

About Preservation Austin

- We exist to empower Austinites to shape a more inclusive, resilient, and meaningful community culture through preservation
- Historic buildings are worth saving because they're important in their own right, and also because they present solutions to issues like affordability, equity, sustainability
- Austin needs both preservation and growth to be world-class city



Policy Background

- Limited preservation tools – historic zoning for individual buildings and districts
- 1975 preservation ordinance allowed for individual landmarks
- Austin didn't enable historic districts until 2004; slow progress made harder by Texas Legislature
- In 2024 we have over 600 individual landmarks but just 8 local historic districts – very different from peer cities
- Less than 1 percent of all city parcels are zoned historic
- Land development code, city processes make it easier to demolish than to preserve
- City sees an average 600 residential demolitions per year; these are largely smaller, older, and more affordable



Preservation Bonus

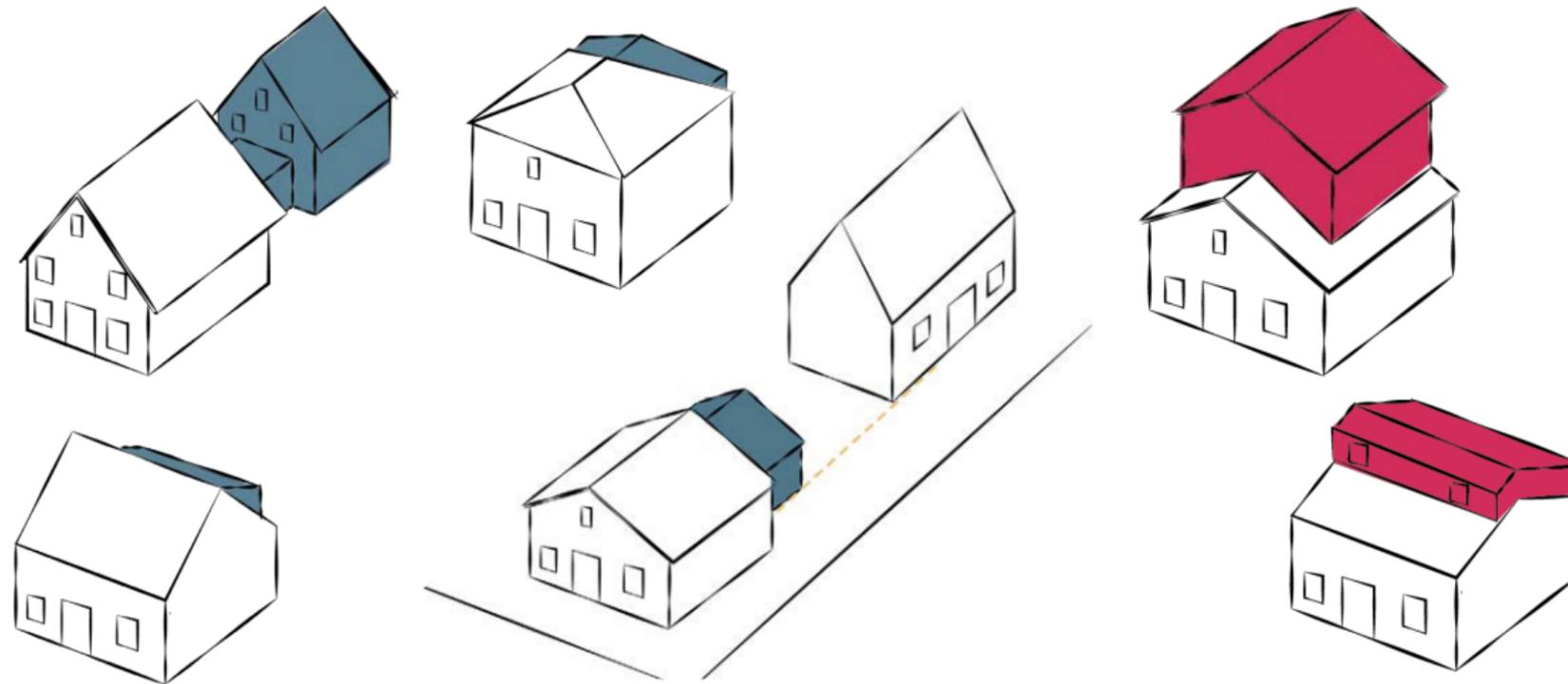
- CodeNEXT 2019: Preservation Bonus is introduced – only required preserving 50 percent in exchange for entitlements
- Partnered with Austin Infill Coalition in 2021 to come up with a better incentive
- Meaningful preservation in exchange for additional unit and development entitlements
- We need a tool that helps preserve character-rich neighborhoods, even where historic designations are unlikely, by providing better alternatives to demolition and incentivizing preservation.
- Support from Council Member Kathie Tovo's office, but died with staff
- HOME presented opportunity; risk that increased entitlements could accelerate demolitions, and opportunity to convert more demolitions into preservation projects that support density



Pre-1960 Housing



Preservation Best Practices

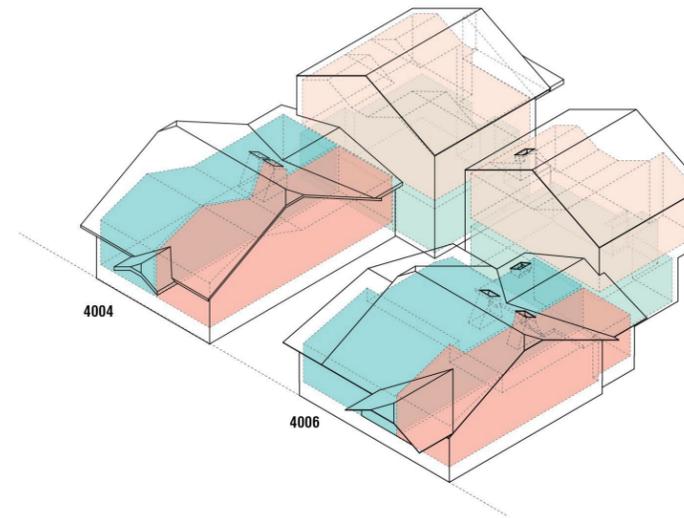


Compatible additions are subordinate to the historic building.

Incompatible additions compromise the design and form of the historic building.



Preservation Best Practices





PRESERVATION BONUS

HOME PHASE I BONUS

For structures built on or before 31 December 1960, the area of the existing dwelling can be excluded from the FAR maximums if 50% of the existing dwelling unit and 100% of the street-facing facade are preserved. For side-gabled, cross-gabled, hipped, or pyramidal roof form, alterations must be behind the existing ridge-line or peak. For front-gabled, shed roof, or flat roof form, alterations must be the lesser of 15' or half the width of the front wall. If the development requires a 15' clearance on the side of the existing dwelling unit to build other allowable dwelling units, an existing or converted garage or carport may be altered or removed to provide the clearance.



PRESERVATION BONUS

POLICY ACTION

FAR Fix

Reverse interpretation that FAR caps for individual units within a multi-unit development intended to prevent 'stealth McMansions' apply to preservation projects

Fourth Unit

Exempt the existing unit from allowable unit count

Site Coverage

Exempt the building cover and impervious cover of the existing qualifying structure, but not more than 10% of site area for either, from building cover and impervious cover calculations



PRESERVATION BONUS

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

Subdivisions

Allow for easier front and back subdivisions, including provisions that would allow for flag lots with a minimal 'pole'

Reduced Setbacks

Consider reducing rear and front setback further for projects that preserve a qualifying structure

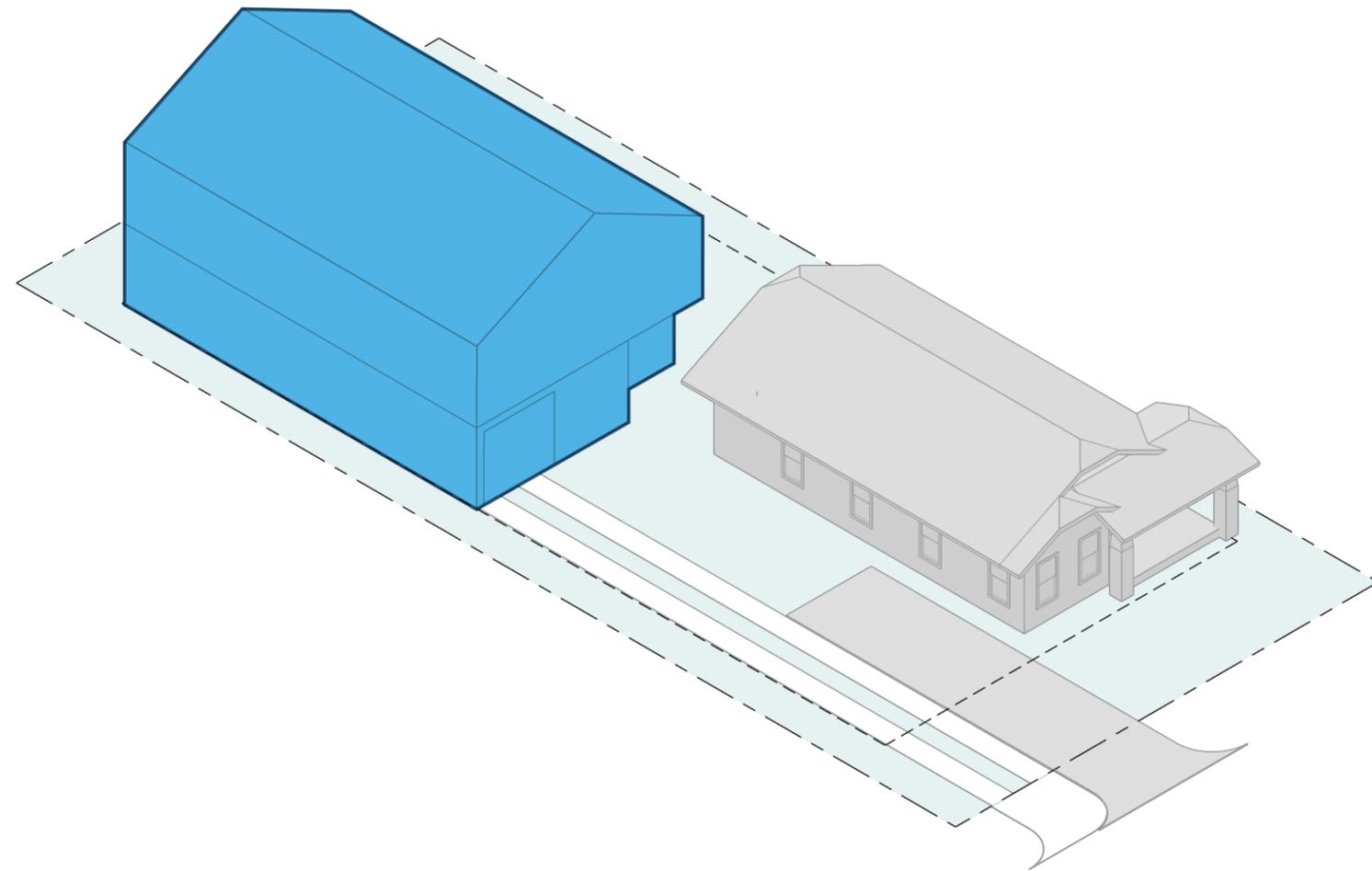
Relocations

Allow relocations of a qualifying structure to benefit from the Preservation Bonus

