The case for more American tiny home communities

by

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Abstract

As affordable housing becomes a fleeting reality for many Americans, it is clear that increasing housing costs pose a significant challenge for current and future generations of homeowners. The issue of affordable housing dates to the 1930s during the Great Depression. Attempts to provide affordable housing have been implemented with limited success by several acts of legislation that ebb and flow with the political climate. However, a strong emergent trend is the commercialization of housing which pits institutional investors against the persons who seek to actually occupy the homes. This study analyzes the possible use of tiny homes situated within cluster home communities to provide more affordable housing options for future first-time homeowners, the homeless and persons who simply want to achieve economic freedom by living in a smaller home. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the question “How can tiny homes be compatibly incorporated into cluster home designed communities so that such homes are accessible and affordable, provide high aesthetics, foster environmental stewardship, and provide a sense of place through spatial layout and amenities?”. This question will be answered using a literature review, projective design, as well as precedent studies. Ultimately, this study aims to provide a comprehensive review of tiny homes in cluster home settings by compiling data (both subjective and objective), categorizing such data, identifying how that data influences four factors, and then drawing a reasonable conclusion supporting that tiny homes in cluster designed communities afford a high level of design, accessibility, community, sustainability and affordability.



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Glossary

Affordability
Affordability in homes varies widely between regions in the USA but the Department of Housing and Urban Development defines affordable housing as a percentage of area median income (AMI). As such, it focuses subsidy programs on housing for households earning at or below 80% of the AMI so the housing can be afforded using 30% or less of the household income.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)
An additional smaller dwelling that resides on a larger residential property (typically single-family residential).

Amenities
In the context of this document, amenities are those site features that provide either recreational benefits or leasure activities.

Community Economic Development (CED)
The process of building strong communities, industries and markets through collaboration with the community.

Cluster Development
Community layouts where residential units are grouped in clusters that typically support higher density or provide space for community amenities. Parking may not be adjacent to residential units. This is distinguishable from trailer parks.

Form Based Codes (FBC)
Land development regulations that create predictable build results and a high quality public form.

High Aesthetics
“High Aesthetics” refers to developing homes with a cohesive architectural style that integrates with the surrounding community and enhances resident experience.

Manufactured Home
A Manufactured or Prefabricated (Prefab) home is a living unit that has been constructed off-site and transported to be set onto a plot or pad.

Sustainability
Sustainability is the ability of housing to be implemented with minimal or no damage to the environment for the benefit of future generations.

Site Integration
Site Integration can be defined as how well a project connects itself to the landscape, community, and urban fabric.

Tiny home
A tiny home is defined by floor plan sizes falling between 100 to 1,000 sq ft of livable space typically designed for ergonomics and space efficiency.

Tiny homes on wheels (THOW’s)
A tiny home that is built on a trailer that has wheels and typically ranges from 200- 450 sq ft. in size.

Zoning
Local ordinances that govern and regulate which buildings are allowed to be constructed in select areas and the rules for construction within those areas.

Abstract

As affordable housing becomes a fleeting reality for many Americans, it is clear that increasing housing costs pose a significant challenge for current and future generations of homeowners. The issue of affordable housing, was generated from about 1915 to 1930 when zoning regulations favored single family homes and eliminated forms of affordable housing. Although promotion of affordable housing has been addressed with limited success by several acts of legislation the implementation of which ebb and flow with the political climate. However, a new compounding negative trend is the commercialization of housing which pits institutional investors against the persons who seek to actually occupy the homes. As a partial solution, this study analyzes the possible uses of tiny homes situated within cluster home communities in order to provide more affordable housing options for future first-time homeowners, the homeless and persons who simply want to achieve economic freedom by living in a smaller home. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the question “How can tiny homes be compatibly incorporated into cluster home designed communities so that such homes are accessible and affordable, provide high aesthetics, foster environmental stewardship, and provide a sense of place through spatial layout and amenities?” This question is answered using a literature review, projective design, as well as precedent studies. Ultimately, this study aims to provide a comprehensive review of tiny homes in cluster home settings by compiling data (both subjective and objective), categorizing such data, identifying how that data influences four evaluation factors, and then drawing a reasonable conclusion supporting that tiny homes in cluster designed communities afford a high level of design, accessibility, community, sustainability and affordability.

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1 Introduction

The importance of tiny home communities

1.1 Introduction

In a time when home ownership is increasingly expensive, there is a need to explore more affordable housing options. Various factors have compounded current marketplace conditions which have polarized the two sides of the housing market: homeowners and aspiring homeowners. Homeowners have benefited from appreciated home values which contribute to personal wealth. Unfortunately, this also means that the homeownership threshold for the younger generation is becoming increasingly out of reach. Tiny homes and Aternative Dwelling Units have emerged as an option to address housing inequality. Thus, this report provides an in-depth look at existing tiny home projects in the United States by analyzing price, structure, and suitability for communities. By combining this information, my review of these communities allows future projects to leverage the knowledge of both successful and unsuccessful prior projects.

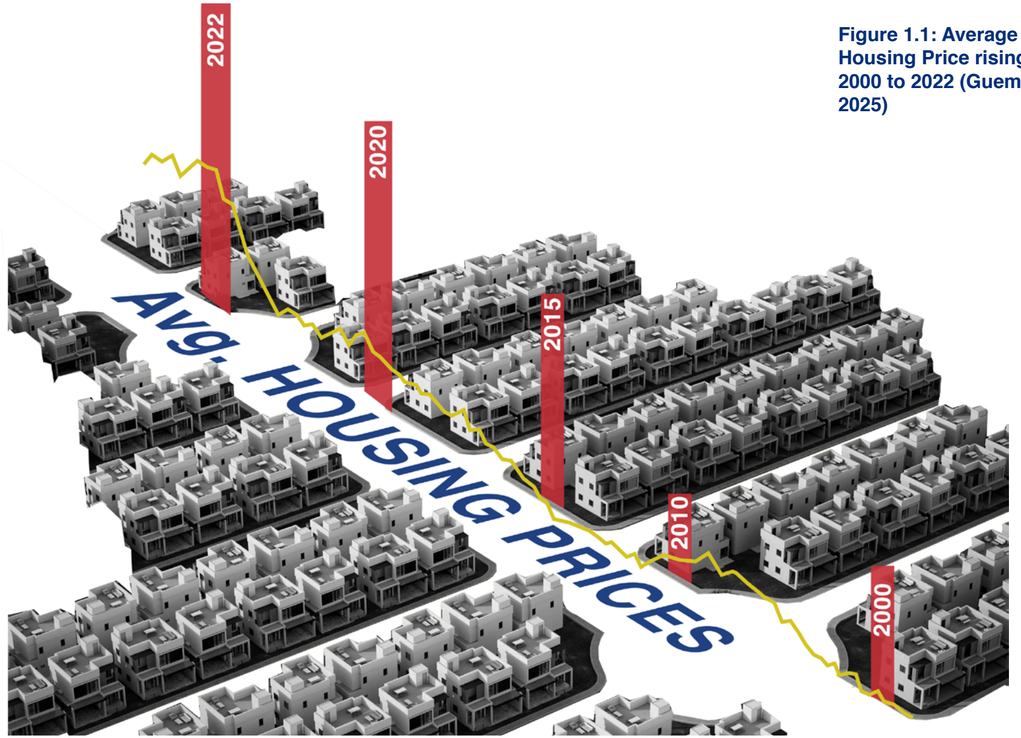


Figure 1.1: Average Housing Price rising from 2000 to 2022 (Guemmer 2025)

1.2 Research Objectives and Goals

Goal One: Provide a foundational knowledge of tiny home communities and their strengths and weaknesses to demonstrate how tiny homes might be more widely utilized in the context of new development.

Goal Two: Analyze existing tiny home communities through matrices to classify different typologies of effective unit types, landscaping, layout formations, and amenities.

Goal Three: Create a set of housing typologies based on the criteria to be used as guidelines for future tiny home communities serving various users of different income levels.

Research Question

How can tiny homes be compatibly incorporated into cluster home communities to make homes more affordable, provide high aesthetics, and provide a sense of place through spatial layout and amenities?

1.3 Importance

As housing prices have substantially increased over the last several decades, many Americans within the lower and middle-class brackets have struggled to find suitable housing. As this trend escalates, the need for affordable housing has become ever-present. However, countervailing factors make affordable housing less prevalent. In general, Madden & Marcuse (2016) notes that housing regulations and public housing policies are used as social control, a means to increase labor productivity, or drive speculative land prices. These policies often displace those in poverty while benefiting private capital. As such, this report explores the possible uses of tiny homes in a community planning setting to generate a new wave of affordable housing options for persons of low income, first-time homeowners and those seeking a smaller residential footprint.

1.4 Expected Outcome

The expected outcome of this project is to provide a research-informed report that guides designers and developer to consider the benefits associated with adopting favorable tiny home planning practices . Research results will be informed through matrix analysis, precedent studies, and case studies to identify the most successful typologies that can be translated into future projects. These typologies provide a toolkit for designers to develop new communities that maximize affordability, aesthetics and sustainability. This project also aims to highlight the impact of inequitable housing distribution. This research is limited by several factors such as time frame, data availability, and subjective analysis. This research seeks to contribute to the ever-growing body of work that supports alternative housing developments.

1.5 Project Overview

Chapter One: The introduction chapter summarizes the issues that this project aims to address and the subsequent goals.

Chapter Two: The background chapter compiles existing literature and information regarding tiny homes and tiny home communities. This information covers the history and relevance of tiny home communities as a form of affordable housing. Additionally, this chapter discusses the role of landscape architects in the development of such communities.

Chapter Three: The methodology chapter covers the research process employed by this report. This includes a literature review, precedent selection, and a composite analysis of all precedent through a series of matrices.

Chapter Four: The findings chapter takes the composite analysis from the previous chapter and utilizes the most positive compiled traits as a basis to identify the most favorable tiny home communities.

Chapter Five: The design concepts chapter utilizes the composite matrix of traits to create three conceptual tiny home communities.

Chapter Six: The final chapter of this report contains the conclusions from the project, the limitations, and potential future research that can be pursued.

Chapter Seven: References and Appendices

2 Background

The history of american tiny homes and public perception

2.1 Project Background

The central goal of this report is to recommend what aspects of tiny homes, as incorporated into cluster home developments, can help satisfy the persistent need for affordable housing. The research question seeks to understand how tiny homes can be introduced and encouraged through zoning while being accepted within traditional residential settings. Potential home buyers face the challenges of a dynamic housing market, such as the 2008 housing crash, the lingering impact of the pandemic, and the increasing trend of institutional investors buying homes for investment purposes. These factors contribute to a shortage of affordable housing and a decline in homeownership rates, especially among younger generations burdened by student loan debt. Besides economic factors, potential tiny home buyers may face the social stigma associated with alternative housing, a lack of aesthetics and zoning barriers. This project examines user types, including the workforce and the homeless populations, and their respective needs and motivations for considering tiny homes. Specifically, changes in zoning are needed to promote the development of tiny homes, such as increasing density standards, decreasing lot size requirements, and implementing inclusionary zoning regulations. Background research is needed to explore layouts and configurations, including cluster development and auxiliary housing. Finally, strategies are also needed for integrating tiny homes into residential areas to reduce energy consumption and promote more sustainable living.

2.2 Home Ownership

The United States' housing market has undergone several large shifts in the last few decades including the 2008 housing crash and the 2019 pandemic. The aftermath of the 2008 housing crash led to roughly 3 million U.S. homeowners losing their homes in foreclosure (USA Facts 1 2023). Since this decline, homeownership rates have leveled off and have made a steady rise back to 65.9% as compared to 63% of home ownership in 2008 (United States Census Bureau 2023). While this positive trend in ownership seems like an affirmation that all segments of American society obtain home ownership, some demographic sectors are not enjoying equal access to homeownership or safe occupancy as a renter. For example, many residents in the U.S. are renters below the age of 35. Specifically, 66% of persons 35 or younger are renters (DeSilver 2021). Additionally, data has shown that Millennials and Gen Zs on average hold high amounts of student loan debt that impair their long-term saving ability and their likelihood of securing the 20% down payment for traditional mortgage financing (Statista Real Estate Reports 2 2023). A recent estamate is that about five million affordable homes are needed.(Nolon 2022 424).

Home ownership is made less affordable due to shrinking housing inventories because large financial companies (such as hedge funds), are buying homes block-by-block for investment purposes. The investment strategy is to secure large swaths of residential homes so investors can receive a stable rate of return from tenants who require the basic human need of housing. By June 2022, institutional investors owned 3 percent of all single-family rentals nationwide, but in more affordable markets they owned an even larger market share. For example, hedge funds own 20 percent of the affordable homes located in Charlotte, North Carolina according to the Urban Institute. Even as the housing market slows, investors have remained active, buying 26 percent of the single-family homes that sold in June 2023, according to CoreLogic, a data analytics company. (Kaysen 2023). The combination of reduced affordable housing inventory combined with fewer young Americans being able to obtain conventional home financing results in less access to home ownership. A third trend is that U.S. financial policy favors the ownership of single-family homes over multi-family homes. (Davis,2018). Finally, as discussed below, the use of historically exclusionary zoning practices that favored single-family zoning greatly limited the production of more affordable housing such as multi-family or tiny homes. (Nolon 2022 430).

2.3 Housing Affordability

The lack of affordable housing is manifested by the fact that younger Americans are currently more inclined to rent rather than buy due to housing costs reaching unprecedented heights. In the United States, the average home cost is roughly $540,000 while the average household income is around $70,000 (Statista Real Estate Mortgage Reports 2023). Current trends show that the cost of homes across America have consistently out-paced wage growth for the last several decades. This trend worsened within the last 10 years and according “to the Federal Finance Housing Agency, home prices rose 74% from 2010 to 2022. The average wage rose only 54% during the same time.” (USA Facts 1 2023).

There are more extreme examples. In the American West, home prices increased at a staggering rate leading to a major disparity between housing costs and wages over the past decade. Specifically, Western housing costs rose “162% from 2010 to 2022, while wages rose 47%.” (USA Facts 1 2023).

All of these factors combined have led to the United States housing market holding a combined 19 trillion dollars of mortgage debt in 2022 (Statista 3 2022). Said more simply, “our country faces an affordable housing crisis: 32.9 percent of households in America are cost-burdened, spending more than the recommended 30 percent of income on housing costs. One major reason for this problem is a lack of affordable-housing supply.” (Davis 2018, 146). Likewise, in 2019, 46% of renters were cost-burdened and 24% were severely cost-burdened. (Nolon 2022 426)

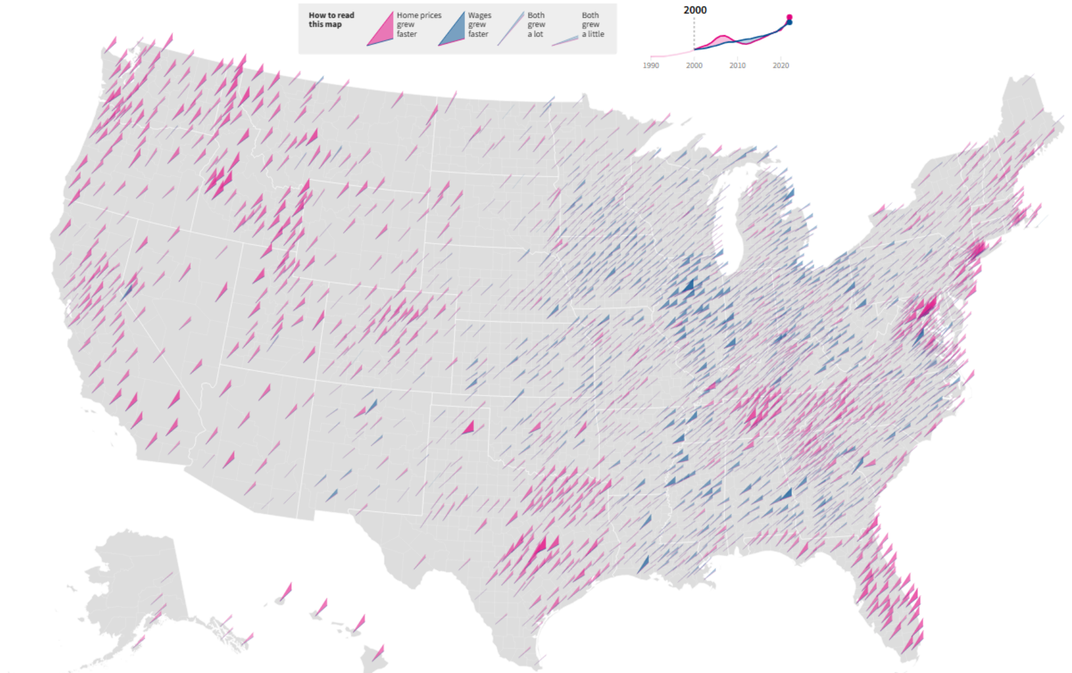


Figure 2.1: Change in Homes Price and Wages 2000 to 2022 (USA Facts)

2.4 Social Dynamics

Along with the financial hurdles that impede home ownership, there also exists a social stigma regarding alternative types of residential units (i.e., mobile homes, tiny homes, high density apartments, etc.). Additionally, there exists a disparity in wealth which has led to the distinct divide between the renting class and the home-owner class. While there have been leaps toward providing affordable housing through national housing legislation and local initiatives, real estate remains an engine-for-profit growth vehicle and thus clashes with the goal of providing universal housing.

There are social barriers to adopting affordable housing. For example, some societies such as America may be inclined to accept smaller homes, while other more traditional societies may be inclined to reject affordable housing. “While THOW (tiny homes on wheels) are generally more accepted in the USA than Australia, this acceptance is not universal. Homeowner and homeowner association attitudes often depend on how tiny houses are integrated into existing urban areas with some preferring specific zones rather than allowing ad hoc parking (Evans 2018a). These attitudes are, of course, not new as (Jackson 1985) described in Crabgrass Frontier and (Fogelson 2007) documented in *Bourgeois Nightmares.* Attitudes reflect broader sociocultural factors—towns with strong counter cultural lifestyles were more positive towards tiny houses than more conservative places as (Evans 2018a) found.” As such, when implementing affordable housing, consideration must be given to aesthetics, environmental stewardship, and a sense of place through spatial layout and amenities. For example, just providing dedicated parking for affordable housing in Australia was enough to garner acceptance.

From a macro perspective, the proponents of affordable housing reflect socio-cultural aspirations of a counter cultural movement whose members reject the commodification of housing. As such, there appears to be two segments of the Tiny House movement: (i) persons who desire to go off grid and become self-sufficient; and (ii) others who just wish to find an affordable means of living among traditional residential populations. With respect to the latter group, thrift-oriented persons enjoy the reduced carbon footprint of tiny homes, their reduced operating costs, the parallel reduction in personal possessions and ease of maintenance. As such, tiny homes may appeal to consumers who favor reduced consumption rather than the rejection of consumerism consistent with an off-grid, sustainable lifestyle (Evans 2018a).

From a historic perspective, it is interesting to note that the U.S. was very receptive to tiny homes prior to the widespread adoption of zoning. America has a strong tradition of small square footage housing beginning with cabins, continuing with Sears and Roebuck prefabricated homes, the shifting to manufactured “trailer homes” and currently culminating with tiny homes (Evans 2019 210).

2.5 Resident Groups

The traditional work force is a resident group who should consider tiny homes as they prioritize other factors in life. In other words, many among this user group seek economic freedom from the chore of servicing a large mortgage that otherwise consumes most of their income. “It is frequently recommended that households should not spend more than 30% of their income on housing (Schwartz 2014, 32; Desmond 2018), yet over 50% of Americans are paying more than 30% of their earnings for housing (Glaeser and Gyourko, 2009).” (Evans 2018a 35). As such, many middle class workers seek to avoid the obligations associated with a mortgage on a property far from an employment center, that has a long commute, as well as the need for two adults to work. (Bauman, 2004; Smith 2006). As such, traditional home ownership for the working class is obstructed as home prices increase and the ability of young Americans to afford traditional financing decrease.

