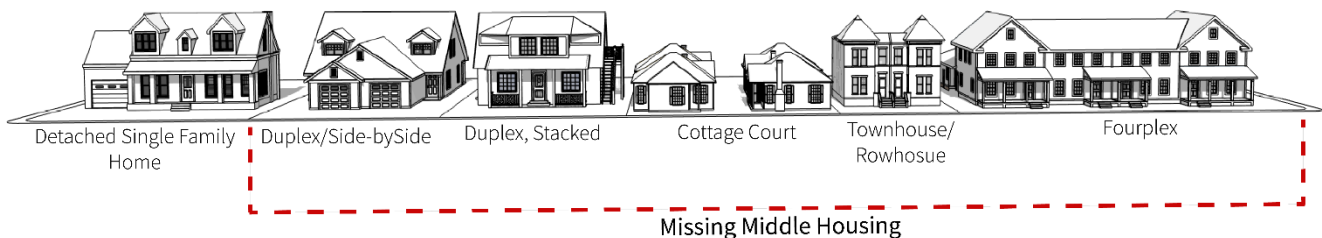


How to Meet the Housing Needs of Los Gatos

While Los Gatos is a desirable location to live, finding a place to call home in Los Gatos has been unattainable for many. The Town's housing issues come from many factors, the primary of which is affordability (high purchase and rental prices). Other related factors include a lack of unit types and sizes to meet the needs of prospective residents. The aging population in Town may wish to downsize; however, there is a the shortage of smaller dwelling units. The prevalence of single-family homes and the trend towards building larger and larger homes has further limited the supply of new housing.

These housing issues are not unique to Los Gatos and are seen throughout the Bay Area and many communities in California. As part of the Housing Element process, the State dictates the number of units at a variety of income levels for which a jurisdiction must plan and remove barriers to construction. For Los Gatos, this is expected to be approximately 2,000 dwelling units of various income levels over the next eight years.

To address the diversity of housing needed in Los Gatos and meet the requirements of State law, the Town needs innovative strategies to plan for housing. One strategy is to help evolve existing neighborhoods into a heterogeneous mix of housing types and affordabilities, as was done in past in cities throughout the nation. Housing types that lie between detached single-family and apartment buildings is often referred to as "Missing Middle" housing, and can include a mix of duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, cottage courts/clusters, and townhomes (illustrated in the graphic, below). Through design, these units can be compatible in form and appearance with detached single-family homes.



Future Housing – Providing for the Missing Middle

As part of the 2040 General Plan, a goal, supporting policies, and action items (now called implementation programs) are proposed to support the development of Missing Middle housing within existing Los Gatos neighborhoods. The graphic below illustrates this concept using a variety of Missing Middle housing types.

In the graphic below, two blocks were laid out to be identical relative to lot lines and existing structures, with the housing units shaded in white being existing single-family detached homes of a variety of sizes (square footages). The graphic labeled “Existing” depicts a density of 5 dwelling units per acre (du/ac).

The graphic labeled “With Missing Middle Housing” shows that same block with future development and how the individual lots of different sizes could be redeveloped with a 12 du/ac density. The white shaded structures are the remaining existing single-family homes and the gold shaded structures are new Missing Middle housing types. Some are in addition to existing structures (“A” and “F”), one is a replacement structure on an existing lot (“C”), and two show the consolidation of two lots to create one larger lot (“B” and “D”).

On a typical block in Town, the number of Missing Middle units would likely be fewer. Not all properties would be redeveloped, and some would just have an ADU added in the back, while others could be duplexes. The larger lots might be able to get up to four units because they are over one-third of an acre. This illustration shows how a range of housing types and sizes could potentially be incorporated into an existing neighborhood. In addition to different types, the Missing Middle concepts would also support the production of a variety of unit sizes in the 500 to 1,000 square foot range.