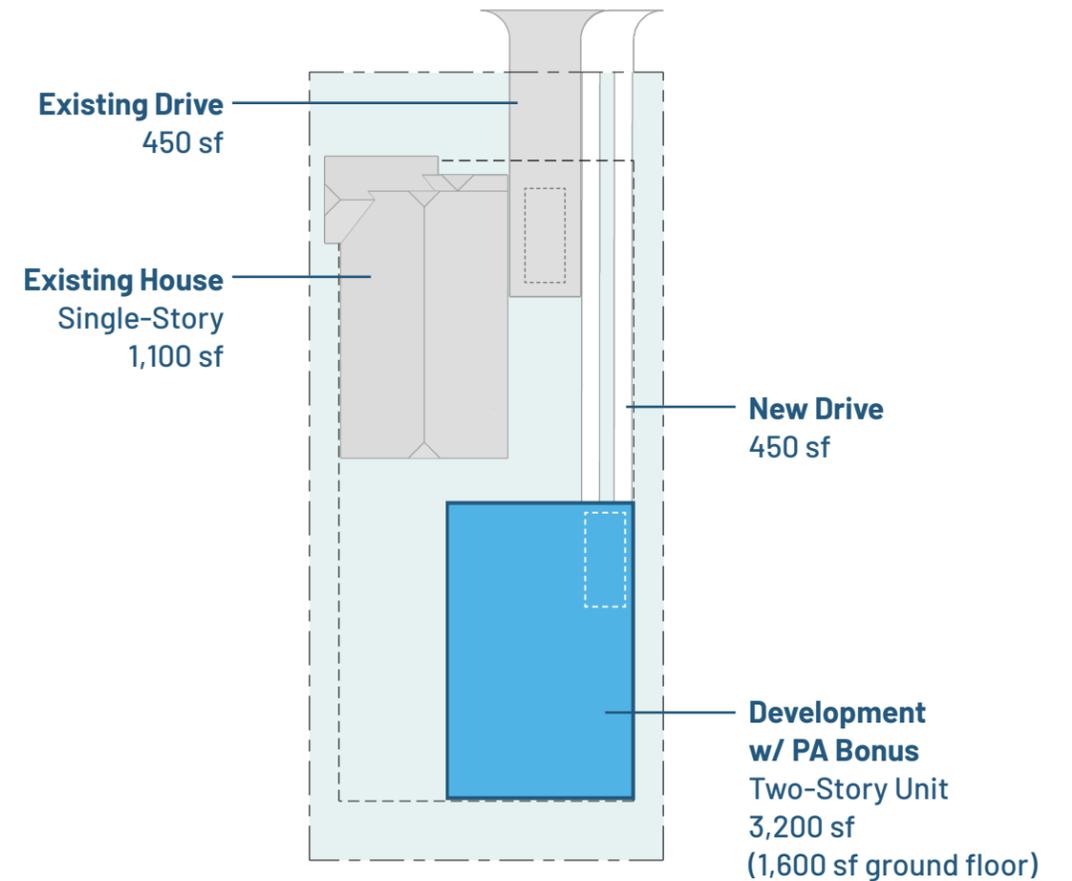


PRESERVATION BONUS - HOME PHASE I

MEDIAN SIZED LOT - 8,000



Preserved Home + One Additional Unit

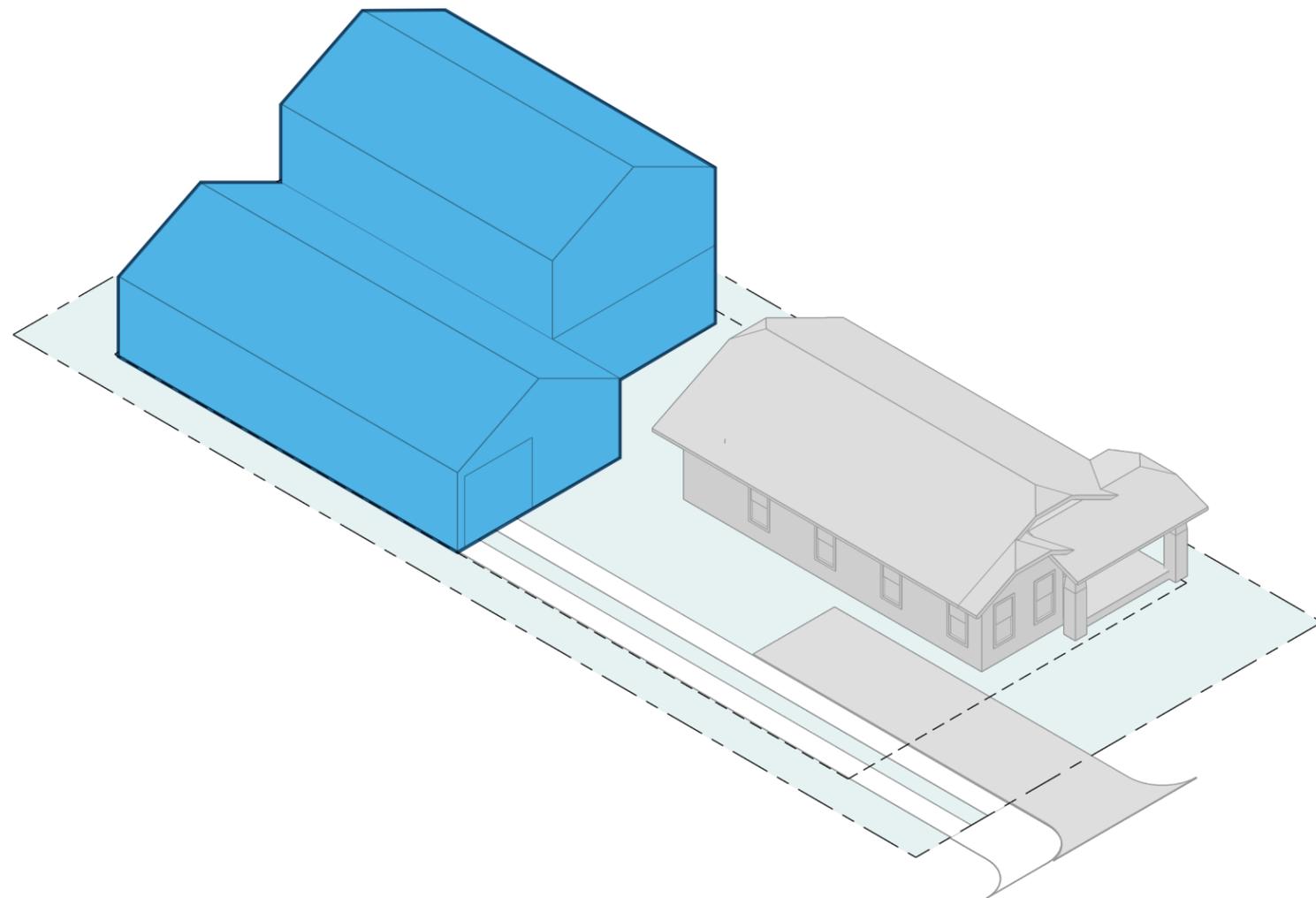


Floor-to-Area Calculations

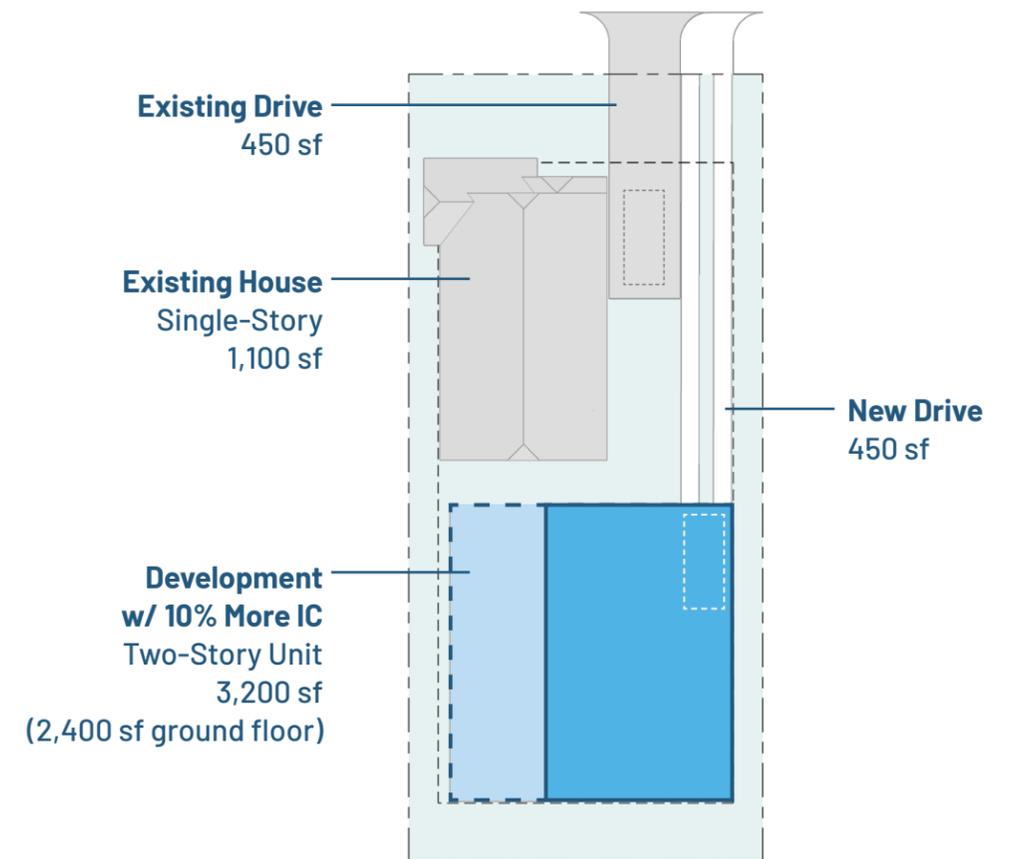
Existing House	1,100 sf	0.14 FAR	(Exempt)
Development w/ PA Bonus	3,200 sf	0.40 FAR	
Total		0.54 FAR	BELOW ENTITLEMENT