Downsizing is an increasing option for individuals seeking more affordable home ownership compared to a traditional home, as well as lifestyle enhancement and reduced environmental impact. The HGTV show “Tiny House, Big Living” glamorizes downsized living among middle-class and wealthy Americans (Alexander 2017). A mini-home community in Lake Dallas, Texas has a diverse range of residents ranging from singles, families, and individuals of all ages. “One individual, Rick Shon, together with his two kids, wife and pets have been living in a 375-square foot tiny home in the village since 2019.” The reason for doing so is a stated desire to “downsize and simplify their life” while other individuals quoted affordability. These homes cost between $50,000 and $100,000 to build (Molestina 2022). The notion of simplifying life as well as reducing consumerism and lessening environmental impact are common themes among those who live in tiny homes. A study from 2019 found that “the desire to live a simple life with less consumerism (65.6% of folks) and having the freedom and independence to move about (51.6% of folks) were the next two influential reasons to live in a tiny house. There was an even split between tiny house residents who had high motivation (50.0%) versus low motivation (50.0%) due to sustainability and environmental concerns. Approximately one third (37.1%) of tiny house residents recorded a high motivation for going into this lifestyle based upon an interest in design. Less than one-fourth of participants (23.8 and 22.4%) attributed empowerment and sense of community, respectively, as high motivations for living in a tiny house.” (Boeckermann et al. 2019 66).

Other segments of society have incurred economic pressures that impede their access to safe and secure housing (let alone home ownership). This includes an increase in the homeless population (Jones 2015) that is fed by a huge surge in immigration and persons affected by mental illness. “Major forces that changed the complexion of homelessness in the modern era include gentrification of the inner city, deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill, high unemployment rates, the emergence of HIV/AIDS, an inadequate supply of affordable housing options, and deep budget cuts to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and social service agencies in response to what was then the country's worst recession since the Great Depression” (Jones 2015 51).

The recession of the 1980’s resulted in deep cuts to the HUD budget, which decreased from approximately $29 billion in 1976 to approximately $17 billion in 1990. Those cuts led directly to reductions in the budget authority for housing assistance (from almost $19 billion in 1976 to about $11 billion in 1990) as well as a reduction in subsidized housing for poor Americans (OMB 2001). Two changes in policy particularly contributed to the rise in homelessness during that period. First, cuts in Supplemental Security Income (SSI) in the late 1980s; accompanied by a tightening of the disability eligibility process (Social Security Act of 1980), adversely affected mentally ill persons living in rooming houses. The subsequent loss of personal income contributed to homelessness for many of these individuals (Collin and Barry 1987 413).

The tiny homes for the homeless movement must be evaluated within the larger continuum of currently available housing and community economic development (CED) options to provide a long-term solution to homelessness. Some perceive the tiny home for the homeless movement as a rejection of the traditional market-based and professionalized approach to CED that has come to dominate housing and CED practice since the late 1980s (Alexander 2017). However, tiny home projects appear to be initial stepping stones to more stable housing and employment for individuals who previously could not participate in traditional housing or employment markets. As such, tiny home villages should supplement, not replace, traditional federal, state, and local housing subsidy programs for the homeless. (Alexander 2017 42).

2.6 City Zoning

The evolution of zoning in the United States reflects a complex interplay between urban planning ideals and socioeconomic stratification. Zoning was originally conceived in Germany as a tool to mitigate the adverse effects of urban density such as pollution, fire hazards, and overcrowding. Then, zoning was adopted in America to serve an additional, more exclusionary purpose: the segregation of socioeconomic classes and the preservation of single-family property values through stringent lot and home size mandates (Evans 2018a, 37). This legacy persists today, as conventional zoning ordinances often impose minimum square footage requirements and large lot sizes that effectively preclude the development of affordable, high-density housing solutions like tiny homes.

To reconcile these historical barriers with contemporary housing needs, municipalities must adopt innovative zoning reforms. One approach involves revising density standards to permit smaller, more efficient dwelling units on existing lots. For example, reducing minimum lot sizes—or even eliminating them in certain zones—can facilitate the integration of tiny homes without compromising neighborhood character (Evans 2018a, 39). Similarly, Form-Based Codes (FBCs) offer a promising alternative by prioritizing building form and function over rigid use classifications, thereby allowing mixed residential and commercial developments that align with modern urban living (Nolon 2022, 434). However, the implementation of FBCs requires significant political will and community buy-in, as they represent a departure from traditional zoning paradigms.

Another viable strategy is the adoption of inclusionary zoning policies, which mandate that a percentage of new developments be allocated for low- and moderate-income households. While such policies have demonstrated success in expanding affordable housing stock, they are not without trade-offs. Research by Bento et al. (2009), indicates that inclusionary zoning can have the negative effect of increasing market-rate housing prices by approximately 2.2% and reducing the average size of new homes by 48 square feet. These negative consequences are a result of developers offsetting the costs of subsidized units (Bento et al. 2009, 18). Despite these challenges, inclusionary zoning remains a critical tool for municipalities committed to equitable housing solutions

For tiny homes specifically, targeted zoning adjustments—such as permitting Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) or relaxing setback and parking requirements—can lower barriers to entry (Davis 2018, 148). Infill development, which repurposes underutilized or vacant urban parcels, further optimizes existing infrastructure while minimizing sprawl (Nolon 2022, 436–437). Ultimately, the success of these reforms hinges on a nuanced understanding of local housing markets, community priorities, and the broader regulatory landscape.

2.7 Development Standards

Development standards, which govern the physical and structural parameters of residential construction, play a pivotal role in shaping housing affordability and accessibility. Traditional standards—such as minimum lot sizes, floor area ratios, and building height restrictions—were designed to ensure orderly growth but often inadvertently exclude alternative housing models like tiny homes. For instance, many municipalities mandate minimum lot sizes of 5,000 square feet or more for single-family homes, rendering compact, high-efficiency dwellings economically unviable (Evans 2018a, 39). These standards, while well-intentioned, perpetuate a housing paradigm that prioritizes square footage over sustainability and affordability.

To address these limitations, progressive jurisdictions are reevaluating development standards to accommodate tiny homes. Cluster development, a model that groups residential units on a portion of a site while preserving shared open space, offers one such solution. This approach not only reduces per-unit infrastructure costs but also fosters community cohesion through strategically designed common areas (Asabere 2012, 3). Moreover, cluster developments often incorporate green amenities—such as trails, gardens, and stormwater management features—that enhance property values and livability (American Planning Association 2023).

Beyond cluster development, municipalities can incentivize tiny home adoption by streamlining permitting processes, reducing impact fees, and revising building codes to reflect modern construction techniques. For example, modular and prefabricated tiny homes, which are built off-site and assembled on-location, can significantly reduce construction timelines and costs (Davis 2018, 147). However, these innovations require updated codes that recognize off-site construction methods and prioritize performance-based standards over prescriptive requirements. Finally, replacing slow moving design review boards with an administrative process yields speed and reliability.

The financial implications of these reforms cannot be overlooked. While lowering development standards may reduce upfront costs for builders, it must be balanced against potential concerns about neighborhood aesthetics and long-term property values. Here, design guidelines—such as architectural coherence, material quality, and landscape integration—can ensure that tiny home developments align with community expectations (Evans 2019, 210). By coupling regulatory flexibility with thoughtful design oversight, municipalities can create a regulatory environment that supports both affordability and placemaking.

2.8 Placemaking

Placemaking is the deliberate design and stewardship of public spaces to foster social interaction and community identity and is essential for the successful integration of tiny homes into communities. Unlike conventional housing, tiny homes often face skepticism due to perceptions of diminished aesthetics or transient occupancy. Overcoming these biases requires a multifaceted approach that emphasizes high-quality design, shared amenities, and participatory planning processes.

Aesthetic cohesion is a cornerstone of effective placemaking. Tiny home developments that employ consistent architectural styles, durable materials, and human-scaled design elements are more likely to gain acceptance within traditional residential areas (Evans 2018a, 39). For example, projects that mimic the vernacular architecture of a region such as gabled roofs in New England or adobe finishes in the Southwest can visually harmonize with surrounding homes while meeting modern efficiency standards. The Tumbleweed Tiny House Company and Four Lights Tiny Houses exemplify this principle, demonstrating that small-footprint dwellings need not sacrifice design integrity (Evans 2018a, 39).

Beyond aesthetics, the spatial organization of tiny home communities plays a critical role in placemaking. Cluster developments, which concentrate dwellings around shared courtyards or greenways, create natural gathering spaces that encourage neighborly interaction (Asabere 2012, 3). These layouts not only maximize land use efficiency but also cultivate a sense of belonging, a key factor in resident satisfaction (Boeckermann et al. 2019, 66). Auxiliary Dwelling Units (ADUs), when integrated into single-family lots, can similarly enhance social diversity without disrupting neighborhood character (Wegmann and Chapple 2014, 318).

Homeowners' Associations (HOAs) can further amplify placemaking efforts by establishing design review boards, maintaining communal landscaping, and organizing social events. While HOAs are often associated with restrictive covenants, their role in tiny home communities can be re-imagined to prioritize inclusivity and sustainability. For instance, HOAs might mandate energy-efficient building practices, low light exteriors or allocate shared resources such as tool libraries or community gardens to reduce living costs and environmental impacts (Wilson and Boehland 2005).

Ultimately, the success of tiny home placemaking hinges on community engagement. Participatory design workshops, charrettes, and pilot projects can demystify tiny housing and empower residents to shape their neighborhoods' futures (Shearer and Burton 2023, 375). By coupling innovative design with intentional social planning, tiny home developments can transcend their utilitarian roots to become vibrant, enduring communities. Sometimes, this process is best facilitated by a third party who engages in active listening.

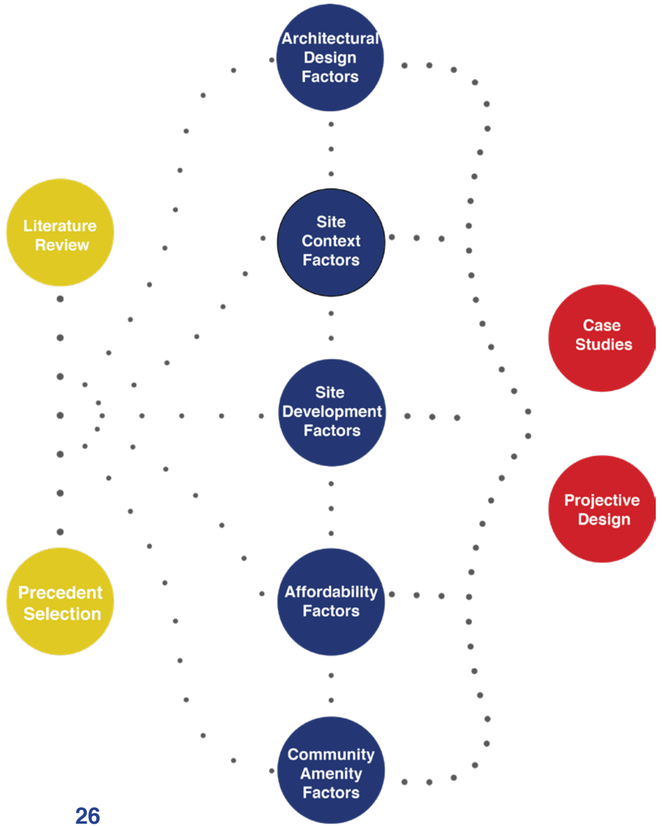
3 Methodology

Analyzing tiny home communities across the U.S.A.

3.1 Methodology

For this project, the work is established through four main phases. These phases include: (i) a literature review; (ii) a precedent selection and analysis; (iii) a case study compilation and review; and (iv) projective design. An overview of these phases and supporting sub-areas are presented in the Methodology Map as shown in Figure 3.1. Each phase and sub-section will be described in more detail in subsequent sections.

Figure 3.1: Methodology Map

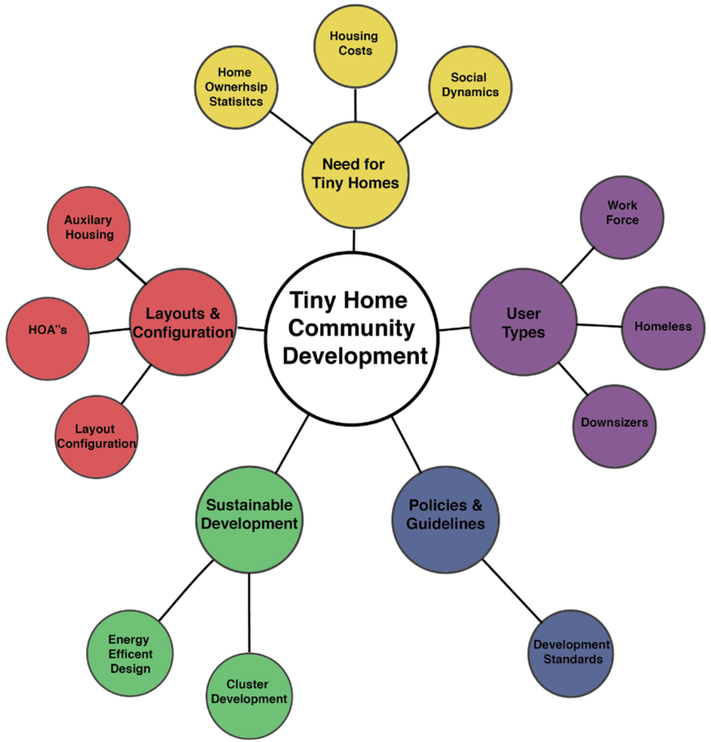


3.2 Summary of Literature Review

A literature review was undertaken to gain a better understanding of the need for tiny homes, the types of users who may inhabit them, city policies and guidelines to allow tiny homes within zoning categories, layout configurations, and sustainable development principles. Literature articles and other findings were organized according to a literature review map shown in Figure 3.2.

Affordable housing has been a significant issue in the USA since the 1930s, prompting legislative responses such as the U.S. Housing Act of 1937 and subsequent acts (National Low Income Housing Coalition 2015). This review examines the current state of housing in America, focusing on the potential of tiny homes in community settings as an alternative solution to the typical residential development. The exploration revolves around introducing tiny homes through zoning, and integrating them into traditional residential forms, emphasizing factors like social integration, aesthetics, environmental considerations, spatial layout, and amenities.

Figure 3.2: Literature Review Map



The United States has witnessed fluctuations in the housing market over the years, with homeownership rates gradually recovering after the 2008 crash (DeSilver 2021). However, demographic disparities persist, especially among young renters facing challenges like high student loan debts and limited access to affordable housing (Statista Real Estate Reports 2 2023). The affordable housing crisis is exasperating individuals who are challenged by increasing housing costs and relatively lower wages who are forced to compete for real estate with institutional investors that acquire residential properties for investment. These trends underline the urgent need to address diminishing affordability and access to homeownership (Nolon 2022, 426).

Social dynamics also play a crucial role in accepting and developing affordable housing solutions like tiny homes. Public attitudes, historical zoning practices, and cultural perceptions influence the implementation of alternative housing options. While some communities embrace tiny homes for their simplicity and reduced environmental impact, others face resistance due to conventional norms (Evans 2018a). Overcoming social barriers requires addressing aesthetics, environmental concerns, community integration, and spatial design in affordable housing initiatives (Evans 2019, 210).

Different resident groups, including the workforce segment, seek alternatives to traditional homeownership to attain economic freedom, reduced mortgage burdens, and prioritize lifestyle choices. Downsizing, affordability, sustainability, and minimizing environmental footprints drive interest in tiny homes and smaller housing units among various demographics (Bauman 2004; Smith 2006). The emergence of tiny home villages, particularly for the homeless, underscores the potential of tiny homes to provide stable housing solutions and enhance community development (Boeckermann et al. 2019,66).

Zoning policies and guidelines play a crucial role in facilitating the deployment of tiny homes and affordable housing initiatives. Changes in zoning laws, including increased density standards, decreased lot sizes, and support for ADU's, can promote the integration of tiny homes into traditional residential settings. Inclusionary zoning, FBC's, and cluster development guidelines offer avenues to encourage affordable housing options while addressing economic implications and neighborhood diversity (Evans 2018a, 41). The sustainable design and development of energy-efficient tiny homes present opportunities to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, aligning with environmental sustainability goals (Crawford and Stepan 2020,1).

The integration of tiny homes in various settings presents a promising solution to address housing affordability challenges. These small living spaces can cater to diverse demographic groups, including affluent individuals seeking downsizing options and disadvantaged populations in need of stable housing (Wegmann and Chapple 2014, 318). Particularly, tiny homes can be strategically placed on existing residential properties as ADU's or grouped in clusters to optimize space utilization and cost efficiency. Moreover, the potential of leveraging tiny homes in cluster configurations within infill properties holds significant promise.

The concept of tiny home communities bring together compact living spaces and the development of vibrant community spaces thereby promoting social interaction and a sense of place. While implementing such amenities and initiatives involves a financial investment, the long-term benefits of fostering community engagement and social cohesion outweigh the initial costs (Whyte 1964; Unterman and Small 1977; Arendt 1996 and Sanders 1980). By embracing the notion of place making through the provision of quality amenities and upkeep services, tiny homes have the potential to contribute positively to the social fabric of neighborhoods and enhance residents' overall well-being (Asabere 2012, 3).

In conclusion, the research underscores the value of tiny homes as a key element in diversifying housing options and addressing affordability issues across different socio-economic groups. Whether integrated as standalone units or in clustered arrangements, tiny homes offer a practical and scalable solution to meet the housing needs of various segments of the population. The adaptability of tiny homes to different environments, such as new developments and infill properties, opens new possibilities for creating innovative housing solutions.

3.3 Precedent Selection

The selected precedents were chosen due to their variety in scale, unit types, density, and layouts. All precedents were discovered through Google searched articles, architectural journals, and Kansas State University library resources. The precedents are a blend of recognized and unrecognized works as they are a mix of highly designed communities, tiny home villages for the homeless and cluster communities. The precedents are organized alphabetically below with additional general site information provided together with a link to the project's relevant web page. All aerial photography is sourced from Google Earth (2025) or county parcel online viewers.

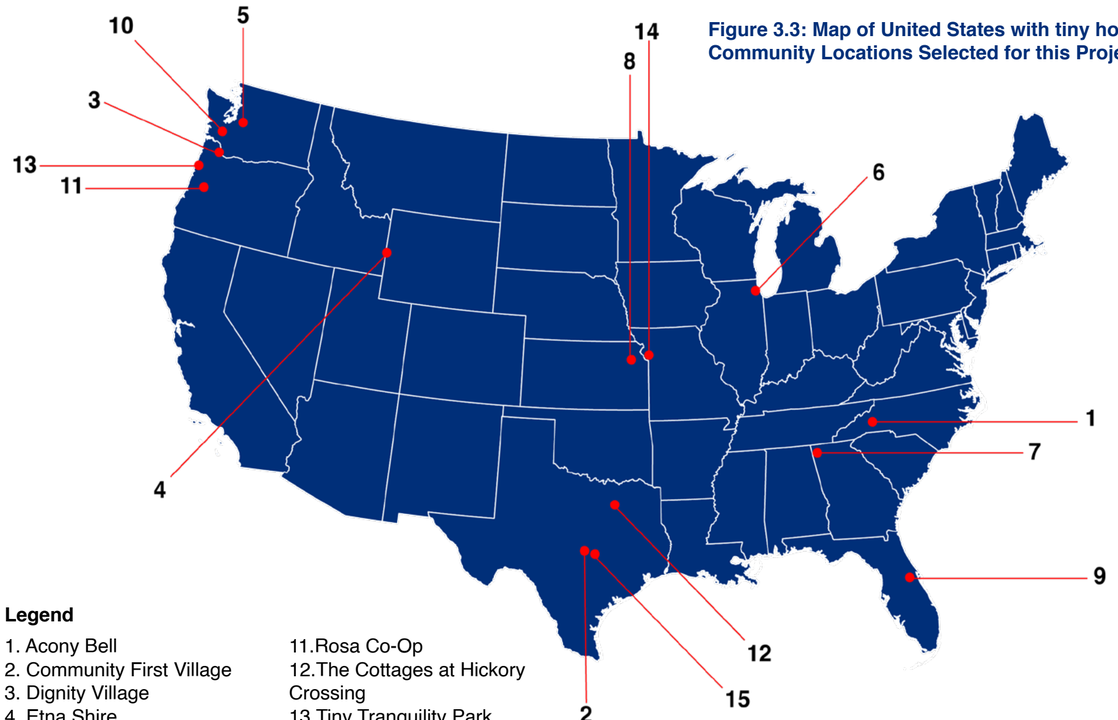


Figure 3.3: Map of United States with tiny home Community Locations Selected for this Project

Legend

1. Acony Bell
2. Community First Village
3. Dignity Village
4. Etna Shire
5. Greenwood Cottages
6. Harbor Point Estates
7. Little River Escape
8. Monarch Village
9. Orlando Lakefront Community
10. Quixote Village
11. Rosa Co-Op
12. The Cottages at Hickory Crossing
13. Tiny Tranquility Park
14. Veterans Community Project
15. Village Farm

Acony Bell

Site Location: Mills River, NC

Land Size: 50 acres

Units: 96

Density: 1.94 units per acre

Avg. Lot Size: 0.35 Acres

Avg. Unit Size: 330 sq ft

Building Types: Cottage, Container, THOWs

Layout: Flexible living/renting, DIY encouraged, large lot sizes

Zoning Type: RF1

Surrounding Zoning: RF1

Parking: Next to unit

Hyperlink: https://aconybell.com/

Notable Features

Access to nature

Large areas of community greenspace

Flexibility in unit price



Figure 3.4 Acony Bell Perspective 1



Figure 3.5 Acony Bell Perspective 2

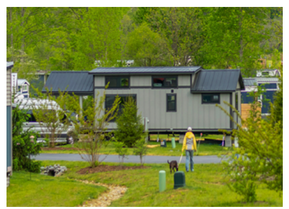


Figure 3.6 Acony Bell Perspective 3



Figure 3.7: Acony Bell Aerial



Figure 3.8 Acony Bell Zoning Designation

Community First Village

Site Location: Austin, TX

Land Size: 27 acres

Units: 400

Density: 8.33 units per acre

Avg. Lot Size: 650 sq ft

Avg. Unit Size: 358 sq ft

Building Types: Cottage

Layout: Central community area, energy-efficient design

Parking: Close-by parking lot

Zoning Type: Private Residential

Surrounding Zoning: I-SF-4A (Industrial Single Family Residence)

Hyperlink: https://mlf.org/community-first/

Notable Features

Designed for the homeless population.

