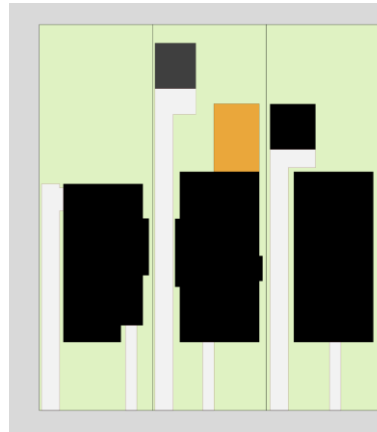
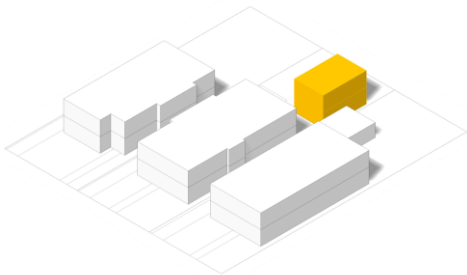


Accessory Dwelling Units, or ADU's, are relatively smaller structures that can be constructed on a lot. In California, after the state passed legislation to reduce barriers to ADU's, permit applications more than quadrupled.

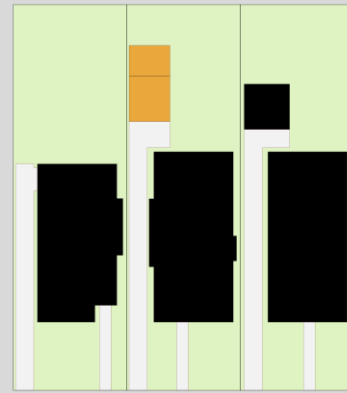
Prototypical Atlanta lot



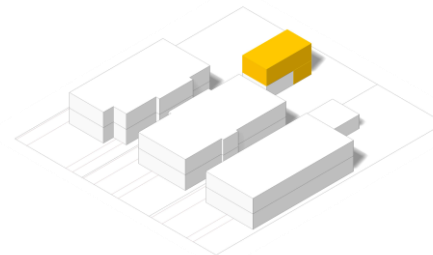
Detached ADU



Attached ADU

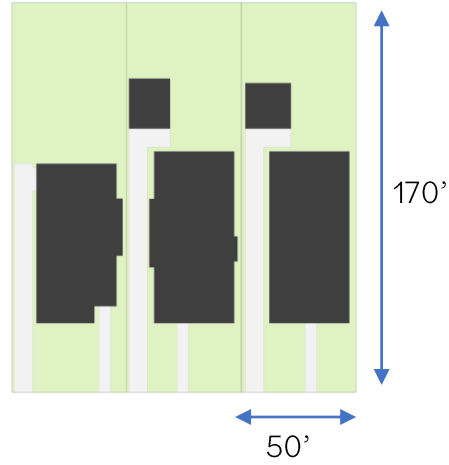


Detached, Over-Garage



Other housing types can add more units without compromising quality of design or neighborhood character. A cottage court is simply a collection of single-family homes, typically smaller in size, around a shared courtyard. Many small apartment buildings built in the past also took advantage of the courtyard idea.

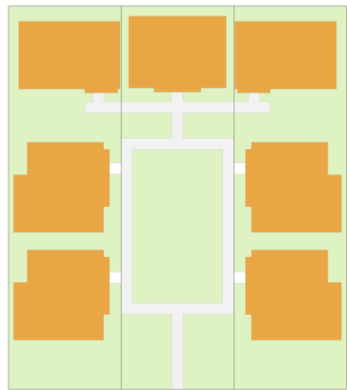
Prototypical Atlanta lot



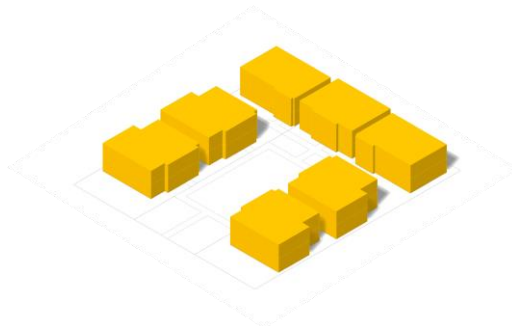
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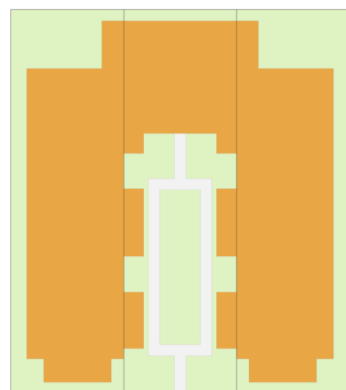
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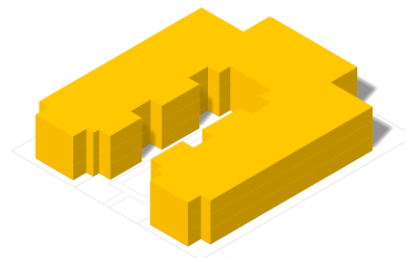
Cottage Court



2.



Courtyard Apartments



2.



## BEFORE YOU BUILD, CONSIDER THIS CHECKLIST...

1.

*Check your regulations. What are you allowed to build on that property? Do you need to request an exception (variance)?*

2.

*Check your surroundings. What else is in the area? For example: access to commercial areas, parks, sidewalks, and public transportation*

3.

*Check your conditions. Based on the above, how many new residents can this place support? Can you build without needing to rely on new parking and other infrastructure?*

4.

*Check your balance sheet. How can you build it at the price point you intended?*





[www.georgiaconservancy.org](http://www.georgiaconservancy.org)

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