PRESERVATION BONUS - EXEMPTING EXISTING I.C. MEDIAN SIZED LOT - 8,000



Preserved Home + One Additional Unit



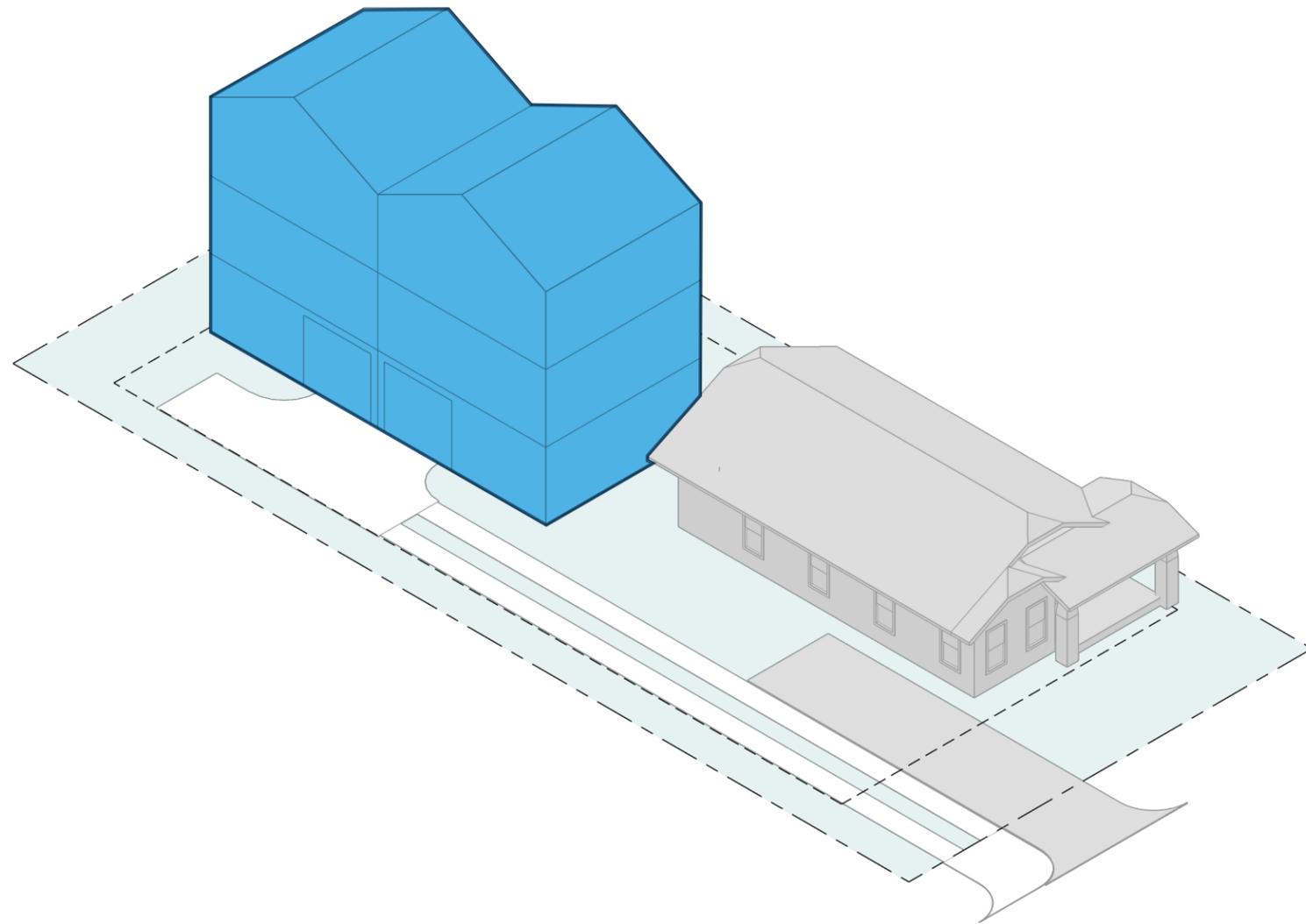
Floor-to-Area Calculations

Existing House	1,100 sf	0.14 FAR	(Exempt)
Development w/ PA Bonus	3,200 sf	0.40 FAR	LIMITING FACTOR
Total		0.54 FAR	BELOW ENTITLEMENT

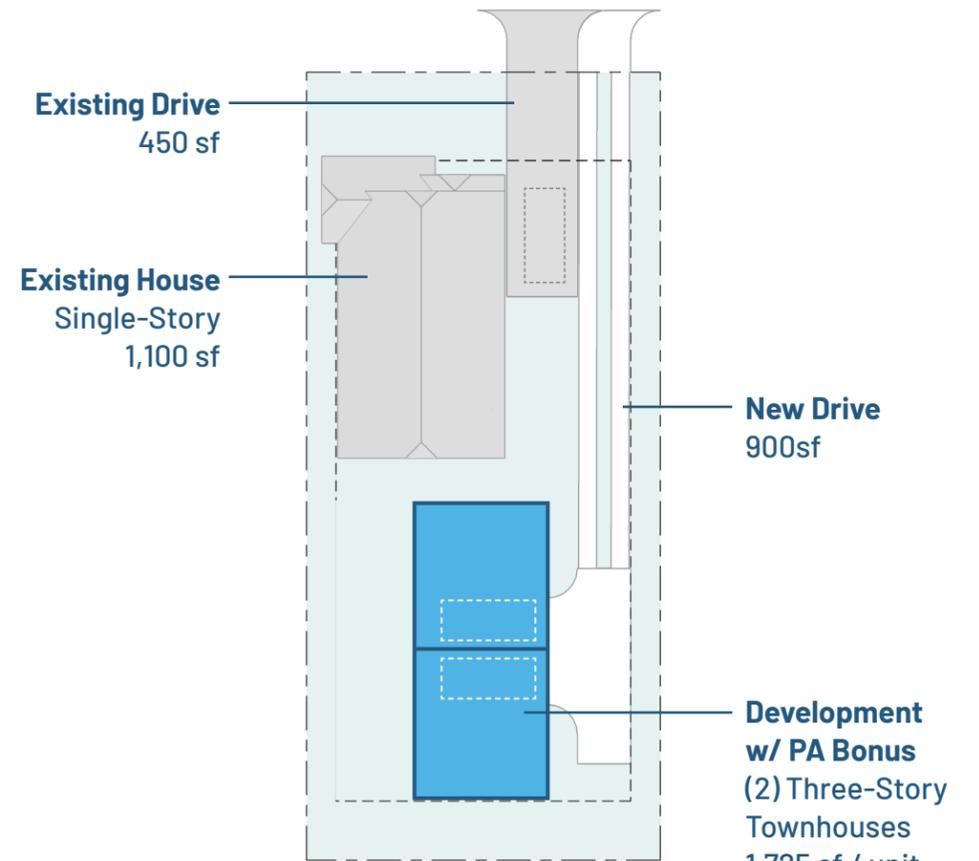


PRESERVATION BONUS - HOME PHASE I

MEDIAN SIZED LOT - 8,000



Preserved Home + Two Additional Unit



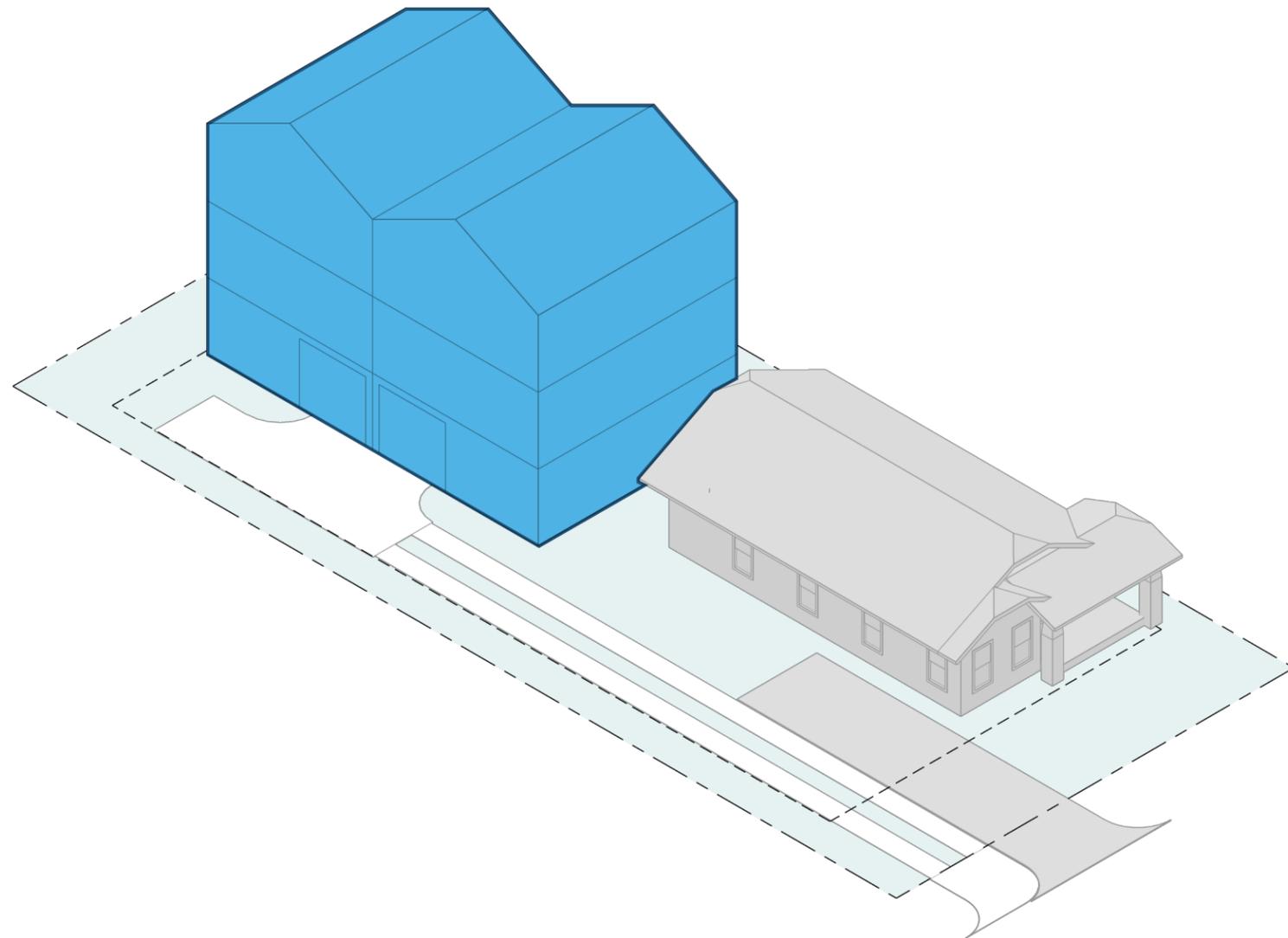
DIFFICULT TO MAKE WORK

Floor-to-Area Calculations

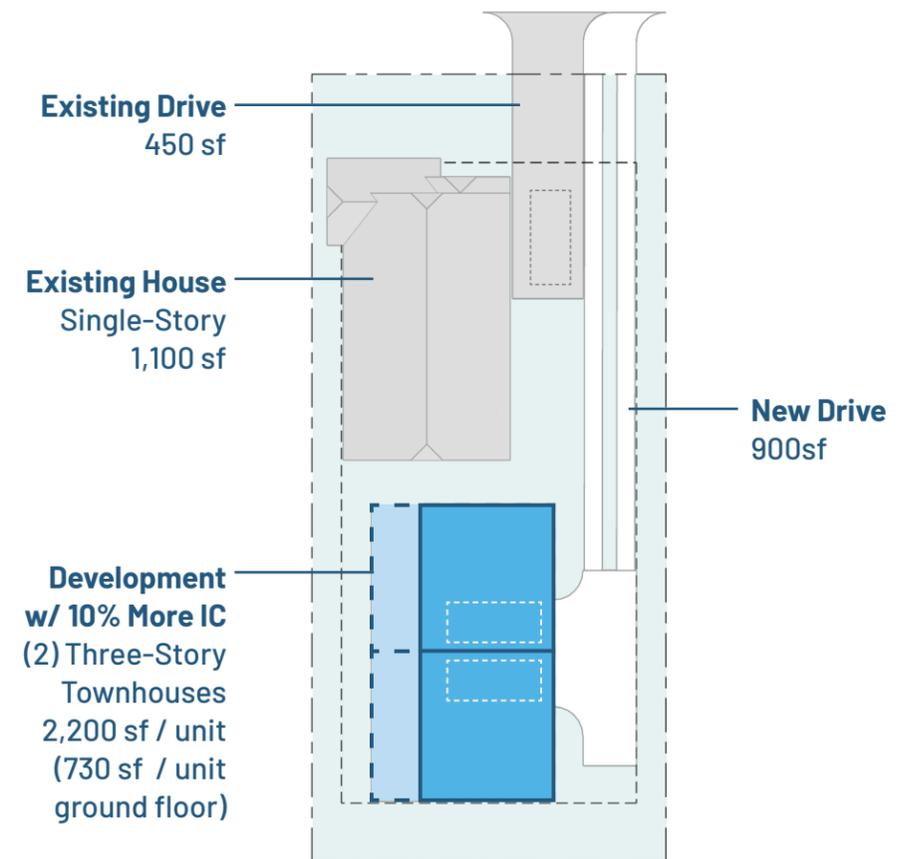
Existing House	1,100 sf	0.14 FAR	(Exempt)
Development w/ PA Bonus	3,450 sf	0.43 FAR	
Total		0.57 FAR	BELOW ENTITLEMENT