Includes agricultural space, amphitheater, dog park, and arts center.

Support programs for residence (job assistance, skill building, etc.)



Figure 3.9 Community First Perspective 1



Figure 3.10 Community First Perspective 2



Figure 3.11 Community First Perspective 3



Figure 3.12: Community First Village Aerial

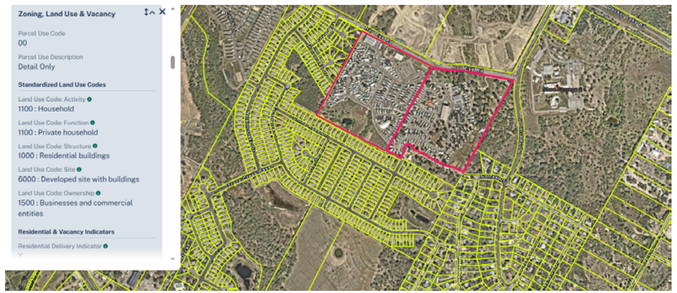


Figure 3.13: Community First Village Zoning

Dignity Village

Site Location: Portland, OR

Land Size: 1.2 acres

Units: 43

Density: 39.2 units per acre

Avg. Lot Size: 250 sq ft

Avg. Unit Size: 193 sq ft

Building Types: Cottage, THOWs

Layout: Central axis resembling a “main street”

Parking: None provided

Zoning Type: General Industrial (IG2)

Surrounding Zoning: Industrial

Hyperlink: https://dignityvillage.org/

Notable Features

First tiny home village for the homeless in the U.S.A.

Focus on communal living and shared resources.

Focus on self sustainability (agrculture land and rain water collection).



Figure 3.14 Dignity Village Perspective 1



Figure 3.15 Dignity Village Perspective 2



Figure 3.16 Dignity Village Perspective 3



Figure 3.17: Dignity Village Aerial



Figure 3.18: Dignity Village Zoning Map

ETNA Shire

Site Location: Etna, WY

Land Size: 9 acres

Units: 6 built phase 1, 6 built phase 2, 24 yet to be built phase 3

Density: 4 units per acre

Avg. Lot Size: 2,000 sq ft

Avg. Unit Size: 1,000 sq ft

Building Types: Constructed on site

Layout: Centered around street axis

Parking: Parking bay near unit

Zoning Type: Business Commercial

Surrounding Zoning: Residential Household

Hyperlink: https://www.etnashire.net/

Notable Features

High aesthetic cohesion throughout the development.

Larger parcels

High standard of landscaping and site development.



Figure 3.19: Etna Shire Perspective 1



Figure 3.20: Etna Shire Perspective 2



Figure 3.21: Etna Shire Perspective 3



Figure 3.22: Etna Shire Aerial

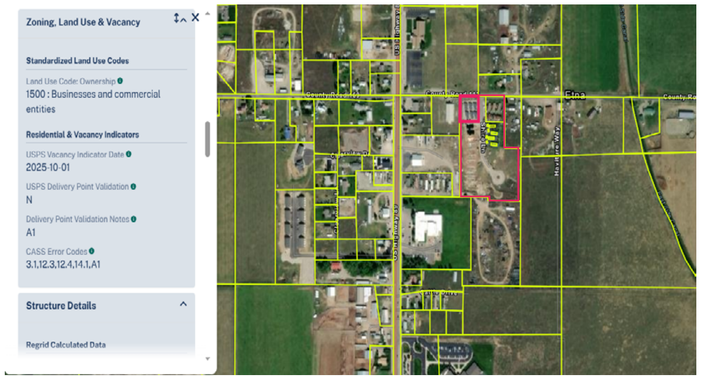


Figure 3.23: Etna Shire Zoning Map

Greenwood Cottages

Site Location: Shoreline, WA

Land Size: 0.5 acres

Units: 8

Density: 8.89 units per acre

Avg. Lot Size: 1,500 sq ft

Avg. Unit Size: 885 sq ft

Building Types: Cottage

Layout: Central green space, harmonious architectural style

Parking: Close-by parking bay

Zoning Type: NR2 (Neighborhood Residential 2)

Surrounding Zoning: NR1 (Neighborhood Residential 1)

Hyperlink: https://www.cottagecompany.com/Communities/Greenwood-Avenue-Cottages.aspx

Notable Features

High aesthetic cohesion with surrounding neighborhood.

Small-scale, intimate community design.

High quality gardens and landscaping.



Figure 3.24: Greenwood Cottages Perspective 1



Figure 3.25: Greenwood Cottages Perspective 2



Figure 3.26: Greenwood Cottages Perspective 3



Figure 3.27: Greenwood Cottages Aerial



Figure 3.28: Greenwood Cottages Zoning Map

Harbor Point Estates

Site Location: Chicago, IL

Land Size: 24 acres

Units: 177

Density: 7.7 units per acre

Avg. Lot Size: 2,000 sq ft

Avg. Unit Size: 1,150 sq ft

Building Types: Container

Layout: Grid-based, no central element

Parking: Next to unit

Zoning Type: PD-1121 (Planned Development)

Surrounding Zoning: RS-2 (Residential Single Unit District)

Hyperlink: https://harborpointestates.com/

Notable Features

Large community format with uniform landscaping.

Focus on affordability and modular housing.

Ease of access to Lake Wolf and public recreation area,



Figure 3.29: Harbor Point Estates Perspective 1



Figure 3.30: Harbor Point Estates Perspective 2



Figure 3.31: Harbor Point Estates Perspective 3



Figure 3.32: Harbor Point Estates Aerial



Figure 3.33: Harbor Point Estates Zoning Map

Little River Escape

Site Location: Cloudland, GA

Land Size: 42 acres

Units: 57

Density: 1.36 units per acre

Avg. Lot Size: 0.4 Acres

Avg. Unit Size: 400 sq ft

Building Types: THOWs

Layout: Traditional neighborhood with cul-de-sacs

Parking: Next to unit

Zoning Type: Secialized Residential

Surrounding Zoning: Private Residential

Hyperlink: https://littleriverescape.com/

Notable Features

Outdoor pavilion, pool, walking trails, and community fire pit.

Large plots with recreational amenities

Privacy from other ocupants



Figure 3.34 Little River Escape Perspective 1



Figure 3.35: Little River Escape Perspective 2



Figure 3.36: Little River Escape Perspective 3



Figure 3.37: Little River Escape Aerial



Figure 3.38: Little River Escape Zoning Map

Monarch Village

Site Location: Lawrence, KS

Land Size: 0.62 acres

Units: 12

Density: 19.35 units per acre

Avg. Lot Size: 425 sq ft

Avg. Unit Size: 300 sq ft

Building Types: Container

Layout: Arranged around a community area

Parking: Close-by parking bay

Zoning Type: Planned Industrial Development

Surrounding Zoning: General Public and Insitutional Use

Hyperlink: https://studio804.com/gallery/

Notable Features

Homes for the homeless

Prefabricated container homes.

Includes a community pavilion and vegetable garden.



Figure 3.39: Monarch Village Perspective 1



Figure 3.40: Monarch Village Perspective 2



Figure 3.41: Monarch Village Perspective 3



Figure 3.42: Monarch Village Aerial

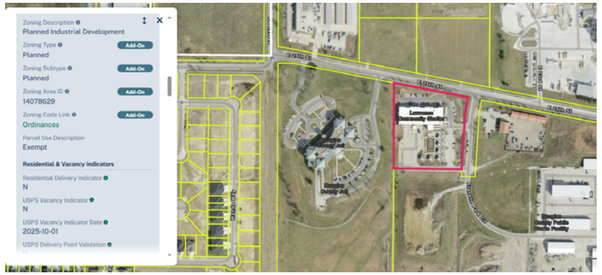


Figure 3.43: Monarch Village Zoning Map

Orlando Lakefront

Site Location: Orlando, FL

Land Size: 4 acres

Units: 50

Density: 12.5 units per acre

Avg. Lot Size: 600 sq ft

Avg. Unit Size: 300 sq ft

Building Types: THOWs

Layout: Grid-based, no central element

Parking: Next to unit

Zoning Type: R-1AA (Single Family Dwelling District)

Surrounding Zoning: C-3 (Wholesale Commercial District)

Hyperlink: https://tinyhouserental.club/

Notable Features

Boat/fishing dock, community garden, and fire pit.

Lake access.

Leasing options available.



Figure 3.44: Orlando Lakefront Perspective 1



Figure 3.45: Orlando Lakefront Perspective 2



Figure 3.46: Orlando Lakefront Perspective 3



Figure 3.47: Orlando Lakefront Aerial

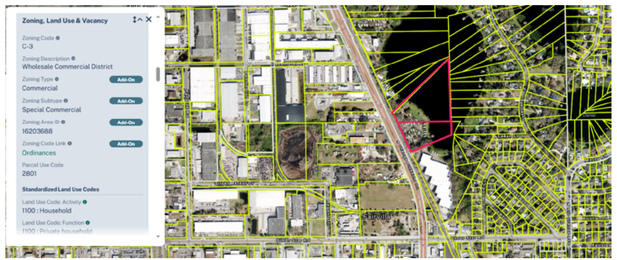


Figure 3.48: Orlando Lakefront Zoning Map

Quixote Village

Site Location: Olympia, WA

Land Size: 0.33 acres

Units: 30

Density: 15 units per acre

Avg. Lot Size: 600 sq ft

Avg. Unit Size: 275 sq ft

Building Types: THOWs

Layout: Central community area

Parking: Close-by parking bay

Zoning Type: LI (Light Industrial)

Surrounding Zoning: GI (General Industrial)

Hyperlink: https://www.nhcommunities.org/

Notable Features

Small-scale, close-knit community.

Central greenspace as a gathering area.

High quality gardens

Rainwater retention pond



Figure 3.49: Quixote Village Perspective 1



Figure 3.50: Quixote Village Perspective 2



Figure 3.51: Quixote Village Perspective 3



Figure 3.52: Quixote Village Aerial



Figure 3.53: Quixote Village Zoning Map

Rosa Co-op Village

Site Location: Eugene, OR

Land Size: 1 acre

Units: 30

Density: 30 units per acre

Avg. Lot Size: 140 sq ft

Avg. Unit Size: 100 sq ft

Building Types: THOWs

Layout: Central community area

Parking: Close-by parking bay

Zoning Type: R-3 (Limited High Density Residential)

Surrounding Zoning: R-1 (Single Family Residential)

Hyperlink: https://www.squareonevillages.org/villages/opportunity-village

Notable Features

Provides housing for the homeless.

Residency contingent on community participation.

Future expansion under works.



Figure 3.54: Rosa Co-Op Village Perspective 1



Figure 3.55: Rosa Co-Op Village Perspective 2

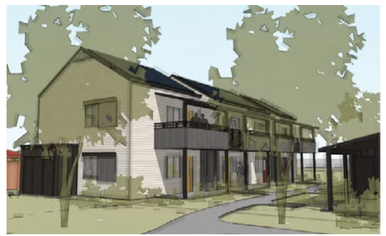


Figure 3.56: Rosa Co-Op Village Perspective 3



Figure 3.57: Rosa Co-Op Village Aerial

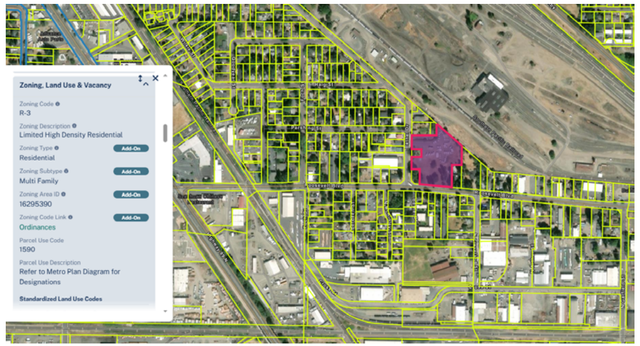


Figure 3.58: Rosa Co-Op Village Zoning Map

The Cottages at Hickory Crossing

Site Location: Dallas, TX

Land Size: 0.75 acres

Units: 50

Density: 66.67 units per acre

Avg. Lot Size: 550 sq ft

Avg. Unit Size: 430 sq ft

Building Types: Modular

Layout: Designed to promote community

Parking: Close-by lot

Zoning Type: MU-1 (Mixed Use District 1)

Surrounding Zoning: IM (Industrial and Manufacturing)

Hyperlink: https://www.bcworkshop.org/cottages

Notable Features

Provides homes for the homeless.

Compact, high-density design.

Large community center/ visitors center.



Figure 3.59: Cottages at Hickory Crossing Perspective 1



Figure 3.60: Cottages at Hickory Crossing Perspective 2



Figure 3.61: Cottages at Hickory Crossing Perspective 3



Figure 3.62: Cottages at Hickory Crossing Aerial



Figure 3.63: Cottages at Hickory Crossing Zoning Map

Tiny Tranquility Park

Site Location: Waldport, OR

Land Size: 6 acres

Units: 43

Density: 7.17 units per acre

Avg. Lot Size: 2,000 sq ft

Avg. Unit Size: 350 sq ft

Building Types: THOWs

Layout: Designed to promote community interaction

Parking: Next to unit

Zoning Type: RR-2 (Rural Residential)

Surrounding Zoning: RR-1(Rural Residential)

Hyperlink: https://tinytranquility.com/

Notable Features

Ocean access

Dog park, greenhouse, and outdoor activity area.

Large parcels



Figure 3.64: Tiny Tranquility Park Perspective 1



Figure 3.65: Tiny Tranquility Park Aerial Perspective 2



Figure 3.66: Tiny Tranquility Park Perspective 3



Figure 3.67: Tiny Tranquility Park Aerial



Figure 3.68: Tiny Tranquility Park Zoning Map

Veterans Community Project Kansas City

Site Location: Kansas City, MO

Land Size: 4 acres

Units: 49

Density: 12.25 units per acre

Avg. Lot Size: 600 sq ft

Avg. Unit Size: 280 sq ft

Building Types: Cottage

Layout: Grid-based, no central element

Parking: Close-by lot

Zoning Type: MPD (Master Planned Development)

Surrounding Zoning: R-2.5 (Residential Single Family)

Hyperlink: https://www.veteranscommunityproject.org/kansascity

Notable Features

Designed for homeless veterans

Includes open green space and community center

Social support network for veteran community



Figure 3.69: Veterans Community Project Perspective 1



Figure 3.70: Veterans Community Project Perspective 2



Figure 3.71: Veterans Community Project Perspective 3



Figure 3.72: Veterans Community Project Kansas City Aerial



Figure 3.73: Veterans Community Project Zoning Map

Village Farm

Site Location: Austin, TX

Land Size: 50 acres

Units: 115

Density: 3.1 units per acre

Avg. Lot Size: 800 sq ft

Avg. Unit Size: 400

Building Types: Cottage

Layout: Arranged around a community area

Parking: Close-by lot

Zoning Type: MH (Mobile Home Residence)

Surrounding Zoning: SF-3 (Single Family Residential)

Hyperlink: https://villagefarmaustin.com/

Notable Features

Focus on farming and sustainable living

Includes dog park, community garden, and pool



Figure 3.74: Village Farm Perspective 1



Figure 3.75: Village Farm Perspective 2



Figure 3.76: Village Farm Perspective 3



Figure 3.77: Village Farm Aerial

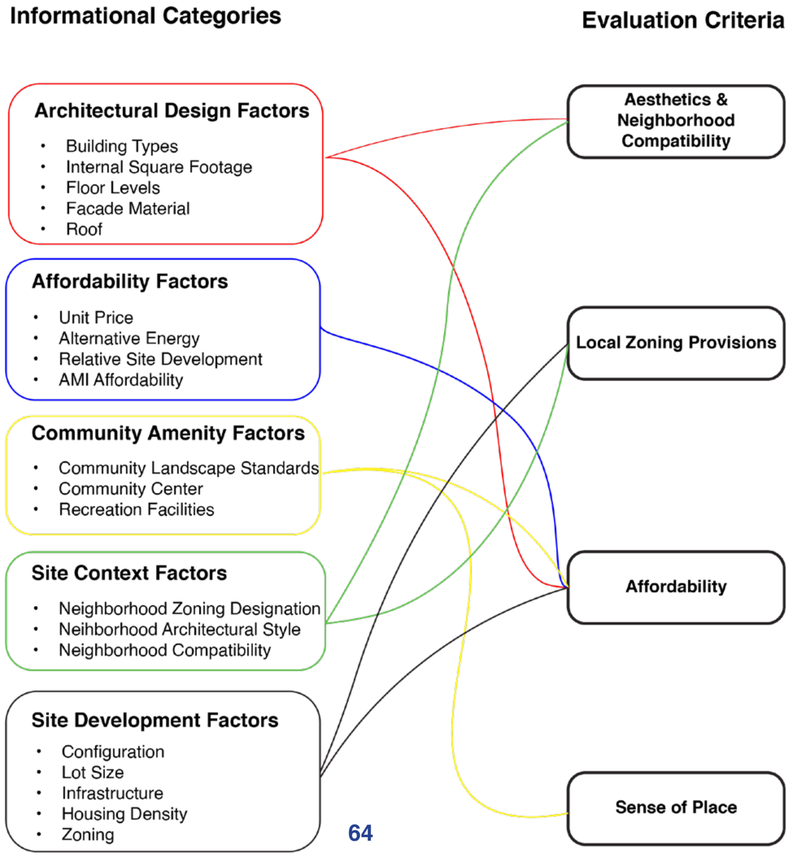


Figure 3.78: Village Farm Zoning Map

3.4 Precedent Characterization

The selected precedents are characterized in five informational category matrices: (i) Architectural Factors, (ii) Site Context Factors, (iii) Site Development Factors, (vi) Affordability Factors, and (v) Community Amenity Factors. These categories are tied to the four evaluation criteria: Affordability, Aesthetics, Site Integration, and Zoning. These aspects were selected as the four most impactful factors when considering community development. Aspects will be characterized through literature-based reviews and indirectly assessed through Google Maps/Earth, community websites, and other online sources. A scoring system is used for each information matrix to select the three most successful projects that will then be further analyzed in the Precedent Analysis and Case Studies later in the report. The specifics of the scoring system is described under the Category Factors proceeding each matrix.

Figure 3.79 : Cross Mapping Diagram



Site Development Factors

Configuration
Does this community's lot configuration promote a sense of community by centering development around a green space or other community space as well as the placement of all dwellings in a manner that preserves room for amenities? If so, one star is awarded.

Lot Size
Does the lot size equal or exceed the footprint of the dwelling by 1.5x? If so, one star is awarded.

Infrastructure
One star is provided if the width of the roads are greater than 20 feet to accommodate parking.

Housing Density
One star is awarded if the number of dwellings exceed 12 per acre. A second star is awarded if the site provides 24 or more units per acre. See appendix A for housing density standards.

Zoning
Two stars are awarded for developments zoned as residential single family or planned development. One star is awarded to development zoned as transitional housing or other residential types. No stars awarded for nonresidential zoning designation.