PRESERVATION BONUS - EXEMPTING EXISTING I.C. MEDIAN SIZED LOT - 8,000



Preserved Home + Two Additional Unit



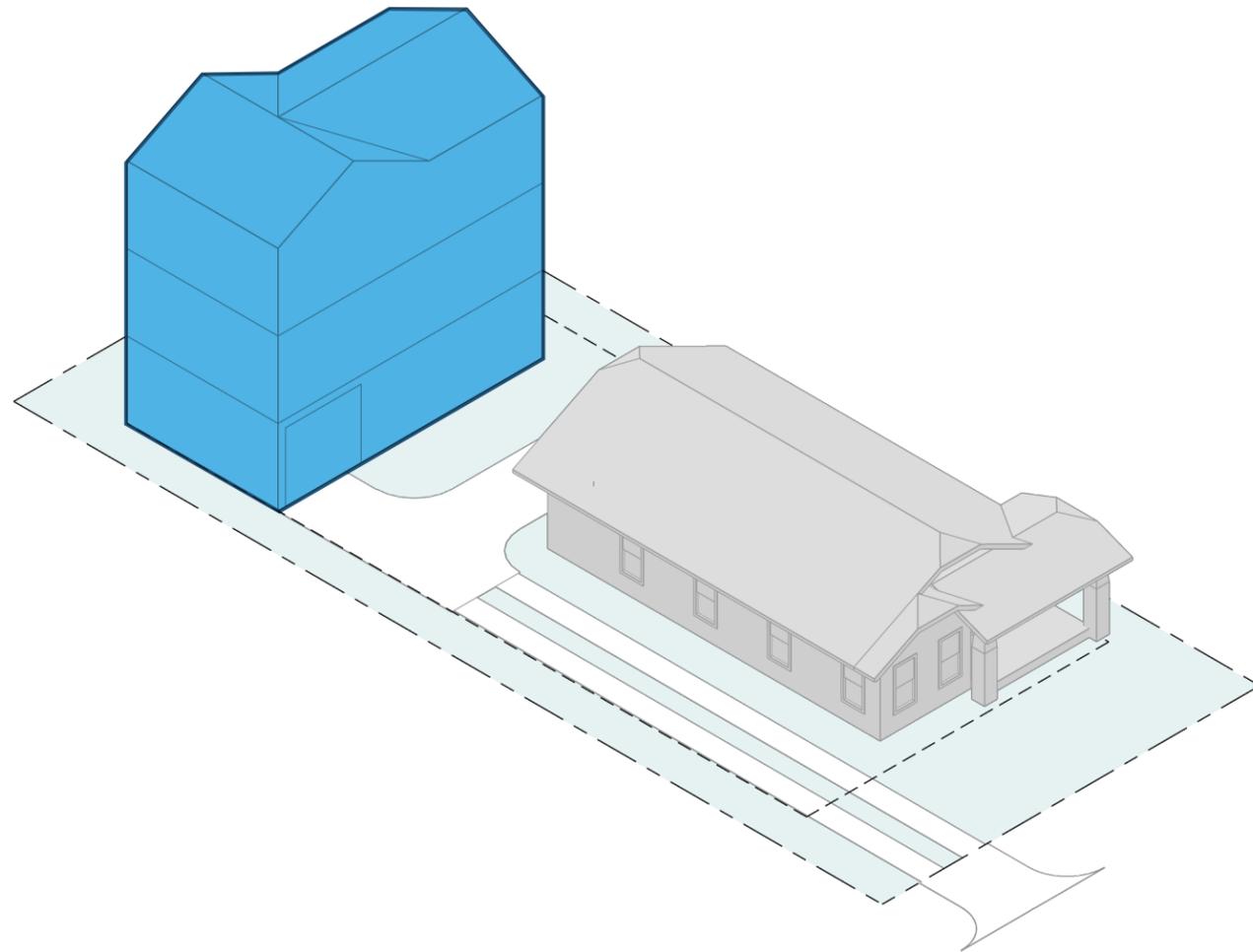
Floor-to-Area Calculations

Existing House	1,100 sf	0.14 FAR	(Exempt)
Development w/ PA Bonus	4,400 sf	0.55 FAR	LIMITING FACTOR
Total		0.69 FAR	

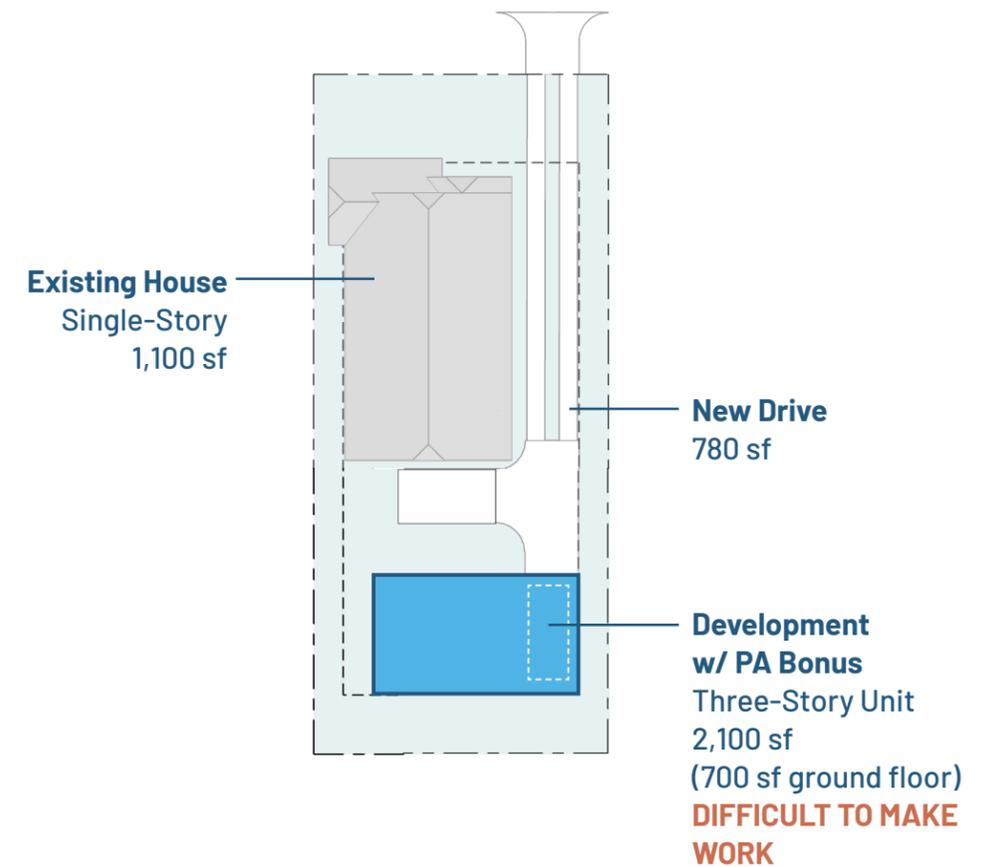


PRESERVATION BONUS - HOME PHASE I

MINIMUM SIZED LOT - 5,750



Preserved Home + One Additional Unit

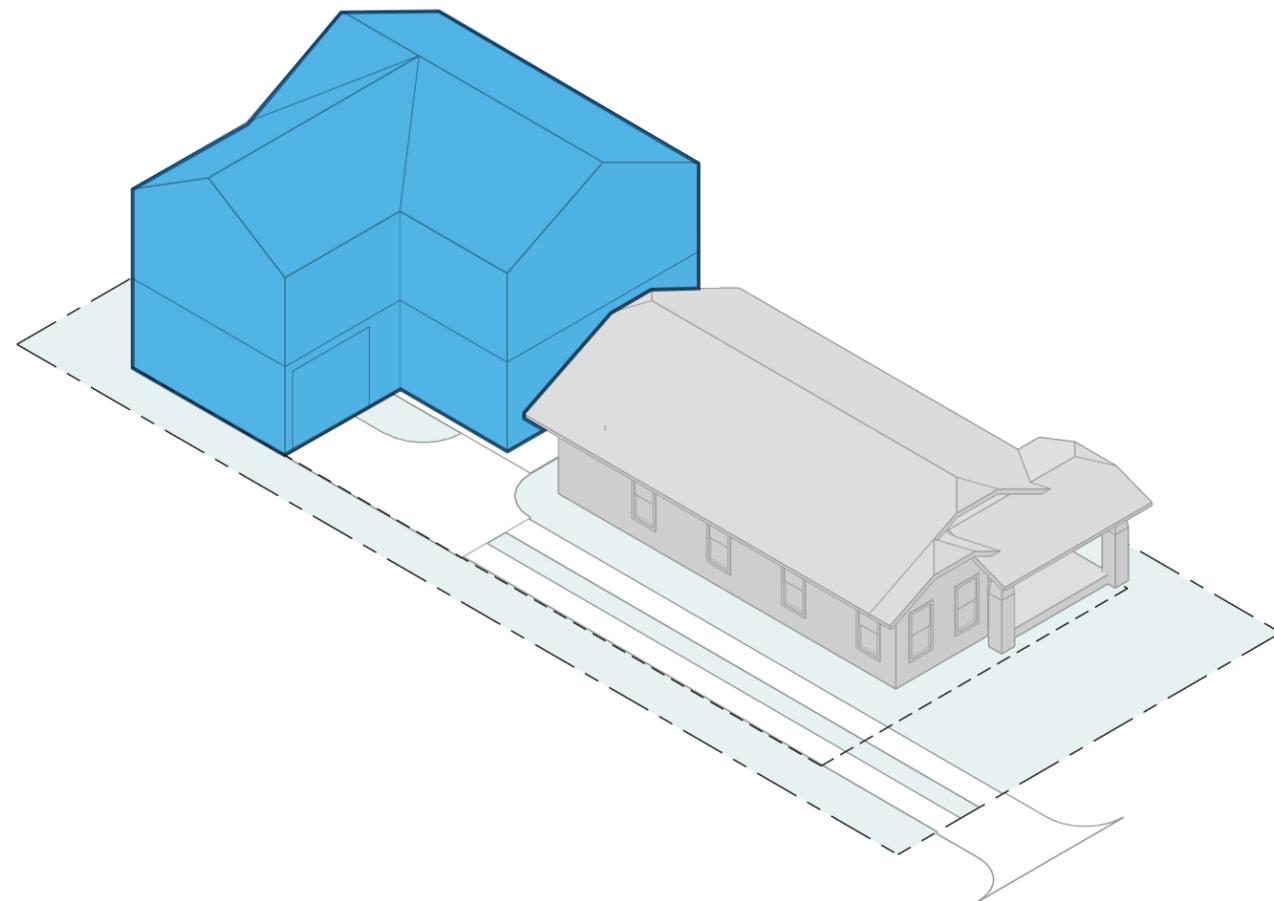


Floor-to-Area Calculations

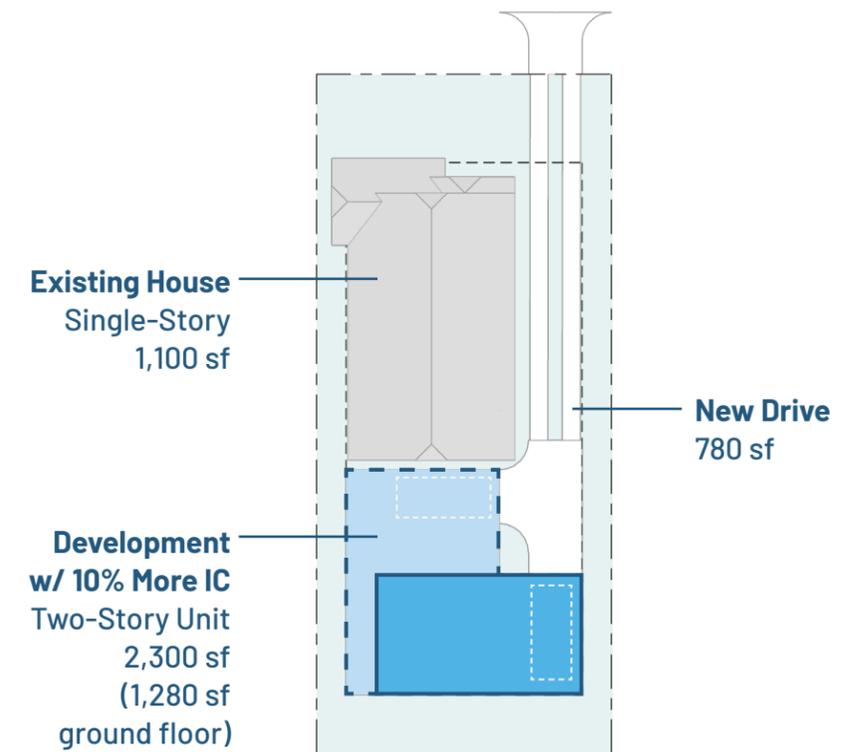
Existing House	1,100 sf	0.19 FAR	(Exempt)
Development w/ PA Bonus	2,100 sf	0.37 FAR	
Total		0.56 FAR	



PRESERVATION BONUS - EXEMPTING EXISTING I.C. MINIMUM SIZED LOT - 5,750



Preserved Home + One Additional Unit

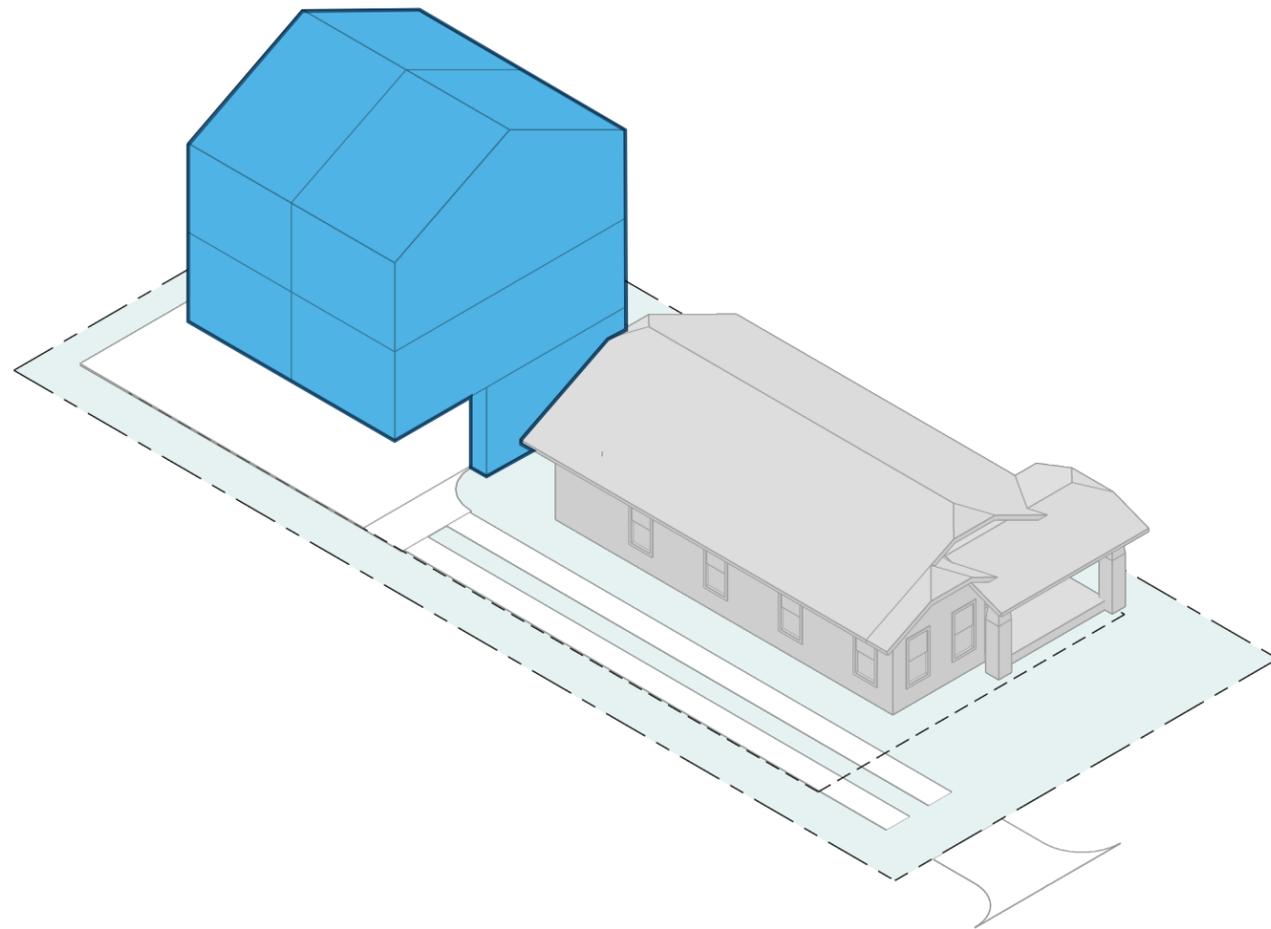


Floor-to-Area Calculations

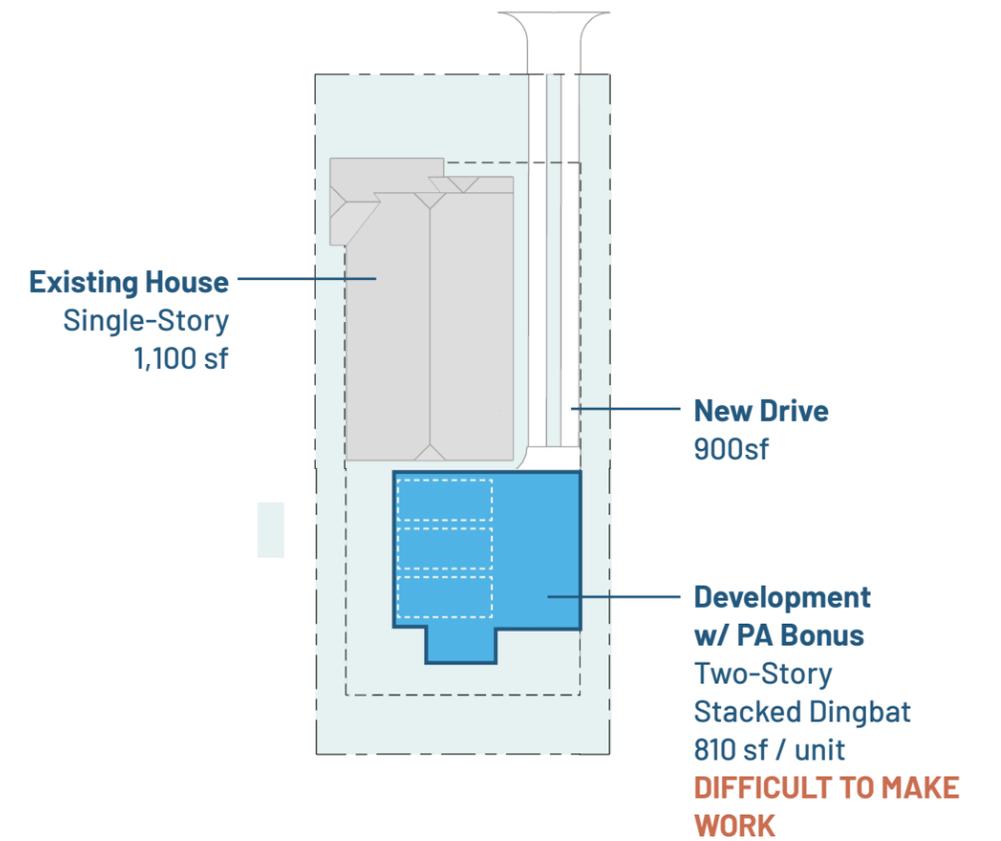
Existing House	1,100 sf	0.19 FAR	(Exempt)
Development w/ PA Bonus	2,300 sf	0.40 FAR	LIMITING FACTOR
Total		0.59 FAR	