Site Development Factors

Project	Acony Bell (Mills River, NC) pp.37-38	Community First Village (Austin,TX) pp.39-40	Dignity Village (Portland, OR) pp.41-42	Etna Shire (Etna, WY) pp.43-44)	Greenwood Cottages (Shoreline, WA) pp.45-46
Configuration	✳ Units are oriented around public green space.	✳ Units are arranged with a central community area.	✖ The community is arranged on a central axis, acting like a main street, but with no central element.	✖ The community is arranged on a central axis, acting like a main street, but with no central element.	✳ Units are arranged with a central green space.
Lot Size	✳ Lots exceeds 1.5x unit size.	✳ Lots exceed 1.5x unit size.	✖ Lots do not exceed the 1.5x unit size.	✳ Lots exceed 1.5x unit size	✳ Lots exceed 1.5x unit size.
Infrastructure	✖ The site does not provide roads larger than 20ft or any additional infrastructure.	✳ Roads widths greater than 20ft	✖ The site does not seem to have any favorable grading or streets exceeding 20ft.	✳ Roads widths greater than 20ft	✳ Roads widths greater than 20ft
Housing Density	✖ 97 lots/50 acres = 1.94 units per acre	✖ 400 lots/27 acres = 14.81 units per acre	✳ ✳ 47 units/1.2 acres = 39.2 units per acre	✖ 36 Units/ 9 Acres = 4 Units per acre	✖ 8 lots/ 0.9 acres = 8.89 units per acre
Zoning	✳ ✳ Single Family Residential	✳ ✳ Private Residential	✖ General Industrial	✳ Business Residential	✳ ✳ Single Family Residential

Table1: Site Development Factors

Site Development Factors

Project	Harbor Point Estates (Chicago,IL) pp.47-48	Little River Escape (Cloudland, GA) pp. 49-50	Monarch Village (Lawrence, KS) pp. 51-52	Orlando Lakefront (Orlando, FL) pp. 53-54	Quixote Village (Olympia, WA) pp. 55-56		Rosa Village Co-Op (Eugine, OR) pp. 57-58	The Cottages at Hickory Crossing (Dallas, TX) pp. 59-60	Tiny Tranquility Park (Waldport, OR) pp. 61-62	Veterans Community Project (Kansas City, MO) pp. 63-64	Village Farm (Austin, TX) pp.65-66
Configuration	✕ The community is arranged on a grid with no central element.	✳ Units are arranged in a traditional neighborhood layout utilizing cul-de-sacs.	✳ Units are arranged around a community area.	✕ The community is arranged on a grid with no central element.	✳ Units are arranged with a central community area and green space.		✳ Units are arranged around a community area.	✳ Units are arranged in a way to promote community.	✳ Units are arranged in a way to promote community.	✕ The community is arranged on a grid with no central element.	✳ Units are arranged around a community area.
Lot Size	✳ Lots exceed 1.5x unit size.	✳ Lots exceed 1.5x unit size	✕ Lots do not exceed the 1.5x unit size	✳ Lots exceed 1.5x unit size	✕ Lots do not exceed the 1.5x unit size		✕ Lots do not exceed the 1.5x unit size	✕ Lots are less than the 1.5x unit size	✳ Lots exceed 1.5x unit size	✳ Lots exceed 1.5x unit size	✳ Lots exceed 1.5x unit size
Infrastructure	✳ Roads widths greater than 20ft	✳ Roads widths greater than 20ft	✳ Roads widths greater than 20ft	✳ Roads widths greater than 20ft	✳ Roads widths greater than 20ft		✳ Roads widths greater than 20ft	✳ Roads widths greater than 20ft	✳ Roads widths greater than 20ft	✳ Roads widths greater than 20ft	✳ Roads widths greater than 20ft
Housing Density	✕ 77 units/10 acres = 7.7 units per acre	✕ 57 units/42 Acres = 1.36 units per acre	✳ 12 Units/.62 acres = 19.35 units per acre	✳ 50 Units/ 4 Acres = 12.5 units per acre	✳ 30 Units/ 2 Acres = 15 units per acre		✳ ✳ 30 units/1 acre = 30 units per acre	✳ ✳ 50 units/0.75 acres = 66.67 units per acre	✕ 43 Units/6 Acres = 7.17 units per acre	✳ 49 Units/ 4 Acres = 12.25 units per acre	✕ 155 Units/ 50 Acres = 3.1 units per acre
Zoning	✳ ✳ Planned Development	✳ Specialized Residential	✕ Planned Industrial Development	✳ ✳ Sing Family Dwelling District	✕ Light Industrial		✳ Limited High Density Residential	✕ Mixed use District	✳ ✳ Rural Residential	✳ ✳ Planned Development	✳ Mobile Homes

Site Development Discussion

In the realm of Site Development, successful projects demonstrate a mastery of spatial planning that balance density with quality of life. Sites like Community First Village (Austin, TX) and Village Farm (Austin, TX) serve as exemplary models. They achieved this by consciously arranging their cottages around central community greens and courtyards, a configuration that inherently promotes social interaction and a sense of shared space. Furthermore, these projects invest in robust infrastructure, featuring internal roads wider than 20 feet to accommodate parking and emergency vehicles, and implementing stormwater management practices through favorable grading. Crucially, their zoning and layout preserved significant room for the expansion of amenities, allowing the community to evolve and grow organically.

In stark contrast, sites like Dignity Village (Portland, OR) and The Cottages at Hickory Crossing (Dallas, TX) fail to meet these foundational principles. Both sites suffered from extremely high densities—39.2 and 66.67 units per acre, respectively—which created an overcrowded environment devoid of private outdoor space. Their configurations, such as a simple main street axis or a dense grid, lacked a central, unifying community element. Most critically, their layouts offered no room for the expansion of amenities, severely limiting their long-term viability and reinforcing a negative perception akin to a trailer park rather than an intentional, master-planned community. Harbor Point Estates (Chicago, IL) also faltered with a rigid grid layout that failed to create a discernible community core.

Site Context Factors

Surrounding Zoning Designation
Does the zoning of this development differ from the zoning of the adjacent developed properties? A star is awarded if the development matches the adjacent single family homes

Neighborhood Architectural Style
Is the architectural style of the dwellings within the cluster development consistent with each other? One star is awarded for rhythmic homogeny and two stars for full homogeny.

Neighborhood Compatibility
Is the architectural style of the dwellings within the cluster development consistent with the architectural style of the buildings or homes of their surrounding area? If consistent, a star is awarded.

Site Context Factors					
Project	**Acony Bell** (Mills River, NC) pp.37-38	**Community First Village** (Austin,TX) pp.39-40	**Dignity Village** (Portland, OR) pp.41-42	**Etna Shire** (Etna, WY) pp.43-44)	**Greenwood Cottages** (Shoreline, WA) pp.45-46
Neighborhood Zoning Designation	✳ The zoning of this community matches its context of single-family housing.	✳ The zoning of this community matches its context of single-family housing.	✖ This site does not have any other housing developments nearby.	✳ The zoning of this community matches its context of single-family housing.	✳ The zoning of this community matches its context of single-family housing.
Neighborhood Architectural Style	✳ ✳ The houses in the community contain full homogeneous architectural style.	✳ ✳ The houses in the community contain full homogeneous architectural style.	✳ This site has a rhythmic homogeneity to its architectural style.	✳ ✳ The houses in the community contain full homogeneous architectural style.	✳ ✳ The houses in the community contain full homogeneous architectural style.
Neighborhood Compatibility	✳ The architectural style of the community is in line with the ranch style homes of its surrounding context.	✖ This community does not match its surrounding architectural context.	✖ This community does not have a surrounding architectural style.	✖ This community does not match the surrounding architectural style.	✳ This community has great compatibility with its surrounding context.

Table 2: Site Context Factors

Site Context Factors

Project	Harbor Point Estates (Chicago,IL) pp.47-48	Little River Escape (Cloudland, GA) pp. 49-50	Monarch Village (Lawrence, KS) pp. 51-52	Orlando Lakefront (Orlando, FL) pp. 53-54	Quixote Village (Olympia, WA) pp. 55-56		Rosa Village Co-Op (Eugine, OR) pp. 57-58	The Cottages at Hickory Crossing (Dallas, TX) pp. 59-60	Tiny Tranquility Park (Waldport, OR) pp. 61-62	Veterans Community Project (Kansas City, MO) pp. 63-64	Village Farm (Austin, TX) pp.65-66
Neighborhood Zoning Designation	✕ This site does not have any other housing developments nearby.	✳ The zoning of this community matches its context of single-family housing.	✕ This site does not have any adjacent housing developments.	✳ The zoning of this community matches its context of single-family housing.	✕ This site does not have any adjacent housing developments nearby.		✳ The zoning of this community matches its context of single-family housing.	✕ This site does not have any adjacent housing developments nearby.	✳ The zoning of this community matches its context of single-family housing.	✳ The zoning of this community matches its context of single-family housing.	✳ The zoning of this community matches its context of single-family housing.
Neighborhood Architectural Style	✳ This site has a rhythmic homogeneity to its architectural style.	✳ This site has a rhythmic homogeneity to its architectural style.	✳✳ The houses in the community contain full homogeneous architectural style.	✳ This site has a rhythmic homogeneity to its architectural style.	✳✳ The houses in the community contain full homogeneous architectural style.		✳✳ The houses in the community contain full homogeneous architectural style.	✳✳ The houses in the community contain full homogeneous architectural style.	✳ This site has a rhythmic homogeneity to its architectural style.	✳✳ The houses in the community contain full homogeneous architectural style.	✳✳ The houses in the community contain full homogeneous architectural style.
Neighborhood Compatibility	✕ This community does not have a surrounding architectural style.	✳ This community has compatibility with its surrounding context.	✕ This community does not have a surrounding architectural style.	✕ This community does not have a surrounding architectural style.	✕ This community does not have a surrounding architectural style.		✕ This community does not have a surrounding architectural style.	✕ This community does not have a surrounding architectural style.	✳ This community has compatibility with its surrounding context.	✳ This community has compatibility with its surrounding context.	✳ This community has compatibility with its surrounding context.

Site Context Discussion

The success of a tiny home community is often determined by its ability to integrate seamlessly into its existing neighborhood, a factor evaluated under Site Context. Projects such as Greenwood Ave Cottages (Shoreline, WA), Tiny Tranquility Park (Waldport, OR), and Veterans Community Project (Kansas City, MO) excelled in this regard. They achieved high marks by aligning with their neighborhood's zoning designation—typically single-family residential—and, just as importantly, by ensuring their architectural style was either fully homogeneous or rhythmically coherent. This deliberate design choice ensured that the new development was visually compatible with the surrounding homes, thereby minimizing NIMBYism ("Not In My Backyard") opposition and fostering a sense of belonging within the wider community.

Failures in this category were often due to isolation or architectural discord. Monarch Village (Lawrence, KS) and Quixote Village (Olympia, WA), while often well-designed internally, were typically sited on isolated, non-residential parcels. This meant there was no surrounding architectural style with which to blend, resulting in a failure to integrate into a broader community fabric. Other projects, like Community First Village, maintained internal architectural cohesion but consciously chose a style that did not mimic its surrounding context, prioritizing its own unique identity over assimilation, which the analysis codes as a lack of compatibility.

Architectural Design Factors

Building Type
Stars are awarded as follows: (i) THOW's = 1 star; (ii) manufactured contact homes = 2 stars; and (iii) contact homes constructed on site = 3 stars.

Interior Square Footage
Interior square footage only considers interior space, not space allocated to decks or outbuildings. Optimization for unit density and affordabilty were driving factors leading to a prefenece for houses in the 250 to 450 square ft range. However homes in the 451-1000 sq ft range provide more room for families while still being inline with tiny home design. Two stars are awarded for home between 250 - 450 sq ft, one star is awarded to homes 451-1000 sq ft.

Floor Levels
Since most tiny homes do not have a second floor or loft, a star is awarded for tiny homes that provide a loft or second level.

Façade Materials
Do the exterior materials minimize cost and sacrifice aesthetics by using sheet metal or plastic slats or do they maximize the aesthetic appearance through the use of high-quality metal or full wood construction? A star is awarded if the units are of good quality materials.

Roof
Is the roof configuration suitable for its context in terms of aesthetics? For example, a steep roof set among a cluster development of adobe homes would not be suitable. A star is awarded if the roof configuration is compatible.

Architectural Design Factors					
Project	**Acony Bell** (Mills River, NC) pp.37-38	**Community First Village** (Austin,TX) pp.39-40	**Dignity Village** (Portland, OR) pp.41-42	**Etna Shire** (Etna, WY) pp.43-44)	**Greenwood Cottages** (Shoreline, WA) pp.45-46
Building Type	✳ This community is composed primarily of THOW's.	✳ ✳ ✳ Homes are constructed on-site.	✳ ✳ ✳ Homes are constructed on-site.	✳ ✳ ✳ Homes are constructed on-site.	✳ ✳ ✳ Homes are constructed on-site.
Interior Square Footage	✳ ✳ Units are 330 sq ft	✳ ✳ Unit size varies but ranges from 358 sq ft	✖ Units are190 sq ft	✳ Units are 1000 sq ft	✳ Units range from 885 sq ft
Levels	✳ All units provide lofts.	✖ Units are all single-story no lofts.	✖ Units are all single-story no lofts.	✳ All units provide lofts.	✳ Units are two stories.
Façade Materials	✳ Homes in this community vary in façade, but all seem of good quality.	✳ Homes in this community vary in façade, but all seem of good quality.	✳ Homes do not seem to be constructed of high-quality materials.	✳ Homes in this community vary in façade, but all seem of good quality	✳ Homes in this community have harmonious facades of good quality.

Table 3: Architectural Design Factors

Architectural Design Factors

Project	Harbor Point Estates (Chicago,IL) pp.47-48	Little River Escape (Cloudland, GA) pp. 49-50	Monarch Village (Lawrence, KS) pp. 51-52	Orlando Lakefront (Orlando, FL) pp. 53-54	Quixote Village (Olympia, WA) pp. 55-56
Building Type	✳ This community is composed primarily of THOW's.	✳ This community is composed primarily of THOWs.	✳ ✳ Homes are manufactured off-site.	✳ This community is composed primarily of THOW's.	✳ ✳ ✳ Homes are constructed on-site.
Interior Square Footage	✕ Units are 1150 sq ft	✳ ✳ Units are 400 sq ft	✳✳ Units 300 sq ft	✳ ✳ Units range from 200 to 300 sq ft	✕ Units are 144 sq ft
Levels	✕ Units are all single-story no lofts.	✳ Units are a mix of single-story and lofted.	✕ Units are all single-story, no lofts.	✳ Units are a mix of single-story and lofted.	✕ Units are all single-story, no lofts.
Façade Materials	✳ Homes in this community have matching façade, and all seem of good quality.	✳ Homes in this community vary in façade, but all seem of good quality.	✕ Homes do not seem to be constructed of high-quality materials.	✳ Homes in this community vary in façade, but all seem of good quality.	✳ Homes in this community vary in façade, but all seem of good quality.
Roof	✳ Homes use a Gabled style appropriate to the context and weather conditions.	✳ Homes use a Gabled style appropriate to the context and weather conditions.	✳ Homes use a flat roof style	✳ Homes use a Gabled, flat, and pitched style appropriate to the context and weather conditions	✳ Homes use a Gabled style appropriate to the context and weather conditions.

Project	Rosa Village Co-Op (Eugine, OR) pp. 57-58	The Cottages at Hickory Crossing (Dallas, TX) pp. 59-60	Tiny Tranquility Park (Waldport, OR) pp. 61-62	Veterans Community Project (Kansas City, MO) pp. 63-64	Village Farm (Austin, TX) pp.65-66
Building Type	✳ ✳ Homes are constructed on-site.	✳ ✳ ✳ Homes are constructed on-site.	✳ This community is composed primarily of THOW's.	✳ ✳ ✳ Homes are constructed on-site.	✳ ✳ ✳ Homes are constructed on-site.
Interior Square Footage	✕ Units are 100 sq ft	✳ ✳ Units are 430 sq ft	✳ ✳ Units 330 sq ft	✳ ✳ Units range from 240 to 320 sq ft	✳ ✳ Units are 395 sq ft
Levels	✕ Units are all single-story, no lofts.	✕ Units are all single-story, no lofts.	✳ Units are a mix of single-story and lofted.	✕ Units are all single-story, no lofts.	✳ Units are a mix of single-story and lofted.
Façade Materials	✳ Homes are made of adequate building material.	✳ Homes in this community vary in façade, but all seem of good quality.	✳ Homes in this community vary in façade, but all seem of good quality.	✳ Homes in this community vary in façade, but all seem of good quality.	✳ Homes in this community vary in façade, but all seem of good quality.
Roof	✳ Homes use a Gabled and pitched style appropriate to the context and weather conditions	✳ Homes use a Gabled and pitched style appropriate to the context and weather conditions.	✳ Homes use a Gabled, flat, and pitched style appropriate to the context and weather conditions.	✳ Homes use a Gabled and pitched style appropriate to the context and weather conditions.	✳ Homes use a Gabled and pitched style appropriate to the context and weather conditions.

Architectural Design Discussion

The Architectural analysis considered construction quality, building type, and design appropriateness. The most successful projects here balanced durability with thoughtful design suited to the tiny home scale. Community First Village and Village Farm, which utilized stick-built, on-site construction, were standout examples. This method allowed for durable, high-quality facade materials and roof configurations appropriate to their regional context (e.g., pitched roofs for weather shedding). Their units, while small, were designed for single-story living without lofts, enhancing accessibility.

Projects like Acony Bell (Mills River, NC) and Little River Escape, which primarily used Tiny Homes on Wheels (THOWs), demonstrated that quality was still achievable with manufactured units. They offered variety in facade materials and included lofted spaces to maximize their small footprints, appealing to a different market segment. The standout failure in this category was Dignity Village, where the use of visibly low-quality, ad-hoc building materials compromised both aesthetics and longevity, reinforcing negative stereotypes about alternative housing. Monarch Village's use of prefabricated containers with flat roofs, while innovative, was noted for its less conventional and potentially lower-quality material appearance.

Community Amenity Factors

Community Landscape Standards
Does this community have landscaping and if so, is it provided by the developer? One star is awarded if the landscaping is provided by the residents and two stars if the landscaping is provided by the developer. No star is awarded if no landscaping is present.

Community Center
Does this community provide a center for residents to gather? One star is awarded if a community center is provided.

Recreation Facilities
What kind of recreational facilities are provided in this community? One to three stars are awarded based on the amenities provided ranging from community gardens, walking paths, dog parks, etc.

Community Amenity Factors

Project	Acony Bell (Mills River, NC) pp.37-38	Community First Village (Austin,TX) pp.39-40	Dignity Village (Portland, OR) pp.41-42	Etna Shire (Etna, WY) pp.43-44)	Greenwood Cottages (Shoreline, WA) pp.45-46
Community Landscape Standards	✳ Landscaping is present but not consistent, implying that homeowners provide landscaping.	✳ ✳ The site provides landscaping throughout, provided by the developer.	✖ The site does not provide any landscaping.	✳ ✳ The site provides landscaping throughout, provided by the developer.	✳ ✳ The site provides landscaping throughout, provided by the developer.
Community Center	✖ The site does not provide a community center.	✳ A community center is provided.	✖ No community center is provided.	✖ The site does not provide a community center.	✳ A community center is provided.
Recreation Facilities	✳ ✳ This site provides agricultural space, walking/biking trails, and a stream.	✳ ✳ ✳ This site provides agricultural space, an amphitheater, gardens, a dog park, and an arts center.	✳ This site provides an agricultural space and common spaces.	✳ An open green space is provided.	✳ A general recreation space is provided.

Table 4: Community Amenity Factors

Community Amenity Factors

Project	Harbor Point Estates (Chicago,IL) pp.47-48	Little River Escape (Cloudland, GA) pp. 49-50	Monarch Village (Lawrence, KS) pp. 51-52	Orlando Lakefront (Orlando, FL) pp. 53-54	Quixote Village (Olympia, WA) pp. 55-56		Rosa Village Co-Op (Eugine, OR) pp. 57-58	The Cottages at Hickory Crossing (Dallas, TX) pp. 59-60	Tiny Tranquility Park (Waldport, OR) pp. 61-62	Veterans Community Project (Kansas City, MO) pp. 63-64	Village Farm (Austin, TX) pp.65-66
Community Landscape Standards	✳✳ The site provides landscaping throughout, provided by the developer.	✖ The site does not provide any landscaping.	✖ The site does not provide any landscaping.	✳✳ The site provides landscaping throughout, provided by the developer.	✳✳ The site provides landscaping throughout, provided by the developer.		✳ Landscaping is present but not consistent, implying that homeowners provide landscaping.	✳✳ The site provides landscaping throughout, provided by the developer.	✳✳ The site provides landscaping throughout, provided by the developer.	✖ The site does not provide any landscaping.	✳✳ The site provides landscaping throughout, provided by the developer.
Community Center	✳ A community center is provided.	✖ The site does not provide a community center.	✳ A community center is provided.	✖ The site does not provide a community center.	✳ A community center is provided.		✳ A community center is provided.	✳ A community center is provided.	✳ A community center is provided.	✳ A community center is provided.	✳ A community center is provided.
Recreation Facilities	✳ A general recreation space is provided.	✳✳✳ This site provides an Outdoor Pavilion and pool, walking trails, and recreational space, and a community fire pit.	✳ A community pavilion and vegetable garden are provided.	✳✳✳ This site provides a boat/ fishing dock, green space, community garden, and a community fire pit.	✳✳ This site provides a community greenspace, a retention pond, and a community building.		✳ A vegetable garden is provided .	✳ An open green space is provided.	✳✳✳ This site provides a dog park, outdoor activity area, greenhouse, and the Redwood Commons.	✳ An open green space is provided.	✳✳✳ This site provides a dog park, outdoor activity area, community garden, and pool.