PRESERVATION BONUS - HOME PHASE I MINIMUM SIZED LOT - 5,750



Preserved Home + Two Additional Unit

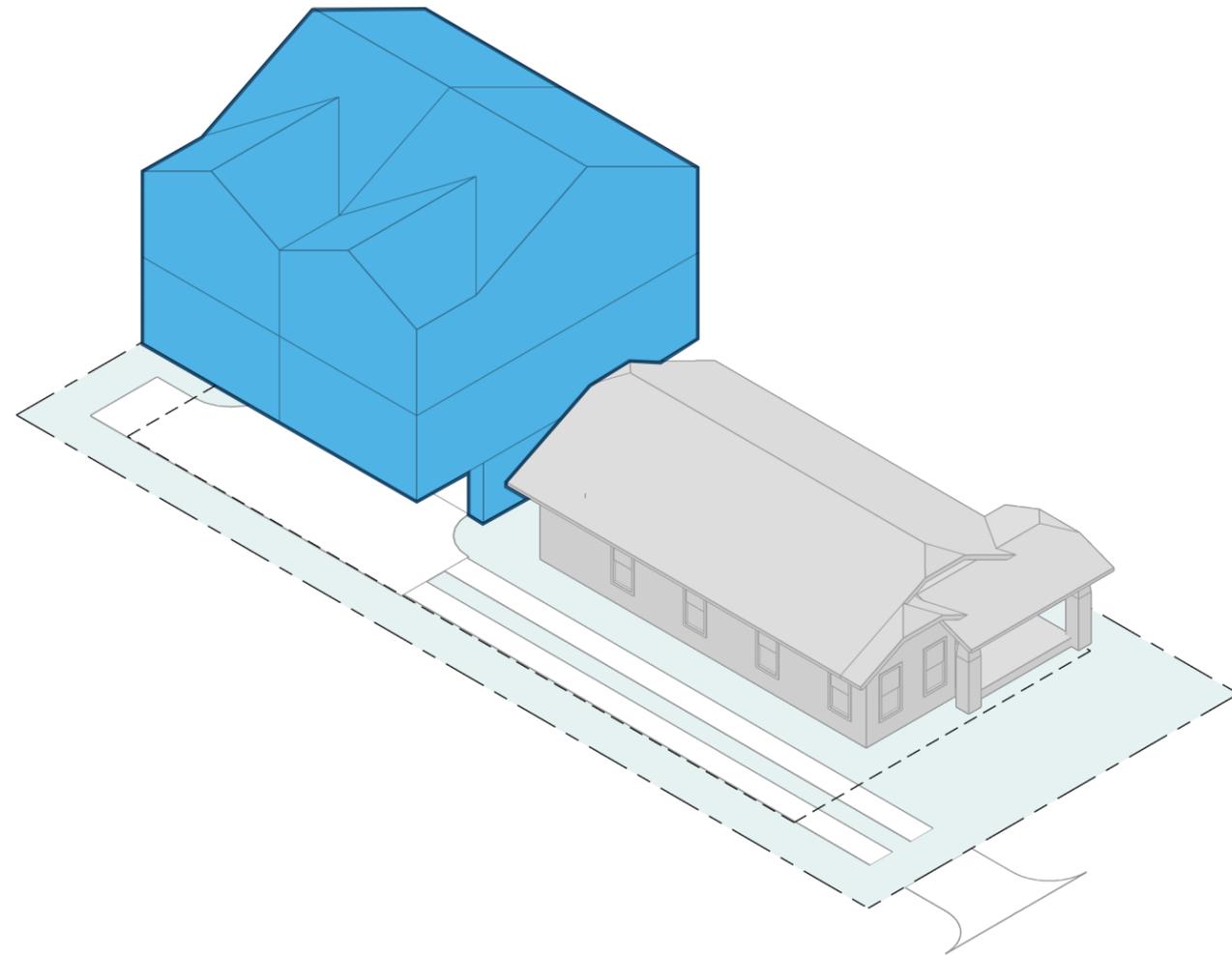


Floor-to-Area Calculations

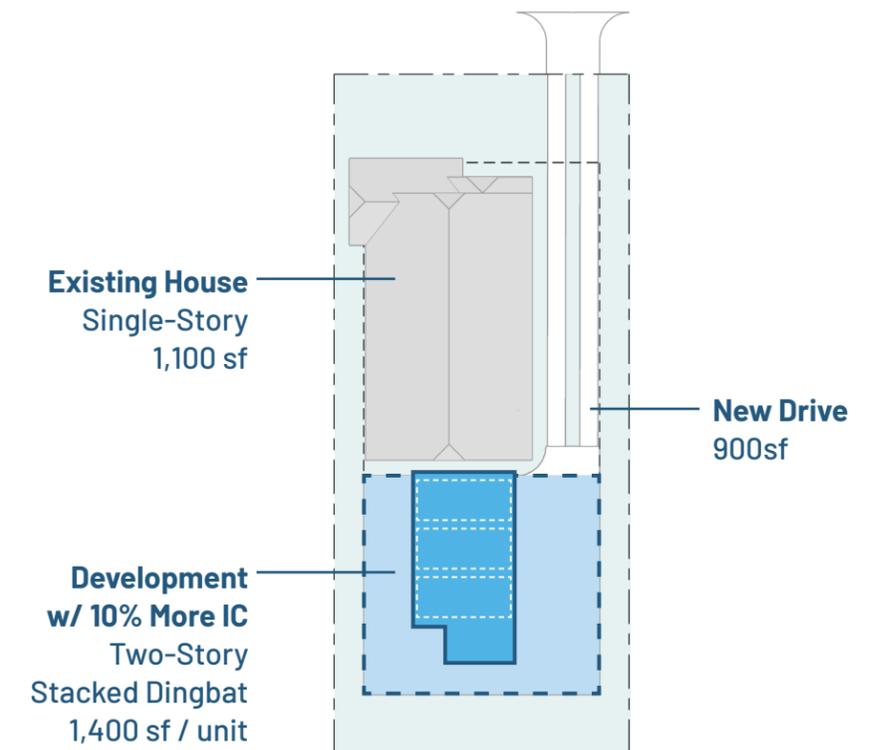
Existing House	1,100 sf	0.19 FAR	(Exempt)
Development w/ PA Bonus	1,790 sf	0.31 FAR	
Total		0.50 FAR	BELOW ENTITLEMENT



PRESERVATION BONUS - EXEMPTING EXISTING I.C. MINIMUM SIZED LOT - 5,750



Preserved Home + Two Additional Unit



Floor-to-Area Calculations

Existing House	1,100 sf	0.19 FAR	(Exempt)
Development w/ PA Bonus	2,900 sf	0.50 FAR	
Total		0.69 FAR	

Future housing projections under Preservation Austin Bonus

Citywide Analysis of Austin, TX

About this analysis

This is a citywide analysis of the Preservation Bonus as it relates to the HOME ordinance (Ordinance 20231207-001). For the purposes of this study the following factors were considered:

- All parcels that are zoned as SF-1, or SF-2, or SF-3 with a minimum lot area of at least 5,750 sf is described as a qualifying parcel.
- The qualifying parcels have one existing structure built on or before December 31, 1960.
- The qualifying parcels fall on or inside Austin's Urban Watershed boundaries

There are a **total of 22,709 parcels in Austin, TX** that qualify for this study under the qualifying factors listed above.

Three different scenarios have been modeled and tested to generated this data set. The conditions of these scenarios are listed below:

- 01 Preserve existing structure and add up to two additional units** while maintaining **impervious coverage allowance at 45% of lot area**. All other area, height, and density requirement follows the HOME ordinance.
- 02 Preserve existing structure and add up to two additional units** while increasing **impervious coverage allowance to 55% of lot area**. All other area, height, and density requirement follows the HOME ordinance.
- 03 Preserve existing structure and add up to three additional units** while increasing **impervious coverage allowance to 55% of lot area**. All other area, height, and density requirement follows the HOME ordinance.

Several prototypical site development options were modeled to capture the three scenarios described above based on real-world parcels in Austin, TX that qualify for this study. These prototypical site development options can be reviewed on p.17 - p.20, and the real-world case studies can be viewed by clicking on the links provided with each site development option.



Preservation Bonus
Any new development may exclude the preserved square footage of an existing structure built on or before December 31, 1960 from the Gross Floor Area of the development. At least 50% of the existing dwelling unit and 100% of the street-facing facade must be preserved.

Source: Ordinance 20231207-001

Prepared for: City of Austin
Issued: February 26, 2024
Prepared in partnership with: AIA Housing Advocacy Group & Preservation Austin

The information contained in this proposal is confidential, is intended only for the use of the recipient(s) named above and public agencies associated with the recipient, and may be legally privileged.

Citywide Analysis

There are 22,709 parcels in Austin that meet the base requirements for the Preservation bonus. The section below highlights the outcomes⁺ of the three scenarios tested for this analysis.

SCENARIO 01

Assumption: Preserve existing structure and add up to two additional units while maintaining impervious coverage allowance at 45% of lot area.

8%

of the parcels can be developed under this scenario. That is roughly

1,817

 parcels.

That is an estimated addition of approximately

2,544

new housing units to the city.

SCENARIO 02

Assumption: Preserve existing structure and add up to two additional units while increasing impervious coverage allowance to 55% of lot area.

43%

of the parcels can be developed under this scenario. That is roughly

9,765

 parcels.

That is an estimated addition of roughly

13,671

new housing units to the city.

SCENARIO 03

Assumption: Preserve existing structure and add up to three additional units while increasing impervious coverage allowance to 55% of lot area.

43%

of the parcels can be developed under this scenario. That is roughly

9,765

 parcels.

That is an estimated addition of roughly

20,507

new housing units to the city.

⁺ The outcomes shown in this analysis is based on Cedar's algorithmic interpolation of city-wide data. Additional review may be required. Cedar is currently building tools for refinement of the accuracy of the data shown on this page.

This preliminary analysis does not take existing deed restrictions and trees into consideration.



Prototypical Development Options

PROTOTYPE 01



Existing Structure + Attached Secondary Unit	
Min. preserved floor area	50% - 100%
Min. lot width required	50 ft - 60ft
Min. lot area required	5,750 sf - 7,500 sf
New units added	1
Total unit count	2
Allowed impervious cover	45%
Unit mix	<input type="radio"/> Existing structure <input checked="" type="radio"/> Attached secondary

⁺ View this scenario deployed on a property in Austin, TX <https://www.cedar.build/reports/austin/10671674-277e-43cd-817e-4dcd72df1fc0c>

PROTOTYPE 02



Split Existing + New Single-family residence	
Min. preserved floor area	50%
Min. lot width required	50 ft - 60ft
Min. lot area required	5,750 sf - 7,500 sf
New units added	2
Total unit count	3
Allowed impervious cover	45%
Unit mix	<input type="radio"/> Existing structure <input checked="" type="radio"/> Existing split <input checked="" type="radio"/> New single-family

⁺ View this scenario deployed on a property in Austin, TX <https://www.cedar.build/reports/austin/10671674-277e-43cd-817e-4dcd72df1fc0c>

Prototypical Development Options

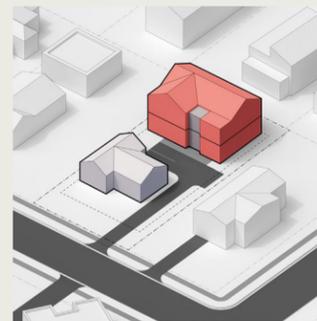
PROTOTYPE 03



Existing Structure + New Single-family	
Min. preserved floor area	50% - 100%
Min. lot width required	50 ft - 60ft
Min. lot area required	5,750 sf - 7,500 sf
New units added	1
Total unit count	2
Allowed impervious cover	45%
Unit mix	<input type="radio"/> Existing structure <input checked="" type="radio"/> New Single-family

⁺ View this scenario deployed on a property in Austin, TX <https://www.cedar.build/reports/austin/672782aa-6146-4e66-adef-328c7154708e>

PROTOTYPE 04



Existing Structure + Stacked Duplex	
Min. preserved floor area	50% - 100%
Min. lot width required	50 ft - 60ft
Min. lot area required	5,750 sf - 7,500 sf
New units added	2
Total unit count	3
Allowed impervious cover	55%
Unit mix	<input type="radio"/> Existing structure <input checked="" type="radio"/> Stacked Duplexes

⁺ View this scenario deployed on a property in Austin, TX <https://www.cedar.build/reports/austin/10671674-277e-43cd-817e-4dcd72df1fc0c>

Prototypical Development Options

PROTOTYPE 05



Existing Structure + Standard Duplex	
Min. preserved floor area	50% - 100%
Min. lot width required	50 ft - 60ft
Min. lot area required	7,500 sf +
New units added	2
Total unit count	3
Allowed impervious cover	55%
Unit mix	<input type="radio"/> Existing structure <input checked="" type="radio"/> Standard Duplexes