Community Amenity Discussion

The provision of Community Amenities was the most significant differentiator between simply providing shelter and creating a true “sense of place.” Top-tier communities understood this and invested heavily. Community First Village is arguably the national precedent, offering an unparalleled array of amenities including an amphitheater, art center, community kitchens, gardens, and a dog park, all supported by developer-maintained landscaping. Similarly, Tiny Tranquility Park provided a greenhouse, dog park, and community commons, and Orlando Lakefront (Orlando, FL) leveraged its unique location with a boat dock and fishing access. These amenities, coupled with a dedicated community center, transform a housing project into a vibrant, self-sufficient neighborhood that fosters social interaction and resident well-being.

On the other end of the spectrum, communities like Acony Bell and Veterans Community Project provided little to no unified landscaping or common facilities. They rely on residents to create their own sense of community, which often result in a less cohesive and less appealing environment. Little River Escape, while boasting excellent recreational amenities like a pool and pavilion, paradoxically failed to provide a community center or any developer-led landscaping, suggesting a focus on private recreation over communal gathering spaces.

Affordability Factors

Unit Price
The unit price for dwellings within each development were sourced from online postings on Zillow, the developer's website, or other means. Stars are not awarded in this category as many developments are either non purchasable or free.

Alternative Energy
Does this development take advantage of alternative energy sources such as solar panels, rainwater storage, radiant heat wall or passive air conditioning? One star is awarded for each type of alternate energy source utilized: (i) solar panels; (ii) rainwater storage; (iii) passive air conditioning; and (iv) radiant heat wall.

AMI Affordability
Stars are awarded based on the communites level of affordability based on the percentage of the local affordability standards of .3 x (AMI) average local median income. Three stars if it is free, two stars for 1- 10% AMI, one star for 11-29% AMI, and no star if it exceeds 30% AMI.

See appendix B for AMI calculations.

Relative Site Development
A star is awarded if there are customization options for the unit. In other words, does the development simply offer a one size fits all site development package or can buyers obtain a higher quality site development or dwelling configuration or finish?

Affordability Factors

Project	Acony Bell (Mills River, NC) pp.37-38	Community First Village (Austin,TX) pp.39-40	Dignity Village (Portland, OR) pp.41-42	Etna Shire (Etna, WY) pp.43-44)	Greenwood Cottages (Shoreline, WA) pp.45-46
Unit Price	Units are priced at $75,000.	Units are priced at $45,000.	Free	Units are priced at $400,000	Units are priced at $100,000.
Alternative Energy	✳ Units use mini-split heating and cooling.	✳ Units are designed with natural heating and cooling.	✳ Units utilize solar panels.	✖ This community has no alternative energy implementation	✖ This community has no alternative energy implementation.
AMI Affordability	✳ ✳ 10% of AMI	✳ ✳ 5% of AMI	✳ ✳ 1% of AMI	✳ ✳ 5% of AMI	✳ ✳ 4% of AMI
Relative Site Development	✳ This community allows for DIY or an array of approved vendors, allowing for variety in costs.	✖ This community has no levels for relative site development.	✖ This community has no levels for relative site development.	✖ This community has no levels for relative site development	✖ This community has no levels for relative site development.

Table 5: Affordability Factors

Affordability Factors

Project	Harbor Point Estates (Chicago,IL) pp.47-48	Little River Escape (Cloudland, GA) pp. 49-50	Monarch Village (Lawrence, KS) pp. 51-52	Orlando Lakefront (Orlando, FL) pp. 53-54	Quixote Village (Olympia, WA) pp. 55-56
Avg. Unit Price	Units are priced at $87,500.	Units are priced at $57,000.	Free	Units are priced at $98,100.	Free
Alternative Energy	× This community has no alternative energy implementation.	× This community has no alternative energy implementation.	× This community has no alternative energy implementation.	× This community has no alternative energy implementation.	× This community has no alternative energy implementation.
AMI Affordability	** 9% of AMI	* 11% of AMI	*** Free	* 17% of AMI	*** Free
Relative Site Development	* This site allows for a small degree of relative site development.	* This site allows for a small degree of relative site development.	× This community has no levels for relative site development.	* This site allows for a small degree of relative site development.	× Community has no levels for relative site development.

Project	Rosa Village Co-Op (Eugine, OR) pp. 57-58	The Cottages at Hickory Crossing (Dallas, TX) pp. 59-60	Tiny Tranquility Park (Waldport, OR) pp. 61-62	Veterans Community Project (Kansas City, MO) pp. 63-64	Village Farm (Austin, TX) pp.65-66
Avg. Unit Price	Free	Free	Units are priced at $97,500.	Free	Free
Alternative Energy	× This community has no alternative energy implementation.	** Units utilize solar panels and rainwater collection systems	* Units utilize composting toilets	× This community has no alternative energy implementation	× This community has no alternative energy implementation
AMI Affordability	*** Free	*** Free	** 10% of AMI	*** Free	*** Free
Relative Site Development	× This community has no levels for relative site development.	× This community has no levels for relative site development	* This site allows for a great degree of relative site development.	× This community has no levels for relative site development	* This site allows for a small degree of relative site development

Affordability Discussion

Finally, in Affordability, the strategies diverged dramatically based on the community's core mission. For-sale communities like Acony Bell and Tiny Tranquility Park achieved relative affordability through lower purchase prices ($75,000-$120,000) and, in Acony Bell's case, by allowing owner-led DIY and customization to control costs. A significant number of projects, including Community First Village, Veterans Community Project, and Dignity Village, addressed the most acute level of affordability by providing housing at little or no cost to homeless or at-risk populations, funded through philanthropy and public support.

However, a common failure across nearly all sites was the notable lack of integration for Alternative Energy sources. With few exceptions like Community First Village (passive design) and Tiny Tranquility Park, most communities did not implement solar panels, rainwater harvesting, or other systems that would reduce the long-term utility costs for residents, missing a critical opportunity to enhance lifelong affordability. Furthermore, projects that offered flexibility in site development costs, like Acony Bell, provided a more accessible pathway to ownership than those with rigid, one-size-fits-all development packages.

4 Findings

Identifying What Makes tiny home Communities Successful

4.1 Precedent Evaluation

Based on the literature review, tiny home acceptance and desirability are predicated on four main factors:

•Affordability: Affordability is based on architectural style and materials, site infrastructure costs, and local AMI.

•Zoning Code Provision: Tiny homes are specifically accommodated within the zoning code other than typical “Mobile Home Park” or “RV Park” designations.

•Aesthetics and Context Compatibility: Tiny home development is attractive to buyers and is compatible with the surrounding context.

•“Sense of Place”: A clustered tiny home development creates a sense of place through a layout pattern that promotes integration with natural systems, social interaction, and recreational/scenic amenities.
Precedent tiny home developments were comparatively scored in the prior section as summarized and shown in Table 4.1 (label table shown on pp 93-94 as “Table 4.1: Comparative Scoring of Precedent tiny home Developments”).

Final Property Scoring

Project	Acony Bell	Community First Village	Dignity Village	Etna Shire	Greenwood Cottages		Harbor Point	Little River Escape	Monarch Village	Orlando Lakefront	Quixote Village
	20	**23**	12	17	21		14	19	16	19	19

Project	Rosa Village Co-Op	Cottages at Hickory Crossing	Tiny Tranquility	KC Veterans Community	Village Farm
	18	22	**24**	21	**26**

4.2 Review of Top Precedents

The three top-scoring precedents identified in Section 4.1, “Village Farm”, “Tranquility Park”, and “Community First Village” are analyzed in greater depth as case studies to formulate guidelines to enhance new tiny home developments, making them more desirable for greater adoption.

Village Farm

Location: Northeast Austin, Texas, USA
Developer: DMA Development Company
Architectural Style: Modern Farmhouse / Sustainable Contemporary
Site Area: 40 acres (formerly Sandstone Farm)
Project Type: Mixed-Use Agrihood (Residential + Urban Farm)

Overview

Village Farm Austin is a pioneering "agrihood" (agriculture-centered neighborhood) that redefines suburban living by integrating urban farming, sustainable design, and community-centric planning. Built on the historic Sandstone Farm, the development preserves its agricultural heritage while introducing modern, eco-conscious architecture. This case study reveals the design philosophy, spatial organization, sustainability strategies, and social impact of Village Farm which make it a benchmark for future affordable communities positioned for agricultural living.



Figure 4.1: Village Farm Axon View

Site & Context Analysis

Village Farm Austin was originally Sandstone Farm, a working farm since the 19th century. The developers retained key structures such as the original barns and silos to maintain historical continuity. In addition, since 2006, Village Farm has operated by Green Gate Farms, a USDA certified organic food and flower farm that offers a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program for the residents to tend. The CSA program allows community members to pay annual membership fees to help cover the farm's production costs in exchange for a weekly "share" of the farm's production during the growing season. Alternatively, participants can volunteer four hours a week to receive a full share of weekly vegetables or flowers.

Austin has a hot, humid subtropical climate (long summers, mild winters) that influences material choices such as stone and stucco, as well as is reason to utilize passive cooling strategies. East Austin enjoys gently rolling terrain with natural drainage patterns, which the developers preserved to minimize land disruption. Village Farm is located near major highways (US 290, SH 130), balancing rural tranquility with city access.

From a social perspective, Village Farm responds to Austin's increasing housing demand and lack of affordable housing. The project also implements sustainable, low-impact development and provides a social network for eco-conscious buyers, young families, and retirees seeking farm-to-table living.

Design Concept

Village Farm integrates residential living with a fully operational urban farm to create an "agrihood". Social interaction is encouraged through a central "farmhouse" that can be used by anyone to host gatherings, occasional concerts and a community pool and hot tub. Community building is further encouraged through shared spaces such as the farm itself and a trail system. With respect to sustainability, the project employs net-zero-ready homes, rainwater harvesting, and native landscaping. Finally, Village Farm takes advantage of its heritage by preserving and adapting historic farm structures.

Architectural & Landscape Features

This agricultural oriented project implements a modern farmhouse aesthetic by incorporating gabled roofs, board-and-batten siding, and large porches. Village Farm also adopted the local vernacular Texan architecture that is reflected by metal roofs, stone accents, and shaded outdoor spaces. Smartly, the Farm uses biophilic design maximizing natural light, ventilation, and greenery integration.

The project kept vertical construction costs down by using a single housing typology. Specifically, Village Farm provides only single-family homes comprised of 395 square feet. Key features of construction include open floor plans with farmhouse-inspired details such as shaker cabinets and exposed beams. In addition, each unit takes advantage of energy-efficient windows, spray-foam insulation, and solar panel readiness. The small indoor living space is leverage by large, covered porches and outdoor living spaces. Finally, the project contemplates future cottages and townhomes to achieve higher density in a later phase of development.

Material Palette

One special aspect of Village Farm is that it takes reclaimed wood from original farm structures and incorporates that authentic fabric into the construction of the homes. As mentioned, the Farm also employs corrugated metal roofing that is both durable and reflective for heat reduction. The project even uses more expensive materials such as local limestone which has a high thermal mass that regulates temperature. Extra care is taken with the interior finishes in that low-VOC paints, recycled glass counter tops, and bamboo flooring are used in every unit.

Urban Farm & Community Spaces

Village Farm is organized around a central working farm which produces organic vegetables and flowers as well as beekeeping operations and chicken coops. Fields are irrigated using a high-efficiency drip system that is fed by rainwater collection. The growing season is significantly extended by the use of greenhouses and hoop houses. The large original barn has been adapted to be a multi-purpose community barn that houses markets, workshops and communal dining.

Pedestrian & Green Infrastructure

In addition to Green Gates farm, Village Farm itself provides raised gardening beds for resident use. The Farm also includes a trail system that connects homes to the farm, parks, BBQ areas and a future farm-to-table café. Two dog parks offer an opportunity for four legged friends to mingle and exercise. Several pocket parks and gathering nodes are equipped with outdoor kitchens and fire pits. The somewhat lavish landscaping is serviced by on-site stewards that maintain the common areas.

Sustainability & Innovation

Energy efficiency is forward thinking by providing solar-ready homes that are-wired for photovoltaic panels. Likewise, passive cooling strategies are employed by the use of deep overhangs, cross-ventilation, and reflective roofing. Water conservation is also addressed by rainwater harvesting via several 20,000-gallon cisterns that feed the drip irrigation system. Another great idea is the use of permeable paving that reduces runoff and heat island effect. Waste reduction is accomplished by on-site composting that diverts organic waste from landfills. Even the construction waste is recycled so that 75% of debris re-purposed.

Spatial Organization & User Experience

The master plan layout of Village Farm is a form of cluster housing which involves grouping homes around shared courtyards and farm plots. The layout also has a pedestrian-first design that uses narrow, tree-lined streets to discourage speeding. Three types of zoning are used: (i) residential clusters (private, quiet zones); (ii) community core (farm, barn, event spaces); and (iii) greenbelt perimeter (buffering future urban sprawl).

Social Dynamics

Shared responsibilities are an optional means for residents to bond and form long-term relationships through volunteering at Green Gate Farm. Likewise, events such as weekly farmers' markets, farm-to-table dinners, and workshops afford an opportunity for camaraderie. By choosing to live at Village Farm, residents share a prioritization of sustainability as a lifestyle that engages in sustainable practices. Reducing car dependency also fosters a stronger community as residents enjoy essential small talk and repetitive communications that support mental health. In summary, Village Farm demonstrates that agriculture as infrastructure can be both functional resource and a social anchor.

Critical Analysis

The strength of Village Farm is that it truly integrates farm life into daily residential life. Unlike ornamental agrihoods, Village Farm has a productive, revenue-generating farm that residents can benefit from both economically and socially. Another favorable aspect of Village Farm is that it offers holistic sustainability delivered by incorporating local materials to energy saving techniques. Lastly, the Farm promotes a strong community identity through shared spaces and activities that cultivate neighborly interaction.

Challenges & Critiques

The downside of Village Farm is a lack of affordability. Homes are priced at a premium and start at $130,000. However, access is made more affordable though favorable financing terms such as amortization over a period of 23 years and a reduced downpayment of 5-10%. Another potential issue is that the Village Farm model may be difficult to replicate in denser urban areas. However, affordable housing is always more practicably implemented in rural areas with lower land costs and impact fees.

Conclusion & Lessons for Future Developments

Village Farm Austin demonstrates how historic preservation, ecological stewardship, and community-centric design can coexist. Key takeaways for architects and planners include the concept that agriculture can serve as a community infrastructure and provide both functional and social anchors. Likewise, sustainability as a lifestyle is embraced by residents who desire to engage in sustainable practices and social dynamics.

Tiny Tranquility Park

Location: Oregon, USA
Developer: Tiny Tranquility
Architectural Style: Modern Minimalist / Pacific Northwest Vernacular
Unit Types: 140–280 sq ft micro-cabins
Key Features: Off-grid capability, biophilic design, eco-conscious materials

Introduction

Tiny Tranquility re-imagines getaway architecture by offering prefabricated, off-grid-ready micro-cabins in a serene natural setting. Designed for eco-tourists, digital nomads, and mindfulness seekers, these structures prioritize minimalism, sustainability, and connection to nature. This study promotes their design strategy, modular construction, and user experience, positioning them as a model for low-impact hospitality.



Figure 4.2: Tiny Tranquility Park Axon View

Site & Context Integration

The locational strategy of Tiny Tranquility leverages the coastal beauty of the Oregon coast. Sites are nestled in the Oregon forests (e.g., Rock Creek, Nectar) with deliberate proximity to water bodies and trails. The actual cabins are lightly anchored (minimal grading) and oriented for privacy to maximize angled views and use tree buffers for privacy. In addition, the placement maximizes solar gain by featuring large south-facing windows for the colder sites. Stormwater management is also accomplished using permeable gravel pads. Likewise, Tiny Tranquility addresses climate issues by using steep-pitched roofs that shed snow and rain. The site also applies cedar-clad exteriors which are naturally weather-resistant and locally sourced. Finally, the site uses raised foundations that prevent moisture retention in an environment that is iconically rainy.

Design Philosophy

The design philosophy of this project is a “Less House, More Life” ethos. Each unit employs compact efficiency by only providing 140–280 square foot layouts that eliminate excess while retaining comfort. In addition, the units have a biophilic design based on floor-to-ceiling windows that blur indoor/outdoor boundaries. Natural materials such as wood interiors and wool insulation provide additional comfort. Loft bedrooms emulate treehouse-like intimacy. The park also employs modular and prefabricated innovation such as factory-built components that reduce construction waste. Flat-pack delivery enables remote site assembly.

Architectural Features

The exterior design begins with gabled roofs having extended eaves that deliver shade and rain protection. Materials include cedar siding that is untreated and ages naturally. Corrugated metal roofs that are both lightweight and durable are also regularly used. Tiny Tranquility responds to its remote location by being off-grid ready solutions such as solar hookups, propane heater compatibility and composting toilets.

Interior spaces are optimized by using multi-functional zones such as convertible furniture (e.g., fold-down tables, Murphy beds), as well as built-in storage under stairs and lofts. Interior spaces are also maximized by using loft layouts for sleeping that are accessed via ladders and the low ceilings enhance coziness. Each mini kitchen has a 2-burner induction cook top and an under-counter fridge. Wet baths that combined the space occupied by the shower and toilet areas save space by borrowing from RV designs.

Sustainability & Technology

Eco-conscious systems are used to reduce energy. For example, residents can purchase optional solar panels that generate 200 watts of power to provide LED lighting and low-energy appliances. Water usage is decreased using rain catchment for non-potable uses and grey water systems are also employed. From a materials perspective, the project uses FSC-certified wood for both structures and interiors. Wool insulation which is non-toxic and has a high R-value are used together with salvaged materials such as barn wood accents.

User Experience & Impact

The strength of the Tiny Tranquility lies in its ability to deliver what its name projects – tranquility and a digital detox. This is accomplished through the physical aspects of the development as well as the site's policy that prohibits media and instead encourages engagement with nature. The sensory design that affords acoustic privacy through thick insulation and stress reduction from wood aromas and natural light.
In addition, the common areas offer a large dog park, the ocean beach just a stroll away, as well as a huge outdoor activity area. The 2,400 square foot common lodge has the rare big screen TV, ping pong and pool tables, as well as a fire pit and grilling area. Everyone can use the 12,000 square foot greenhouse to not only grow plants, but store excess gear and create crafts.

Critiques

Problems with Tiny Tranquility include limited accessibility caused by the use of lofts and ladders that are unsuitable for mobility-impaired guests. Seasonal constraints also exist in that some units lack sufficient insulation for extreme winters.

Conclusion & Industry Implications

Tiny Tranquility demonstrates how micro-architecture can harmonize sustainability, affordability, and experiential travel. Key lessons learned from Tiny Tranquility include the principal that micro-homes can be produced efficiently to reduce both construction costs and construction waste. Biophilic minimalism enhances well-being. This project lends itself to scalability both for potential eco-resorts and backyard ADUs. Future iterations of this model could explore more accessible designs that use ramp-entries and murphy beds instead of lofts, as well as climate-hardened models for harsher environments.

Community First Village

Project Name: Community First Village
Location: Austin, Texas, USA
Developer: Mobile Loaves & Fishes
Architectural Style: Vernacular, Sustainable, Community-Centric
Site Area: 51 acres (Phase I: 27 acres, Phase II: 24 acres)
Project Type: Permanent Supportive Housing Community

Introduction

Community First Village is a groundbreaking master-planned community in Austin, Texas, designed to provide permanent, dignified housing for individuals transitioning out of chronic homelessness. Developed by the nonprofit Mobile Loaves & Fishes, the 51-acre village re-imagines supportive housing through a human-centered approach, blending affordable tiny homes (100–400 sq ft), communal spaces, and income-generating opportunities. The design emphasizes community integration with clustered tiny homes, shared kitchens, gardens, and workshops that foster connection and purpose. Sustainable features like solar power, rainwater harvesting, and native landscaping reduce environmental impact while lowering costs. Unlike traditional shelters, the village prioritizes stability, belonging, and economic empowerment, offering residents not just shelter but a true home within a purpose-built neighborhood. The success of Community First Village has inspired similar models nationwide, proving that thoughtful design can address homelessness with both compassion and innovation.