⁺ View this scenario deployed on a property in Austin, TX <https://www.cedar.build/reports/austin/ba427175-0145-429b-bca3-679cd7c04f9b>

PROTOTYPE 06



Existing Structure + Stacked triplex	
Min. preserved floor area	50% - 100%
Min. lot width required	50 ft - 60ft
Min. lot area required	5,750 sf - 7,500 sf
New units added	3
Total unit count	4
Allowed impervious cover	55%
Unit mix	<input type="radio"/> Existing structure <input checked="" type="radio"/> Stacked Triplexes

⁺ View this scenario deployed on a property in Austin, TX <https://www.cedar.build/reports/austin/7b1617c8-5049-4457-858c-da94bf751949>

Prototypical Development Options

PROTOTYPE 07



Existing Structure + Standard Duplex	
Min. preserved floor area	50% - 100%
Min. lot width required	50 ft - 60ft
Min. lot area required	7,500 sf +
New units added	3
Total unit count	4
Allowed impervious cover	55%
Unit mix	<input type="radio"/> Existing structure <input checked="" type="radio"/> Townhomes

⁺ View this scenario deployed on a property in Austin, TX <https://www.cedar.build/reports/austin/ba427175-0145-429b-bca3-679cd7c04f9b>

Sample Neighborhood-scale Analysis

Neighborhoods in view (L to R)
Westfield, Old West Austin, Clarksville, Judge's Hill, West End

Watershed areas in view (L to R)
Johnson Creek, Lady Bird Lake, Shoal Creek

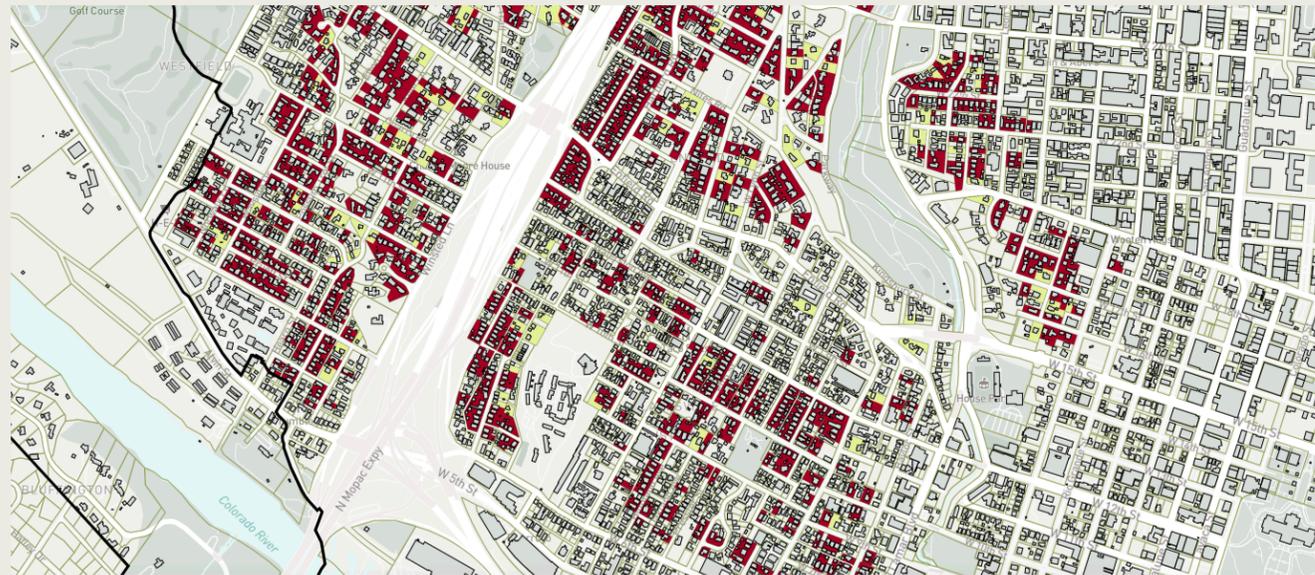
Total qualifying parcels in view
917 parcels qualify for the Preservation Bonus in this area

Lot area
6,000 sf is the most common lot size in this area

Lot width
50 ft is the most common lot width in this area

SCENARIO 01

Preserve existing structure and add up to **two additional units** while maintaining **impervious coverage allowance at 45%** of lot area.



● No units added: **828 parcels** ● Up to 2 new units: **89 parcels** ● Up to 3 new units: **0 parcels**

90%
of the parcels in this area qualify but cannot be developed.

10%
of the parcels in this area allow addition of up to 2 new units.

0%
Not applicable under this scenario.

This yields approximately **267 new housing units** in this area



Sample Neighborhood-scale Analysis

Neighborhoods in view (L to R)
Windsor Park, University Hills

Watershed areas in view (L to R)
Tannehill Branch, Fort Branch, Little Walnut Creek

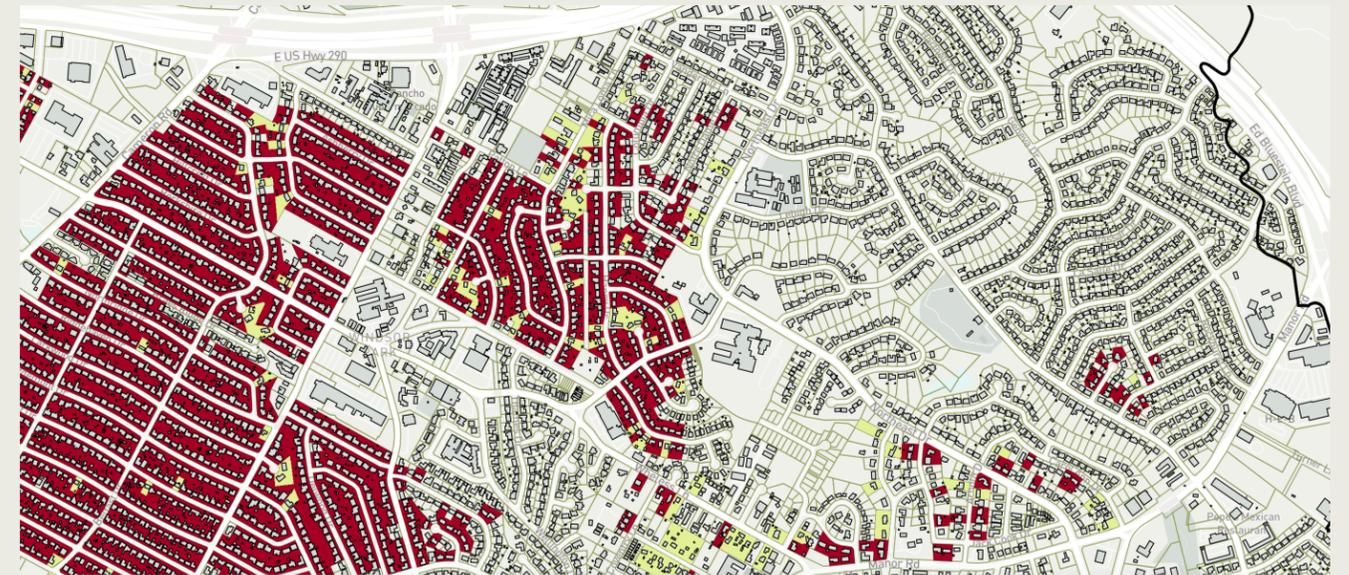
Total qualifying parcels in view
1,668 parcels qualify for the Preservation Bonus in this area

Lot area
8,500 sf is the most common lot size in this area

Lot width
70 ft is the most common lot width in this area

SCENARIO 01

Preserve existing structure and add up to **two additional units** while maintaining **impervious coverage allowance at 45%** of lot area.



● No units added: **1,562 parcels** ● Up to 2 new units: **106 parcels** ● Up to 3 new units: **0 parcels**

94%
of the parcels in this area qualify but cannot be developed.

6%
of the parcels in this area allow addition of up to 2 new units.

0%
Not applicable under this scenario.

This yields approximately **318 new housing units** in this area



Sample Neighborhood-scale Analysis

Neighborhoods in view (L to R)
Westfield, Old West Austin, Clarksville, Judge's Hill, West End

Watershed areas in view (L to R)
Johnson Creek, Lady Bird Lake, Shoal Creek

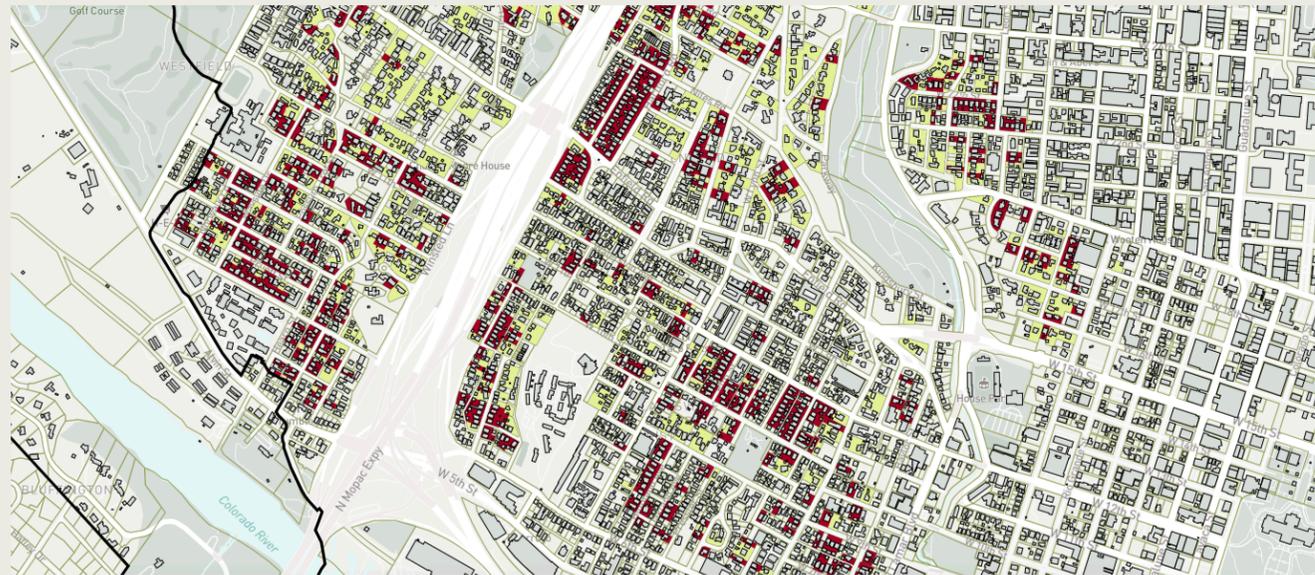
Total qualifying parcels in view
917 parcels qualify for the Preservation Bonus in this area

Lot area
6,000 sf is the most common lot size in this area

Lot width
50 ft is the most common lot width in this area

SCENARIO 02

Preserve existing structure and add up to **two additional units** while increasing **impervious coverage allowance to 55%** of lot area.



● No units added: **547 parcels** ● Up to 2 new units: **370 parcels** ● Up to 3 new units: **0 parcels**

60% of the parcels in this area qualify but cannot be developed. **40%** of the parcels in this area allow addition of up to 2 new units. **0%** Not applicable under this scenario.