Figure 4.3: Community First Village Axon View

Site & Context Analysis

The Community is located in northeast Austin and seeks to address the city's homelessness crisis which is estimated be at least 3,000 unsheltered individuals. The development is master-planned as a self-sustaining village, not a temporary shelter. As such, the site planning philosophy provides decentralized clusters that mimic organic neighborhood growth. The pedestrian-first layout incorporates winding paths that encourage interaction. Native landscaping that includes drought-resistant plants and rainwater gardens are intertwined to enhance user experience.

Design Concept & Philosophy

The project is a manifestation of housing as a human right and therefor focuses on the three pillars of housing, community and purpose. As such, the project rejects institutional aesthetics in favor of home-like, individualized spaces. The architectural inspirations include vernacular Texan architecture such as metal roofs, porches and wood siding. In keeping with affordable housing, the project reflects the tiny house movement that delivers efficient homes of 100 – 400 square feet. As an affordable housing solution, co-housing solutions such as shared kitchens, gardens, and workspaces are employed.

Architectural Features

As mentioned, Community First primarily uses micro-homes ranging from 100 to 400 square feet that are essentially insulated sleeping units. Porches provide an opportunity for personalization and neighborly interaction. However, some other units are canvas-sided cottages that are more affordable and quicker to deploy for transitional housing. Finally, RV pads are made available for residents who are transitioning from vehicular homelessness. Community spaces include the Alchemy Café & Kitchen that trains residents in culinary arts. An art house provides studio space for resident artists and an outdoor movie theater and chapel provides a social and spiritual gathering point. The site has an impressive solar power array that provides 130 kW which offsets 80% of energy use. A huge 50,000-gallon cistern provides rainwater harvesting that is used for irrigation. Finally, composting toilets reduce water usage in communal areas.

Spatial Organization & Social Impact

The master plan layout of Community First centers around pocket neighborhoods with 6–8 homes that are placed around shared green spaces. In addition, a central community square is offered for markets and events. Another community resource is working areas such as gardens and workshops that are integrated throughout. The residents are offered economic empowerment through community works program whereby residents earn income through village maintenance and art sales. On select market days the residents sell crafts, food, and garden produce.

Critical Analysis

The strength of Community First is that it offers a dignity centered design that rejects the institutional feel of homeless shelters. Especially healing is the holistic approach that includes environmental, economic and social concerns. This is a scalable model for the nation as evidenced by Phase II that added 1,400 homes. The weakness of this project is that it is likely to encounter zoning barriers that may require innovative land-use approvals from a liberal municipality as this development type is most likely located within a metropolitan area. In other words, there are limited urban sites that can accommodate this model that works best on large parcels. However, we should offset these concerns by the success of Village Farm that is located 5 miles from a metro area.

Conclusion & Lessons

Community First seeks to offer a designed community that may heal social fractures. The key takeaway from this project is that even small homes can prevent the recidivism of homelessness. Likewise, the social spaces afforded by the infrastructure create social interaction that reduces the isolation of homelessness. Finally, sustainability appears to be scalable in that off-grid systems can reduce long-term costs. As far as lessons for the future, new applications could adapt this model for refugee housing, post-disaster recovery communities and affordable artist villages.

5 Design Concepts

Envisioning New tiny home Communities

5.1 Design Concepts

Each of the following design concepts seeks to implement a new tiny home development that constitutes a community, not just housing. The concepts take advantage of the strengths identified in the selected precedents and likewise avoid some of the pitfalls such as a lack of cohesive development and maintenance.

Student Tiny Village

Location: Manhattan, KS
Total Acerage:11.7
Architectural Style: Modern Minimalist
Unit Types: 1,250 sq ft tiny homes
Lot Size: 5,000 sq ft
Density: 3 Units Per Acre
Total Number of Units: 38
Road Square Footage: 55,800 sq ft
Key Features: Off Campus Housing for Students with Families, Larger lots and Units, Community Courtyards, Agricultural Space

This design concept is located in Manhattan, Kansas. The siteis situated on almost 12 acres nearby Kansas State University and seeks to provide alternative housing for older students who are either married and / or have children. As such, extra outdoor space is afforded to promote outdoor activities and community interaction among young adults and children. This concept could be easily adapted for low income housing.

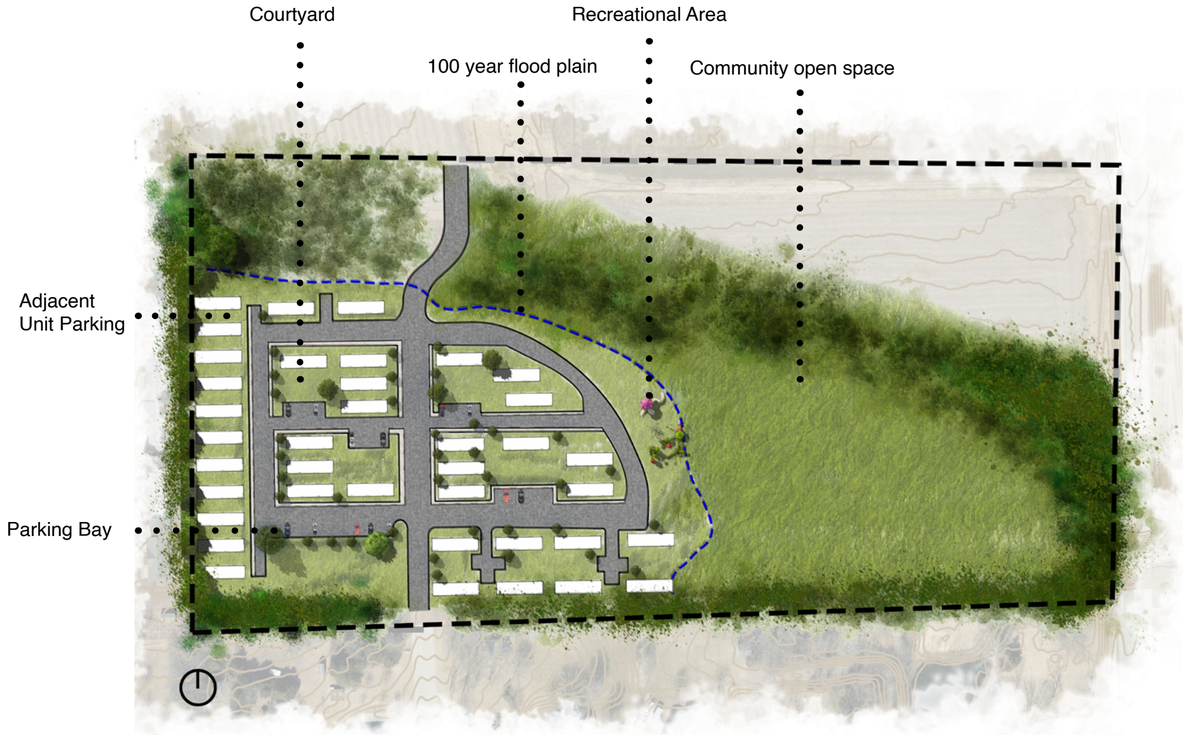


Figure 5.1: Student Tiny Village Rendering

Site Context

Neighborhood Zoning Designation: Single Family
Neighborhood Architectural Style: Homogenus
Neighborhood Compatibility: Compatible

Site Development

Configuration. Units are oriented together in a traditional neighborhood layout which leaves a large open space to the east for agricultural and play grounds. That said, the units are spaced to provide some private outdoor space.

Lot Size. The lots exceed 1.5x the unit size.

Infrastructure. The units are placed on the west side of the property which requires little grading. The roads are 25 feet wide which affords room for two-way traffic and on street parking.

Housing Density. 3 units per acre results in somewhat higher costs per unit. However, the rural location of the site already owned by KSU which supports the overall affordability of the project.

Zoning. The project has approximately 7 acres of land that is subject to 100 year flooding that can be used for agricultural and recreational purposes.

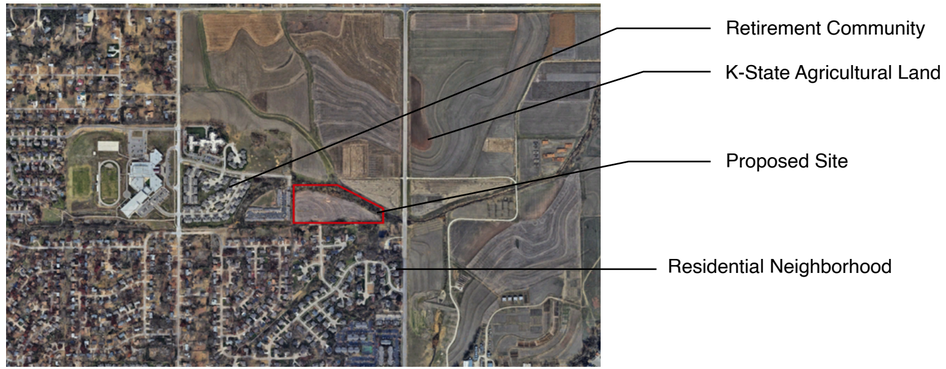


Figure 5.2: Manhattan Site Greater Context

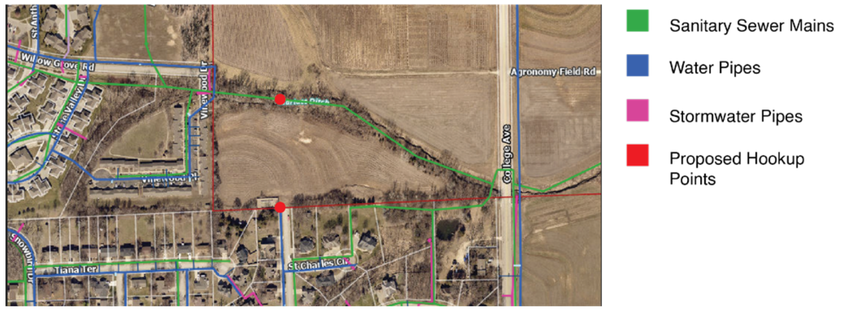


Figure 5.3: Utility lines and hook-ups

Architectural Design

Building Type. The units are modern minimalist style which lends itself to the use of affordable materials, larger windows, energy efficiency and an open floor plan.

Square Footage. The unit size of 1,250 square feet means that the units are larger than a standard trailer of 900 square feet. This translates into an extra bedroom for children and/or a larger common space for eating and family congregation.

Levels. Since the units are rather large, no second level is provided.

Façade Materials. The iconic limestone material found in Manhattan is too expensive for incorporation into this project. As such, other commonly found rural materials such as corrugated sheet metal, salvaged barn wood and Hardie board will be used.

Roof. Units will vary from a flat roof to a pitched roof. No gabled roofs will be used.



Figure 5.4: Student Tiny Village Vignette 1

Community Amenities

Landscaping. The project will mimic the local vegetation of the Konza Prairie. Specifically, native tall grasses, wildflowers and deciduous trees will be provided by the developer.

Community Center. In lieu of a community center, the open field to the east will include a large open pavilion with a firepit for cooking.

Recreation Facilities. The open field will also include a community barn within which farming tools can be stored, including a small tractor that is owned by the community. Each of the 38 units will be assigned a small plot of land that they can use to grow vegetables, raise small livestock or keep bees.

Affordability

Site Development Cost: Since this is a conceptual project, there are many site development cost variables that cannot be estimated at this time: land acquisition costs (market price, donated land, or government subsidized land for low-income groups); rough grading/ earthwork costs (no preliminary engineering); financial arrangements/terms by the lender; or exact local permitting costs that may be required. Nevertheless, relative costs for basic site infrastructure and landscaping costs are estimated for comparative purposes using unit pricing based on Marshall and Swift (M&S) national construction cost data (Appendices B and B-2).

Total Site Infrastructure Cost = $679,414 (Appendix B-2, Table 16)/ 38 dwelling units (DUs)= $17,616/DU (excluding land acquisition, site construction financing, and local permitting costs)

Dwelling Unit Building Cost: Average Dwelling Unit (DU) square foot construction cost is estimated at $212 according to Appendix B1 data. DU (1,250 sf) x $212/sf = $265,000/DU

Total DU Cost: $17,616 + $265,000 =$282,616

Homebuyer Financing: Total $282,616 x 0.80 (20% downpayment) = $226,093 financed at 30-year term, 7% fixed rate = $1,504/month ($18,048/yr)

Affordability: Housing $18,048/ $58,441 Manhattan AMI = 32% of AMI



Figure 5.5: Tiny Home Community Vignette 2

Oregon River Village

Location: Linn County, OR
Architectural Style: Craftsman and Rustic
Total Acerage: 9.92
Unit Types: 450 sq ft tiny homes
Lot Size: 675 sq ft
Density:12.2 Units Per Acre
Total Number of Units: 121
Road Square Footage: 61,500 sq ft
Key Features: River Acess, Large Community Center, Greenspace Corridor

This project provides small tiny homes with high density situated beside a river with community amenities. This community would leverage the recreational opportunities of the Oregon River. The community could serve either the homeless or persons wishing to downsize and enjoy a rural lifestyle. The higher density of over 12 units per acre combined with the small size of the units keeps the price of this community very affordable.

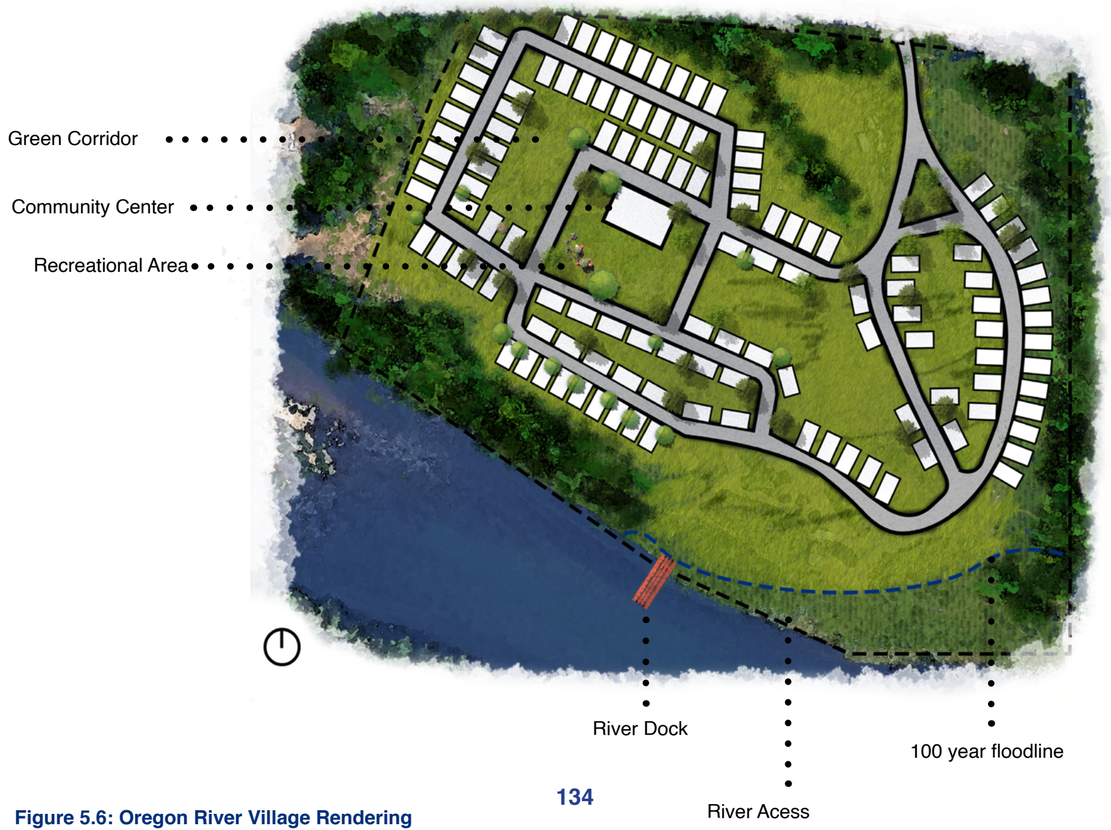


Figure 5.6: Oregon River Village Rendering

Site Context

Neighborhood Zoning Designation: Single Family
Neighborhood Architectural Style: Homogenus
Neighborhood Compatibility: Compatible

Site Development

Configuration. Units are oriented together in a traditional neighborhood layout which creates numerous plots for open space and amenities. None of the units are situated on the best aspect of the property along the river in order to encourage community access to the river.

Lot Size. The lots exceed 1.5x the unit size.

Infrastructure. The property requires little grading. The roads are 20 feet wide which affords room for two-way traffic and on street parking.

Housing Density. 12 units per acre achieves the affordability target.

Zoning. The project has approximately 2 acres of land that can be used for agricultural and recreational purposes.



Figure 5.7: Oregon Site Context

Architectural Design

Building Type. The units are styled as a fishing camp with screen doors and windows, a front porch and cedar planking.

Square Footage. The unit size of 450 square feet means that the units are smaller than a standard trailer of 900 square feet. This translates into a compact living area that is perfect for a single person. Pets are allowed and encouraged.

Levels. Several of the units have a second level. These are designed to provide a sleeping loft for couples.

Façade Materials. Rustic elements such as dark stained cedar, galvanized sheet metal and either stained or plain concrete are used.

Roof. Units use pitched roofs. No gabled roofs will be used.



Figure 5.8: Oregon River Village Vignette 1

Community Amenities

Landscaping. The project will pull from the dense river vegetation that naturally occurs near the Oregon River. The staples of the landscaping will consist of coniferous trees, rhododendrons and native grasses. The landscaping will be provided by the developer.

Community Center. A 2,000 square foot community center will be located in the center of the property and be situated on about an acre of land that itself provides open space for entertaining and small sporting events. The riverfront will include a large dock with a small three season building that can be used for cooking group meals and entertaining. Outside the dock house will be a fish cleaning station.

Recreation Facilities. The open space between the dock and the road will be terraced to provide room for small gardens, other agricultural activities and a walking trail that meanders through the perimeter of the property.

Affordability

Site Development Cost: Since this is a conceptual project, there are many site development cost variables that cannot be estimated at this time: land acquisition costs (market price, donated land, or government subsidized land for low-income groups); rough grading/ earthwork costs (no preliminary engineering); financial arrangements/terms by the lender; or exact local permitting costs that may be required. Nevertheless, relative costs for basic site infrastructure and landscaping costs are estimated for comparative purposes using unit pricing based on Marshall and Swift (M&S) national construction cost data (Appendices B and B-2).

Total Site infrastructure Cost = $3,052,716 (Appendix B-2, Table 17)/ 121 dwelling units (DUs)= $25,229/DU (excluding land acquisition, site construction financing, and local permitting costs)

Dwelling Unit Building Cost: Average Dwelling Unit (DU) square foot construction cost is estimated at $212 according to Appendix B1 data. DU (450 sf) x $212/sf = $95,400/DU

Total DU Cost: $25,229 + $95,400 =$120,629

Homebuyer Financing: Total $120,629 x 0.80 (20% downpayment) = $96,503 financed at 30-year term, 7% fixed rate = $642/month ($7,704/yr)

Affordability: Housing $7,704/ $73,396 Linn County, OR AMI = 10.5% of AMI



Figure 5.9: Oregon River Village Vignette 1

Maha Creek Community

Location: Travis County, TX
Architectural Style: Farmhouse
Total Acerage: 29.3
Unit Types: 400 sq ft tiny homes
Lot Size: 600 sq ft
Density: 6.8 Units Per Acre
Total Number of Units: 197
Road Square Footage: 119,610 sq ft
Key Features: Large Greenway, High density, Walking trails, Large community facilites

This project provides a larger number of small tiny homes with high density located outside of Austin, Texas. This community would serve the homeless population or migrant farmers wintering over in Texas. A huge interior open space would provide hiking trails, garden plots, picnic areas and interspersed seating. This is in addition to a community center of approximately 5,000 square feet that includes a commercial kitchen for community dinners. The density of 6.8 units per acre does not meet the desired density however provides ample room for indivdual units and community spaces.



Figure 5.10: Maha Creek Community Rendering

Site Context

Neighborhood Zoning Designation: Single Family
Neighborhood Architectural Style: Homogenus

Neighborhood Compatibility: Compatable

Site Development

Configuration. Units are generally oriented along the perimeter of the property in rows. Some units are clustered to provide communal courtyards. This design frees up a large central green space.

Lot Size. The lots equal the 1.5x the unit size.

Infrastructure. The property requires little grading except to the extent the interior green space is improved to construct trails, pavilions and recreational areas such as a soccer field. The roads are 25 feet wide which affords room for two-way traffic and on street parking.

Housing Density. 6.8 units per acre.

Zoning. The project has approximately 15 acres of land that can be used for agricultural and recreational purposes.



Figure 5.11: Maha Creek Community Greater Context

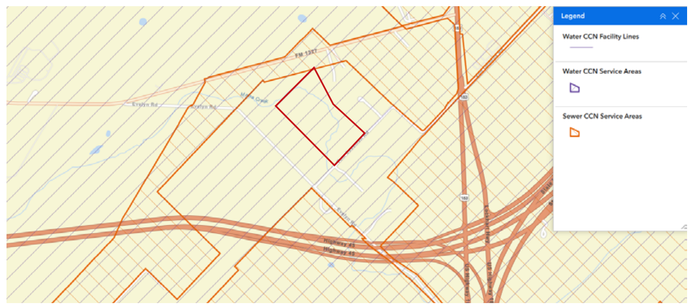


Figure 5.12: Maha Creek Community Utility and Hook-ups

Architectural Design

Building Type. The units are styled as individual Texas bunk houses with screen doors and windows, a front porch and stucco plaster.

Square Footage. The unit size of 400 square feet translates into a compact living area that is perfect for a single person. Pets are allowed and encouraged.

Levels. Several of the units have a second level. These are designed to provide a sleeping loft for couples.

Façade Materials. Texas elements such as insulated stucco on south facing walls, galvanized sheet metal and either stained or plain concrete are used.

Roof. Units will vary from a flat roof to a pitched roof. No gabled roofs will be used.

Community Amenities

Landscaping. Texas vegetation such as mesquite, sage, pinon pines and native grasses will be used. The landscaping will be provided by the developer.

Community Center. A 5,000 square foot community center will be located in the northeast corner of the property and be adjacent to the large green space in the center. The community center will include a commercial kitchen.

Recreation Facilities. The open space will include walking trails, bench seating, and a sporting field.

Affordability

Site Development Cost: Since this is a conceptual project, there are many site development cost variables that cannot be estimated at this time: land acquisition costs (market price, donated land, or government subsidized land for low-income groups); rough grading/ earthwork costs (no preliminary engineering); financial arrangements/terms by the lender; or exact local permitting costs that may be required. Nevertheless, relative costs for basic site infrastructure and landscaping costs are estimated for comparative purposes using unit pricing based on Marshall and Swift (M&S) national construction cost data (Appendices B and B-2).

Total Site infrastructure Cost = $2,782,475 (Appendix B-2, Table 17)/ 197 dwelling units (DUs)= $14,124/DU (excluding land acquisition, site construction financing, and local permitting costs)

Dwelling Unit Building Cost: Average Dwelling Unit (DU) square foot construction cost is estimated at $212 according to Appendix B1 data. DU (400 sf) x $212/sf = $84,800/DU

Total DU Cost: $14,124 + $84,800 =$98,924

Homebuyer Financing: Total $98,924 x 0.80 (20% downpayment) = $79,139 financed at 30-year term, 7% fixed rate = $726/month ($6,312/yr)

Affordability: Housing $6,312/ $113,800 Austin, TX AMI = 5.5% of AMI

5.2 Design Concept Scoring

Site Development Factors

Configuration
Does this community's lot configuration promote a sense of community by centering development around a green space or other community space as well as the placement of all dwellings in a manner that preserves room for amenities? If so, one star is awarded.

Lot Size
Does the lot size equal or exceed the footprint of the dwelling by 1.5x? If so, one star is awarded.

Infrastructure
One star is provided if the width of the roads are greater than 20 feet to accommodate parking.

Housing Density
One star is awarded if the number of dwellings exceed 12 per acre. A second star is awarded if the site provides 24 or more units per acre. See appendix A for housing density standards.

Zoning
Two stars are awarded for developments zoned as residential single family. One star is awarded to development zoned as trailer parks or semi-permanent and no star is awarded for sites zoned for RV's.

Site Development Factors			
Project	**Student Tiny Village**	**Oregon River Village**	**Maha Creek Community**
Configuration	✳ Site is designed in a more traditional neighborhood layout with the addition of courtyards for each housing block	✳ This community creates green areas between residential blocks to allow for shared space as well as larger communal spaces such as the community center and river access area.	✳ Orienting units in rows along the perimeter as well as clustered blocks the site creates communal court yards as well as large areas of communal green space for the community.
Lot Size	✳ Lots meet 1.5x dwelling footprint	✳ Lot sizes meet 1.5x unit size	✳ Lot sizes meet 1.5x unit size
Infrastructure	✳ Roads meet the 20ft or greater requirement to accommodate parking	✳ Streets meet the 20ft or greater requirement	✳ Streets meet the 20ft or greater requirement
Housing Density	× 48 Units/11.7 Acres = 3 Units per acre	✳ 121 Units/9.9 Acres = 12.2 Units per acre	× 197 Units/ 29 Acres = 6.8 Units per acre.
Zoning	✳ ✳ RF1	✳ ✳ Zoned as Rural Residential	✳ ✳ Zoned as Rural Residential

Table 7: Design Concepts Site Development Factors

Site Context Factors

Neighborhood Zoning Designation
Does the zoning of this development differ from the zoning of the adjacent developed properties? A star is awarded if the development matches the adjunct single family homes.

Neighborhood Architectural Style
Is the architectural style of the dwellings within the cluster development consistent with each other? One star is awarded for rhythmic homogny and two stars for full homogny.

Neighborhood Compatibility
Is the architectural style of the dwellings within the cluster development consistent with the architectural style of the buildings or homes of their surrounding area? If consistent, a star is awarded.

Site Context Factors			
Project	**Student Tiny Village**	**Oregon River Village**	**Maha Creek Community**
Neighborhood Zoning Designation	* This development matches its surrounding context of single family residential	* Surrounding properties are rural and single family residential	* Adjacent properties are single family residential
Neighborhood Architectural Style	* * The units in this development have a homogeneous architectural style	* All homes in this community have a homogeneous architectural style	* * The sites architectural style is homogeneous throughout
Neighborhood Compatibility	* This community does integrate with the neighboring architectural style	* The sites architectural style is consistent with its surrounding context in the form of wood based construction and a fishing camp/ cabin aesthetic	* The sites architectural style is consistent with its surrounding context in the form of

Table 8: Design Concepts Site Context Factors

Architectural Design Factors

Building Type
Stars are awarded as follows: (i) THOW's = 1 star; (ii) manufactured contact homes = 2 stars; and (iii) contact homes constructed on site = 3 stars.

Interior Square Footage
Interior square footage only considers interior space, not space allocated to decks or outbuildings. Optimization for unit density and affordabilty were driving factors leading to a prefenece for houses in the 250 to 450 square ft range. However homes in the 451-1000 sq ft range provide more room for families while still being inline with tiny home design. Two stars are awarded for home between 250 - 450 sq ft, one star is awarded to homes 451-1000 sq ft.

Floor Levels
Since most tiny homes do not have a second floor or loft, a star is awarded for tiny homes that provide a loft or second level.

Façade Materials
Do the exterior materials minimize cost and sacrifice aesthetics by using sheet metal or plastic slats or do they maximize the aesthetic appearance through the use of high-quality metal or full wood construction? A star is awarded if the units are of good quality materials.

Roof
Is the roof configuration suitable for its context in terms of aesthetics? For example, a steep roof set among a cluster development of adobe homes would not be suitable. A star is awarded if the roof configuration is appropriate.

Architectural Design Factors			
Project	**Student Tiny Village**	**Oregon River Village**	**Maha Creek Community**
Building Type	✱ ✱ This site uses manufactured tiny homes placed onto concrete pads.	✱ ✱ ✱ Homes are constructed on site.	✱ ✱ ✱ Homes are constructed on site
Interior Square Footage	× Units are 1,250 sq ft to accommodate student families and thus does not meet the ideal tiny home sq ft size	✱ ✱ Homes fall in the ideal size of 450 sq ft	✱ ✱ Homes fall in the ideal tiny home size of 400 sq ft
Levels	✱ These units provide a lofted sleeping area.	✱ All homes provide a loft	✱ Units provide sleeping lofts
Façade Materials	✱ These units are constructed of high quality metal facades	✱ Facades utilize wood construction for its primary martial	✱ Facades are high quality in appearance utilizing stucco to maintain with contextual aesthetics
Roof Type	✱ Vary from flat to pitched	✱ Roofs are pitched	✱ Roofs varied from flat to pitched

Table 9: Design Concepts Architectural Design Factors

Community Amenity Factors

Community Landscape Standards
Does this community have landscaping and if so, is it provided by the developer? One star is awarded if the landscaping is provided by the residents and two stars if the landscaping is provided by the developer. No star is awarded if no landscaping is present.

Community Center
Does this community provide a center for residents to gather? One star is awarded if a community center is provided.

Recreation Facilities
What kind of recreational facilities are provided in this community? One to three stars are awarded based on the amenities provided ranging from community gardens, walking paths, dog parks, etc.

Community Amenity Factors			
Project	**Student Tiny Village**	**Oregon River Village**	**Maha Creek Community**
Community Landscape Standards	∗ ∗ This community is provided landscaping by the developer in the form of garden beds and plantings through the site.	∗∗ Community is provided landscaping by the developer with and emphasis on rain gardens to manage excess storm water.	∗ ∗ Developer provided landscape which maintains focus on native planting of native grasses, pollinators, and trees
Community Center	× This site does not have a community center provided however a pavilion is provided	∗ A 2,000 sq ft community center is provided.	∗ A 5,000 sq ft community center is provided.
Recreation Facilities	∗ ∗ ∗ This site provides recreational green space, walking trails, and play equipment for children and small portions of agricultural land.	∗ ∗ ∗ Recreational amenities include play equipment, river access/ dock house, and walking trail	∗ ∗ ∗ Recreational amenities include walking trails, picnic pavilion and a sporting field.

Table 10: Design Concepts Community Amenity Factors

Affordability Factors

Alternative Energy
Does this development take advantage of alternative energy sources such as solar panels, rainwater storage, radiant heat wall or passive air conditioning? One star is awarded for each type of alternate energy source utilized: (i) solar panels; (ii) rainwater storage; (iii) passive air conditioning; and (iv) radiant heat wall.

AMI Affordability
Stars are awarded based on the communites level of affordability based on the percentage of the local affordability standards of .3 x (AMI) average local median income. Three stars if it is free, two stars for 1- 10% AMI, one star for 11-29% AMI, and no star if it exceeds 30% AMI.

See appendix B for AMI calculations.

Relative Site Development
A star is awarded if there are customization options for the unit. In other words, does the development simply offer a one size fits all site development package or can buyers obtain a higher quality site development or dwelling configuration or finish?

Affordability Factors			
Project	**Student Tiny Village**	**Oregon River Village**	**Maha Creek Community**
Alternative Energy	✳ This site utilizes rainwater retention systems to harvest and store for use in agriculture.	✳ Rain water management is achieved through rain gardens being implemented throughout the site.	✖ No alternative energy methods are provided
AMI Affordability	✖ 32% of AMI	✳ ✳ 10.5% AMI	✳ ✳ 5.5 % of AMI
Relative Site Development	✖ This site provides uniform building footprint which does not allow for varying levels of dwellings	✳ The site provides a small degree of flexibility in relative site development cost with some variation allowed in facade and personal outdoor amenities like a deck or seating area.	✖ There is no variation in site development

Table 11: Design Concepts Affordability Factors

Design Concept Final Scoring			
Project	**Student Tiny Village**	**Oregon River Village**	**Maha Creek Community**
	20	**27**	**25**

Table 12: Design Concepts Final Scoring

6 Conclusion

Final Thoughts and Discussion

6.1 Summary of Findings

Using tiny homes within cluster home developments is a wonderful way to provide affordable housing. This model achieves several goals simultaneously in that it presents an affordable stand-alone home, fosters place making and community engagement, as well as aligns well with a reduced environmental footprint that promotes sustainability. The concept of utilizing well designed, compact, individual homes responds to the growing demand for affordable housing. Tiny homes in cluster developments also satisfy the American preference for individual expression while enjoying the camaraderie of a close knit community setting. Tiny homes are flexible in that they can be employed as a part of urban in-fill, new development or alternatively, ADUs in traditional residential neighborhoods. Cluster developments of tiny homes should be encouraged by local governments with community support using integrated planning, financing and zoning. It is easy to envision how tiny home cluster developments can provide another avenue to solve the need for affordable and enjoyable housing.

6.2 Limitations

While this report offers an overview of the success, flexibility and potential of tiny homes employed in cluster developments as well as ADUs, this report has several limitations:

Context Specificity: The findings may not be universally applicable, as local housing markets, cultural attitudes, and planning frameworks differ widely.

Conceptual Scope: As a student project, the scope is limited to conceptual design and theoretical analysis without field implementation or access to a broad degree of empirical data.

Assumptions in Design Models: Assumptions about land costs, infrastructure availability, and resident preferences may not reflect the realities of all communities or developers.

Exclusion of Broader Economic Factors: The report does not extensively consider macroeconomic forces such as interest rates, labor shortages, or inflation, which can significantly impact project feasibility.

6.3 Future Research

This report was prepared by a landscape architecture graduate student and not by a nongovernmental or governmental entity with more extensive resources. My recommendation is that the following lines of inquiry are needed to fully evaluate the use of tiny homes in cluster developments as a partial solution to the affordable housing crisis.

1. Economic Modeling: Deep research into development costs, financing structures, and rent or ownership models is essential to understand which models are best used to provide a financially feasible model for each type of user such as the homeless, first time home buyers, downsizing persons as well as each of those groups in regional markets.

2. Legal Issues: It would be helpful to conduct a national survey to identify the means by which local governments have modified existing zoning and building codes or introduced form-based code to accommodate tiny home cluster developments and ADUs.

3. Long Term Studies: Essential and more accurate information can be obtained by studies that track the implementation of tiny home developments over 5-10 years to glean aspects and models that deliver the most resident satisfaction, community cohesion, and financial success.

7 References & Appendices

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Chapter 1

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Chapter 2

Figure 2.1 Changes in Homes Price and Wages 2000 to 2023. 2023. Acessed Diigital Image. https://usafacts.org/data-projects/housing-vs-wages.

Chapter 3

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Chapter 4

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Chapter 5

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Appendix A

The number of tiny homes per acre of land represents the density of each project. Density is largely governed by the local government within which the project is situated. Normally, most governmental bodies seek to reduce density to mitigate overcrowding, traffic congestion, water drainage and other issues. However, with respect to new developments (as opposed to infill situations) low density makes the tiny home community unaffordable due to the higher land cost per unit. We note that the average density of tiny homes for the 15 projects considered by this report is about 13 units per acre. However, our top three projects each have densities in excess of that average which lends to their strong affordability score. As such, it is recommended that the density of tiny homes per acre for new developments should equal or exceed 30 units per acre in order to provide affordable housing. Please note that from a practical standpoint, the larger the tiny home, more land is needed to meet setback requirements or just to afford some room for outdoor living. Research failed to disclose an industry standard for density and specifically no standards were advocated by the American Planning Association. As such, this report awards a star for projects that exceed 12 units per acre and two stars for projects that exceed 24 units per acre.

Appendix B

Research failed to disclose any industry estimates to construct tiny homes on a per square foot basis. While several commercial websites provide a range of costs, no independent source of truth was found. That said, one source provided the following detailed advice (Bender 2023):

- The average American home costs $150 per square foot to build. Tiny houses can cost over twice that much, costing up to $400 per square foot for professionally built tiny houses.
- While a professionally built tiny house can cost up to $400 per square foot, the cost per square foot is much less for tiny houses built from shells, kits, or entirely DIY.
- It is possible (but not easy) to build a tiny house for under $10,000. The key is to find free or low-cost building materials, such as recycled or reclaimed lumber, which can cut thousands from the price.

For those subject properties that do not have an identifiable cost per unit, I have calculated the average per square foot cost of the known subject properties as depicted on Appendix B1. Initially, I expected the per square foot cost of housing provided for the homeless to be less than the cost of construction for single family tiny homes. However, the cost difference was only $1 apart based upon an analysis of 13 of the 15 properties. As such, I have used a per square foot construction cost of $212 for the 2 properties that did not have a per unit cost identified.

For those subject properties that do not have an identified land cost, I averaged the known land costs of the 9 properties that made available the separate land costs. Specifically, Appendix B2 concludes that the average land cost per unit is $572 per month and $6,872 annually.

With respect to financing terms, this paper assumes 30 year financing at a fixed rate of 7% and that the developer has required a 20% down payment.

Median Household Income by County in the United States was determined using the searchable database provided by HUD. https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html

Set forth on the following pages is a calculation of affordability based upon whether the annual cost of unit occupancy (combined land and unit costs) are less than the 30% recommendation for housing expenses as compared to the Average Medium Income for the respective county in which the project is located.

Acony Bell, Mills River, North Carolina (Henderson County). AMI = $93,100. Annual rent: $775 mo. × 12 = $9,300. $9,300 ÷ $92,100 = 10% of AMI.

Community First Village, Austin, Texas (Travis County). AMI = $113,800. Average rent is $500 a month. Annual rent: $500 mo. × 12 = $6,000 ÷ $113,800 = 5% of AMI.

Dignity Village, Portland, Oregon (Multnomah County). AMI = $124,100. Program and membership fees are $100 a month (no formal rent). Annual cost $100 mo. x 12 = $1,200. $1,200 ÷ $124,100 = 1% of AMI.

Etna Shire, Etna, Wyoming (Lincoln County). AMI = $117,600. Unit costs are set at $400,000. Yearly assumed rent $6,872 ÷ $117,600 = 5% AMI.

Greenwood Avenue Cottages, Shoreline, Washington (King County). AMI = $157,100. Unit costs are set at $100,000. Yearly assumed rent $6,872 ÷ $157,100 = 4% AMI

Harbor Point Estates, Chicago, Illinois (Cook County). AMI = $119,900. Lot fees start at $765 a month plus a new home that can be leased to own is $95,000. So, loan cost is $158 a month and rent is $765 for a total of $923 mo. Yearly assumed rent $11,076 ÷ $119,900 = 9% AMI

Little River Escape, Cloudland, Georgia (Chattooga County). AMI = $61,200. The average list price for a one bedroom is $129,000 plus monthly land rent of $395. So, the monthly loan payment is $216 and the rent combined is $611 mo. Yearly assumed rent $7,332 ÷ $61,200 = 11% AMI

Monarch Village, Lawrence, Kansas (Douglas County). AMI = $103,500. This program provides rental assistance and financial support to address housing barriers like back rent or overdue bills, and help guests successfully transition into stable housing = affordable. Free

Opportunity Village, Eugene, Oregon (Lane County). AMI = $65,157. $5,000 membership fee plus $570 a month on average. Yearly assumed rent $11,840 ÷ $65,157 = 17% AMI

Orlando Lakefront, Orlando, Florida (Orange County). AMI = $98,100. Average rent is $500 per month. Yearly assumed rent $6,000 ÷ $98,100 = 6% AMI

Quixote Village, Olympia, Washington (Thurston County). AMI = $116,700. Permanent supportive housing with 25 units subsidized with project-based Vouchers, and 5 units with other subsidies = affordable. Free

Rosa Village Co-Op, Portland, Oregon (Multnomah County). AMI = $124,100. Annual rent $400 mo. Yearly assumed rent $4,800. $4,800 ÷ $124,100 = 4% AMI

Tiny Tranquility Park, Waldpark, Oregon (Lincoln County). AMI = $91,000. $775/month. Yealt assumed rent $9,300 ÷ $91,000 = 10% AMI

The Cottages at Hickory Crossing, Dallas, Texas (Dallas County). AMI = $117,300. Free = affordable.

Veterans Community Project, Kansas City, Missouri (Jackson County). AMI = $111,400. Free = affordable.

Village Farm Tiny, Austin, Texas (Travis County). AMI = $113,800. Free= affordable.