This yields approximately **1,110 new housing units** in this area



Sample Neighborhood-scale Analysis

Neighborhoods in view (L to R)
Windsor Park, University Hills

Watershed areas in view (L to R)
Tannehill Branch, Fort Branch, Little Walnut Creek

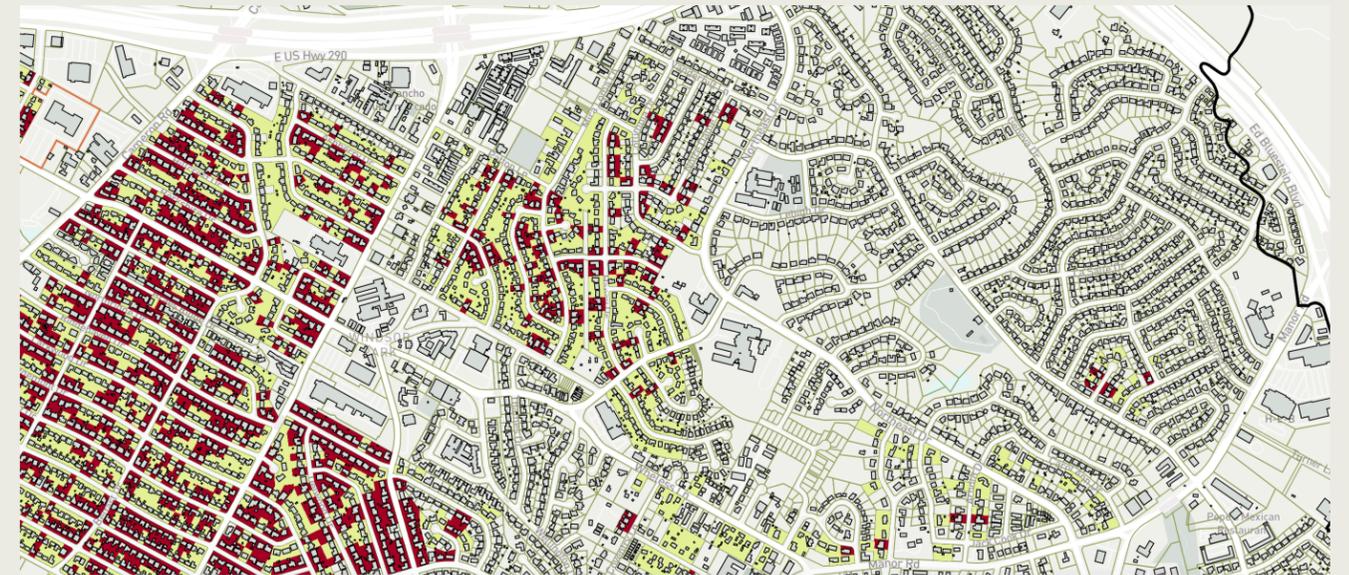
Total qualifying parcels in view
1,668 parcels qualify for the Preservation Bonus in this area

Lot area
8,500 sf is the most common lot size in this area

Lot width
70 ft is the most common lot width in this area

SCENARIO 02

Preserve existing structure and add up to **two additional units** while increasing **impervious coverage allowance to 55%** of lot area.



● No units added: **791 parcels** ● Up to 2 new units: **877 parcels** ● Up to 3 new units: **0 parcels**

47% of the parcels in this area qualify but cannot be developed. **53%** of the parcels in this area allow addition of up to 2 new units. **0%** Not applicable under this scenario.

This yields approximately **2,631 new housing units** in this area



Sample Neighborhood-scale Analysis

Neighborhoods in view (L to R)
Westfield, Old West Austin, Clarksville, Judge's Hill, West End

Watershed areas in view (L to R)
Johnson Creek, Lady Bird Lake, Shoal Creek

Total qualifying parcels in view
917 parcels qualify for the Preservation Bonus in this area

Lot area
6,000 sf is the most common lot size in this area

Lot width
50 ft is the most common lot width in this area

SCENARIO 03

Preserve existing structure and add up to **three additional units** while increasing **impervious coverage allowance to 55%** of lot area.



● No units added: **547 parcels** ● Up to 2 new units: **43 parcels** ● Up to 3 new units: **327 parcels**

60% of the parcels in this area qualify but cannot be developed. **4%** of the parcels in this area allow addition of up to 2 new units. **36%** of the parcels in this area allow addition of up to 3 new units.

This yields approximately **1,437 new housing units** in this area



Sample Neighborhood-scale Analysis

Neighborhoods in view (L to R)
Windsor Park, University Hills

Watershed areas in view (L to R)
Tannehill Branch, Fort Branch, Little Walnut Creek

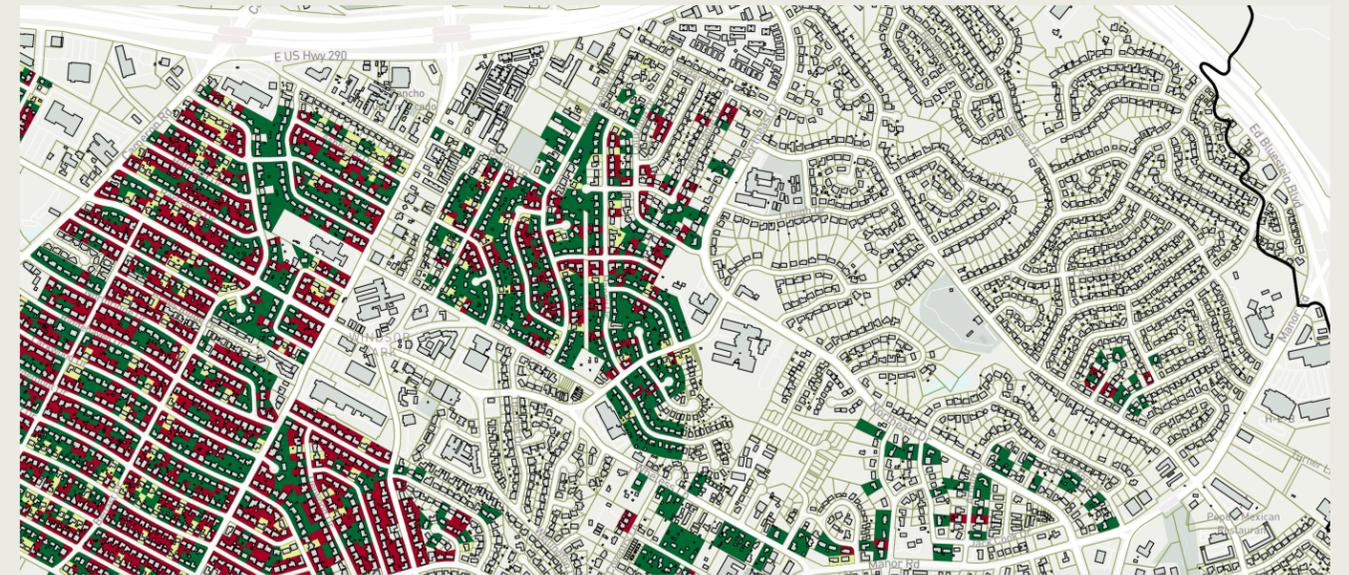
Total qualifying parcels in view
1,668 parcels qualify for the Preservation Bonus in this area

Lot area
8,500 sf is the most common lot size in this area

Lot width
70 ft is the most common lot width in this area

SCENARIO 03

Preserve existing structure and add up to **three additional units** while increasing **impervious coverage allowance to 55%** of lot area.



● No units added: **791 parcels** ● Up to 2 new units: **148 parcels** ● Up to 3 new units: **729 parcels**

47% of the parcels in this area qualify but cannot be developed. **9%** of the parcels in this area allow addition of up to 2 new units. **44%** of the parcels in this area allow addition of up to 3 new units.

This yields approximately **3,360 new housing units** in this area



COA council email form:

<https://www.austintexas.gov/email/all-council-members>

or

<https://tinyurl.com/Austin-council>

The 4th unit for preservation should be part of Home Phase 2.

The FAR bonus should be restored as part of Home Phase 2.

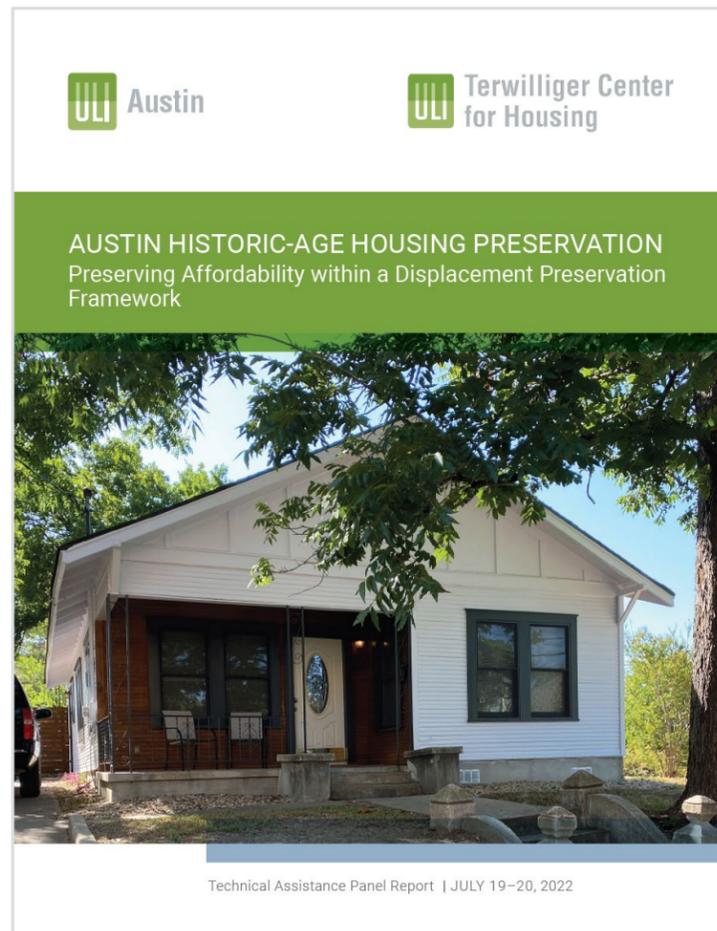
Delay is the same thing as a voting no.

House Relocation - Recommended Process and Policy Changes

- Allow a no-cost switch from a Building Demolition Permit to a Building Relocation Permit, current processes require a cancellation form and reapplication.
- Modify the permit application, review, and approval process for relocation to expedite projects and/or reduce the required fees to encourage relocation over demolition.
- Develop new policies to allow the temporary placement of relocated houses during the permitting process to avoid unnecessary demolitions and support relocation.
- Revise and/or expand the Construction and Demolition Recycling Ordinance to incentivize relocation, as an alternative to demolition



ULI Technical Assistance Panel with the City of Austin



- Housing and preservation policy experts to look at what policies, programs, and tools the city could implement to preserve historic-age (50 years old and older) housing while supporting affordability and preventing displacement.
- It's easier to demolish than to preserve – how do we change this dynamic?
- All solutions should preserve and positively affect affordability to preserve culture and community.
- Recommendations: More CLTs, better home repair programs, preservation bonus, streamline processes for homeowners and developers



PRESERVATION BONUS

POLICY ACTION

FAR Fix
Fourth Unit
Site Coverage

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

Subdivisions
Reduced Setbacks
Relocations

FINAL ASK

PA is requesting the Housing and Planning Committee to vote on a recommendation to the full council.