Appendix B-1

Number	Property Name	Property Type	Square Footage of Average Unit	Average Cost Per Unit	Price Per Square Foot
1	Acony Bell	Single Family	330	$75,000	$228.00
2	Community First! Village	Homeless	358	$18MM/400 units = $45,000	$126.00
3	Dignity Village	Homeless	193	Free	Free
4	Etna Shire	Single Family	1,000	$400,000	$400.00
5	Greenwood Cottages	Single Family	885	$100,000	$113.00
6	Harbor Point Estates	Single Family	1150	$87,500	$76.00
7	Little River Escape	Single Family	400	$57,500	$144.00
8	Monarch Village	Homeless	300	Free	Free
9	Orlando Lakefront	Single Family			
10	Quixote Village	Homeless	275	$88,000	$320.00
11	Opportunity Village	Homeless	70		
12	The Cottages at Hickory Crossing	Homeless	430	$8.4MM/50 units = $168,000	$391.00
13	Tiny Tranquility	Single Family	330	$97,500	$295.00
14	Veterans Community Project	Homeless	280	$5.8MM/49 units = $118,367	$423.00
15	Village Farm	Single Family	400	$105,000.00	$263.00

Table 13: Existing Property Price Per Sq ft Calculation

Average Cost Per Square Foot - Homeless	$212.04
Average Cost Per Square Foot - Single Family	$211.74
Average Cost Per Square Foot - ALL	$211.81

Appendix B-2

Average land cost / Rent (Annual)		
Cost Per Property	Number of Properties	Total Average Rent
$9,300	9	$6,872
$6,000		
$1,200		
$1,1076		
$7,332		
$6,840		
$6,000		
$4,800		
$9,300		

Table 14: Existing Property Rent Calculation

Design Concept Unit Price and AMI

Unit Price KS
Total Site Infrastructure Cost = $679,414 (Appendix B-2, Table 16)/ 38 dwelling units (DUs)= $17,616/DU (excluding land acquisition, site construction financing, and local permitting costs)
Dwelling Unit Building Cost: Average Dwelling Unit (DU) square foot construction cost is estimated at $212 according to Appendix B1 data. DU (1,250 sf) x $212/sf = $265,000/DU
Total DU Cost: $17,616 + $265,000 =$282,616
Homebuyer Financing: Total $282,616 x 0.80 (20% downpayment) = $226,093 financed at 30-year term, 7% fixed rate = $1,504/month ($18,048/yr)
Affordability: Housing $18,048/ $58,441 Manhattan AMI = 32% of AMI

Unit Price OR
Total Site infrastructure Cost = $3,052,716 (Appendix B-2, Table 17)/ 121 dwelling units (DUs)= $25,229/DU (excluding land acquisition, site construction financing, and local permitting costs)
Dwelling Unit Building Cost: Average Dwelling Unit (DU) square foot construction cost is estimated at $212 according to Appendix B1 data. DU (450 sf) x $212/sf = $95,400/DU
Total DU Cost: $25,229 + $95,400 =$120,629
Homebuyer Financing: Total $120,629 x 0.80 (20% downpayment) = $96,503 financed at 30-year term, 7% fixed rate = $642/month ($7,704/yr)
Affordability: Housing $7,704/ $73,396 Linn County, OR AMI = 10.5% of AMI

Unit Price TX
Total Site infrastructure Cost = $2,782,475 (Appendix B-2, Table 17)/ 197 dwelling units (DUs)= $14,124/DU (excluding land acquisition, site construction financing, and local permitting costs)
Dwelling Unit Building Cost: Average Dwelling Unit (DU) square foot construction cost is estimated at $212 according to Appendix B1 data. DU (400 sf) x $212/sf = $84,800/DU
Total DU Cost: $14,124 + $84,800 =$98,924
Homebuyer Financing: Total $98,924 x 0.80 (20% downpayment) = $79,139 financed at 30-year term, 7% fixed rate = $726/month ($6,312/yr)
Affordability: Housing $6,312/ $113,800 Austin, TX AMI = 5.5% of AMI

Marshall and Swift Subdevelopment Cost

Marshall and Swift (M&S) is an industry leading provider of construction cost data which uses estimating software to create averages for construction costs. Due to the speculative nature of the design concepts in this report M&S provides the average costs per foot for materials such as concrete or sewer mains. These Marshall and Swift unit prices are used in the three development cost spreadsheets (Table 16, Table 17, and Table 18).

SUBDIVISION DEVELOPMENT COSTS

RESIDENTIAL STREET IMPROVEMENTS

Costs for residential street improvements vary greatly due to local code requirements for different materials, street types and layouts, and utilities. The following costs are averages including ordinary charges for engineering, plans and inspection. Costs include contractors' overhead and profit but not developers', which is realized when each lot or house is sold. They do not include extensive environmental impact reports, special charges (impact or entitlement) or assessments sometimes levied against the subdivider such as annexation charges, or costs of new or existing trunk sewers. They assume that the utilities are at or near the subdivision boundary with no special connection problems or costs. Single-lot unit costs, industrial access streets or individual cul-de-sac developments can run 45% higher. Do not apply the single-lot factors to large parking lot paving.

STREET IMPROVEMENTS	Cost Range		Average Unit Cost	Per Lin. Ft. Typical 40' Street
*Grading and surplus disposal, sq. ft.	0.32 –	0.84	0.45	27.00
*4" rock base, sq. ft.	0.97 –	1.22	1.05	42.00
add or deduct per inch of variation.	0.16 –	0.27	0.19	7.60
6" cement treated base, sq. ft.	1.24 –	1.90	1.43	57.00
add or deduct per inch of variation.	0.19 –	0.27	0.21	8.40
*Paving, 4" asphaltic concrete, sq. ft.	2.92 –	3.51	3.10	124.00
add or deduct per inch of variation.	0.57 –	0.72	0.62	24.80
Paving, 6" concrete, sq. ft.	4.66 –	7.71	5.51	220.00
add or deduct per inch of variation.	0.59 –	1.03	0.71	28.50
Concrete curb 6", no gutter, lin. ft.	12.30 –	22.40	15.00	30.00
*Concrete curb 6", 1' gutter.	18.15 –	28.25	21.05	42.00
Concrete curb 6", 2' gutter.	20.85 –	32.25	24.10	48.25
Concrete curb 8", add to 6" costs.	1.99 –	2.21	2.06	4.12
Asphalt curb 6" no gutter, lin. ft.	5.48 –	6.29	5.74	11.50
berm 4" (speed bumps, add 100%).	5.39 –	6.18	5.64	11.30
Granite curb 5", lin. ft.	38.00 –	55.50	43.00	86.00
Concrete curb, rolled, lin. ft.	10.85 –	17.70	12.75	25.50
* Concrete cross gutter, at intersection, sq. ft.	9.23 –	12.60	10.25	5.12
* Concrete sidewalk, 4" thick, sq. ft.	5.47 –	8.59	6.36	51.00
add or deduct per inch of variation.	0.59 –	0.93	0.69	5.52
* Concrete aprons, 6" thick, sq. ft.	6.24 –	9.79	7.25	16.70
add or deduct per inch of variation.	0.62 –	0.94	0.71	1.63
Sewer main, 9' average depth, lin. ft.				
add or deduct per foot of depth	0.88 –	3.17	1.37	1.37
* 8" vitrified clay	48.75 –	58.50	----	52.00
8" asbestos cement	31.50 –	43.00	35.00	35.00
8" plastic	25.25 –	37.25	28.75	28.75
add or deduct per inch of diameter	3.99 –	10.70	5.55	5.55
Sewer laterals, 5' average depth, lin. ft.				
* 4" vitrified clay	23.65 –	28.75	25.25	25.25
6" vitrified clay	33.75 –	41.25	36.00	36.00
* Sewer clean outs, 60' o.c., each	930.00 –	1590.00	1110.00	37.00
* Sewer manholes, 400' o.c., each	3500.00 –	5800.00	4125.00	10.30
Storm drainage, lin. ft.				
18" reinforced concrete	83.50 –	106.00	90.50	90.50
18" corrugated metal	62.00 –	87.50	69.50	69.50
add or deduct per inch of diameter	2.55 –	7.30	3.62	3.62
Storm manholes, 400' o.c., each	3500.00 –	4875.00	3900.00	9.75

LIGHTING AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

Water, gas and electric costs vary considerably with local requirements and codes. Often all or a portion of the initial cost, maintenance and replacement is included in an assessment or increased utility rate charged to the consumer. Sometimes an additional charge is made in remote or hilly areas for special service or additional equipment. These requirements should be checked locally. The average costs below are approximate maximum costs for a typical subdivision, all or part of which may be borne by the community or secured against the property. Some of these costs may be refundable to the developer. Specific pipe costs can be found in Section 62. For general site clearing, grading, and soil stabilization, see Section 51. For septic tanks, see Sections 53 or 17. For storm water management, see Page 11.

PUBLIC UTILITIES	Cost Range		Average Unit Cost	Per Lin. Ft. Typical 40' Street
* Water main, 6" ductile iron, lin. ft.	51.00 –	58.50	53.50	53.50
6" asbestos cement	55.50 –	67.00	59.00	59.00
6" steel	56.50 –	68.00	60.50	60.50
6" plastic	34.75 –	44.25	37.75	37.75
add or deduct per inch of diameter	3.64 –	11.15	5.29	5.29
* Water lateral, 1", lin. ft.	20.70 –	26.00	22.35	22.35
* Water meters, 60' o.c., each	333.00 –	760.00	438.00	14.60
* Fire hydrants, 300' o.c., each	4025.00 –	6200.00	4650.00	15.50
* Gas main, 2" steel, lin. ft.	19.95 –	22.55	20.80	20.80
3" steel	25.50 –	29.00	26.75	26.75
4" plastic	25.25 –	30.75	27.00	27.00
* Gas lateral, 3/4", lin. ft.	13.00 –	18.65	14.65	14.65
Electricity, overhead, on poles, lin. ft.	23.45 –	42.00	28.50	28.50
Electrical lateral, lin. ft.	6.80 –	9.32	7.55	7.55
Electricity, underground, in conduit, lin. ft.	28.75 –	47.25	34.00	34.00
* Electrical lateral, lin. ft.	17.70 –	30.50	21.25	21.25
* Telephone lateral, underground	12.75 –	20.25	14.90	14.90
Trench only, lin. ft.	7.56 –	15.50	9.60	9.60
Conduit only, lin. ft.	6.80 –	13.60	8.56	8.56
* Street light, underground wiring, 200' o.c., each	2775.00 –	9750.00	4250.00	21.25
Street lights, overhead wiring, 200' o.c., each	1920.00 –	4875.00	2625.00	13.15

Catch basins . . . . . 2210.00 to 2700.00 plus 333.00 to 650.00 per foot of depth.
for curb inlet type, add 30%.

Concrete headwalls. . . . 995.00 plus 111.00 to 183.00 per inch of pipe diameter.
prefabricated fiberglass endwall units, deduct 50%

Gunite, 2" - 3", surfacing for open drains	7.13	to	11.50 per sq. ft.
Soil cement, roads	1.27	to	1.61 per cu. ft.
embankments	1.87	to	3.23 per cu. ft.
slopes	5.35	to	9.64 per cu. ft.
Soil dikes	0.66	to	1.31 per cu. ft.
Slope protection, netting, mats or fabric	0.13	to	1.64 per cu. ft.
Street signs, with post	183.00	to	615.00 each
Survey monuments	295.00	to	775.00 each

*The cost of complete double-loaded street improvements with the components indicated above totals 635.00 to 775.00 per linear foot of street in ordinary level subdivisions, or from 401.00 to 540.00 per front foot of lot, including side street allowance. Costs may run twice as much for extreme hillside conditions. A typical fully improved industrial access street will cost 790.00 to 1130.00 per linear foot of street.

Table 15: Marshall and Swift Subdivision Development Costs

Student Tiny Village Development Costs

Cost estimate is for site infrastructure costs only and does not include land acquisition costs, site grading/earthwork costs, local permitting fees, or project financing costs

	DESCRIPTION	QTY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	Total Cost
Grading and surplus disposal					
Onsite					
	Corrective Grading and Disposal	1860	LF	$20.25	$37,665
				Total	$37,665
WET UTLITIES					
Sanitary Sewer Onsite					
	8" plastic Sewer line	1860	LF	$28.75	$53,475
	Sewer Manhole	2	EA	$4,125.00	$8,250
	4" laterals	950	LF	$25.25	$23,988
	6" Clean Out	1	EA	$1,100.00	$1,100
	Connect to Existing	1	EA	$5,000.00	$5,000
				Subtotal Sanitary Sewer Onsite	$91,813
Storm Drain System Onsite					
	18" Corrugated Metal	600	LF	$69.50	$41,700
	Drain Manhole	1	EA	$3,900.00	$3,900
	Connect to Existing	1	EA	$5,000.00	$5,000
				Subtotal Storm Drain Onsite	$50,600
Water Onsite					
	6" PVC	1860	LF	$37.75	$70,215
	Fire Hydrant with Assembly	2	EA	$4,650.00	$9,300
	Water Laterals	950	LF	$22.35	$21,233
	Connect to Existing	1	EA	$2,500.00	$2,500
				Subtotal Water Onsite	$103,248
				TOTAL - Onsite Wet Utilities	$245,660
Electric to Homes					
Electric to Homes	Undergound in conduit	950	LF	$34.00	$32,300
Main Line	Undergound in conduit	1860	LF	$14.90	$27,714
Streetlights	Overhead	10	EA	$4,250.00	$42,500
				Subtotal Electric	$102,514
				TOTAL ELECTRIC	$102,514

Table 16: Student Tiny Village Development Cost Calculation

LANDSCAPE					
Vendor to be determined	Landscaping	1	EA	$60,000.00	$60,000
				Subtotal Landscaping	$60,000
				TOTAL LANDSCAPE	$60,000
ONSITE / STREETWORK					
Paving					
	4 inch asphaltic concrete street paving	55,800	SF	$3.10	$172,980
	Alsphalt Curbs	1860	LF	$11.30	$21,018
				SUBTOTAL Street Improvement Grading and Paving - Onsite	$193,998
Onsite Concrete					
	4" Sidewalk	2400	SF	$6.36	$15,264
				SUBTOTAL Street Improvements Concrete - Onsite	$15,264
				TOTAL ONSITE STREETWORK	$209,262
	TOTAL ONSITE COSTS				**$655,101**
Offsite Sewer					
	8" PVC SDR-26	150	LF	$28.75	$4,313
				SUBTOTAL Offsite Sewer	$4,313
				TOTAL Offsite Work	$4,313
MISCELLANEOUS IMPROVEMENT SOFT COSTS					
	Utility Design, engineering and other professional fees	1	LS	$10,000.00	$10,000
	Staking and Survey	1	EA	$10,000.00	$10,000
				MISCELLANEOUS IMPROVEMENT SOFT COSTS	$20,000
				SUBDIVISION IMPROVEMENT COSTS	$679,414

Oregon River Village Development Costs

Cost estimate is for site infrastructure costs only and does not include land acquisition costs, site grading/earthwork costs, local permitting fees, or project financing costs

	DESCRIPTION	QTY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	Total Cost
Grading and surplus disposal					
Onsite					
	Corrective Grading and Disposal	3075	LF	$20.25	$62,269
				Total - Grading	$62,269
WET UTLITIES					
Sanitary Septic Onsite					
	8" plastic Sewer line	3075	LF	$28.75	$88,406
	Sewer Manhole	5	EA	$4,125.00	$20,625
	4" laterals	24200	LF	$25.25	$611,050
	6" Clean Out	1	EA	$1,100.00	$1,100
	Onsite Septic System	1	EA	$500,000.00	$500,000
				Subtotal Sanitary Sewer Onsite	$1,221,181
Storm Drain System Onsite					
	18" Corrugated Metal	0	LF	$69.50	
	Drain Manhole	0	EA	$3,900.00	
	Connect to Existing	0	EA	$5,000.00	
				Subtotal Storm Drain Onsite	$0
Water Onsite					
	6" PVC	3075	LF	$37.75	$116,081
	Fire Hydrant with Assembly	4	EA	$4,650.00	$18,600
	Water Laterals	24200	LF	$22.35	$540,870
	Connect to Existing	1	EA	$2,500.00	$2,500
				Subtotal Water Onsite	$678,051
				TOTAL - Onsite Wet Utilities	$1,899,233
Electric to Homes					
Electric to Homes	Underground in conduit	24200	LF	$34.00	$822,800
Main Electric	Underground in conduit	3075	LF	$14.90	$45,818
Streetlights	Overhead	8	EA	$4,250.00	$34,000
				Subtotal Electric	$902,618
				TOTAL ELECTRIC	$902,618

Table 17: Oregon River Village Development Cost Calculation

LANDSCAPE				
Vendor to be determined	Landscaping	1 EA	$40,000	$40,000
			Subtotal Landscaping	$40,000
			TOTAL LANDSCAPE	$40,000
ONSITE / STREETWORK				
Paving				
	4 inch asphaltic concrete street paving	61,500 SF	$3.10	$190,650
	Asphalt Curbs	3075 LF	$11.30	$34,748
		SUBTOTAL Street Improvement Grading and Paving - Onsite		$225,398
Onsite Concrete				
	4" Sidewalk	0 SF	$51.00	$0
		SUBTOTAL Street Improvements Concrete - Onsite		-
			TOTAL ONSITE STREETWORK	$225,398
	TOTAL ONSITE COSTS			**$3,129,516**
Offsite Sewer				
	8" PVC SDR-26	LF	$28.75	$0
			SUBTOTAL Offsite Sewer	-
			TOTAL Offsite Work	$0
MISCELLANEOUS IMPROVEMENT SOFT COSTS				
	Utility Design, engineering and other professional fees	1 LS	$10,000.00	$10,000
	Staking and Survey	1 EA	$10,000.00	$10,000
			MISCELLANEOUS IMPROVEMENT SOFT COSTS	$20,000
			SUBDIVISION IMPROVEMENT COSTS	$3,052,716

Maha Creek Community Development Costs

Cost estimate is for site infrastructure costs only and does not include land acquisition costs, site grading/earthwork costs, local permitting fees, or project financing costs

	DESCRIPTION	QTY	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	Total Cost
Grading and surplus disposal					
Onsite					
	Corrective Grading and Disposal	8610	LF	$20.25	$174,353
				Total	$174,353
WET UTLITIES					
Sanitary Sewer Onsite					
	8" plastic Sewer line	8610	LF	$28.75	$247,538
	Sewer Manhole	14	EA	$4,125.00	$57,750
	4" laterals	8650	LF	$25.25	$218,413
	6" Clean Out	1	EA	$1,100.00	$1,100
	Connect to Existing	1	EA	$5,000.00	$5,000
				Subtotal Sanitary Sewer Onsite	$529,800
Storm Drain System Onsite					
	18" Corrugated Metal	0	LF	$69.50	$0
	Drain Manhole	0	EA	$3,900.00	$0
	Connect to Existing	0	EA	$5,000.00	$0
				Subtotal Storm Drain Onsite	$0
Water Onsite					
	6" PVC	8610	LF	$37.75	$325,028
	Fire Hydrant with Assembly	15	EA	$4,650.00	$69,750
	Water Laterals	8650	LF	$22.35	$193,328
	Connect to Existing	1	EA	$2,500.00	$2,500
				Subtotal Water Onsite	$590,605
				TOTAL - Onsite Wet Utilities	$1,089,956
Electric to Homes					
Electric to Homes	Undergound in conduit - laterals	8650	LF	$34.00	$294,100
Main Underground Electric		8610	LF	$14.90	$128,289
Streetlights	Overhead	50	EA	$4,250.00	$212,500
				Subtotal Electric	$634,889
				TOTAL ELECTRIC	$627,140

Table 18: Maha Creek Community Development Cost Calculation

LANDSCAPE				
Vendor to be determined	Landscaping	1 EA	$120,000.00	$120,000
			Subtotal Landscaping	$120,000
			TOTAL LANDSCAPE	$120,000
ONSITE / STREETWORK				
Paving				
	4 inch asphaltic concrete street paving	119,610 SF	$3.10	$370,791
	Alsphalt Curbs	8,610 LF	$11.30	$97,293
			SUBTOTAL Street Improvement Grading and Paving - Onsite	$468,084
Onsite Concrete				
	4" Sidewalk	0 SF	$6.36	$0
			SUBTOTAL Street Improvements Concrete - Onsite	$0
			TOTAL ONSITE STREETWORK	$468,084
	TOTAL ONSITE COSTS			**$2,479,533**
Offsite Sewer and Water				
	8" PVC SDR-26	200 LF	$28.75	$5,750
		200 LF	$37.75	$7,550
			SUBTOTAL Offsite Sewer	$13,300
			TOTAL Offsite Work	$13,300
MISCELLANEOUS IMPROVEMENT SOFT COSTS				
	Utility Design, engineering and other professional fees	1 LS	$10,000.00	$10,000
	Staking and Survey	1 EA	$10,000.00	$10,000
			MISCELLANEOUS IMPROVEMENT SOFT COSTS	$20,000
			SUBDIVISION IMPROVEMENT COSTS	$2,512,833

