

Objective Design Standards for Multi-Family Housing

Community Workshop

Town of Atherton

October 23, 2023

AGENDA

- Workshop Overview
- Purpose of Objective Standards
- Regulatory Tools
- Design Issues for Discussion
- Community Identified Issues
- Next Steps



PURPOSE OF OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

PURPOSE OF OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS

Facilitate streamlined and ministerial review process for residential development and:

- Comply with recent State legislation
- Achieve intent of existing policies
- Preserve community character
- Provide objective criteria
- Provide certainty to developers

SB 167 Housing Accountability Act

Local government
may not deny,
reduce density, or
make infeasible
housing projects
*consistent with
objective design
standards*

SB 35

Requires approval of
qualified housing
projects based on
*objective regulatory
standards*

SB 330 Housing Crisis Act

Prohibits imposing
or enforcing new
design standards
established on or
after January 1,
2020, that *are not
objective*

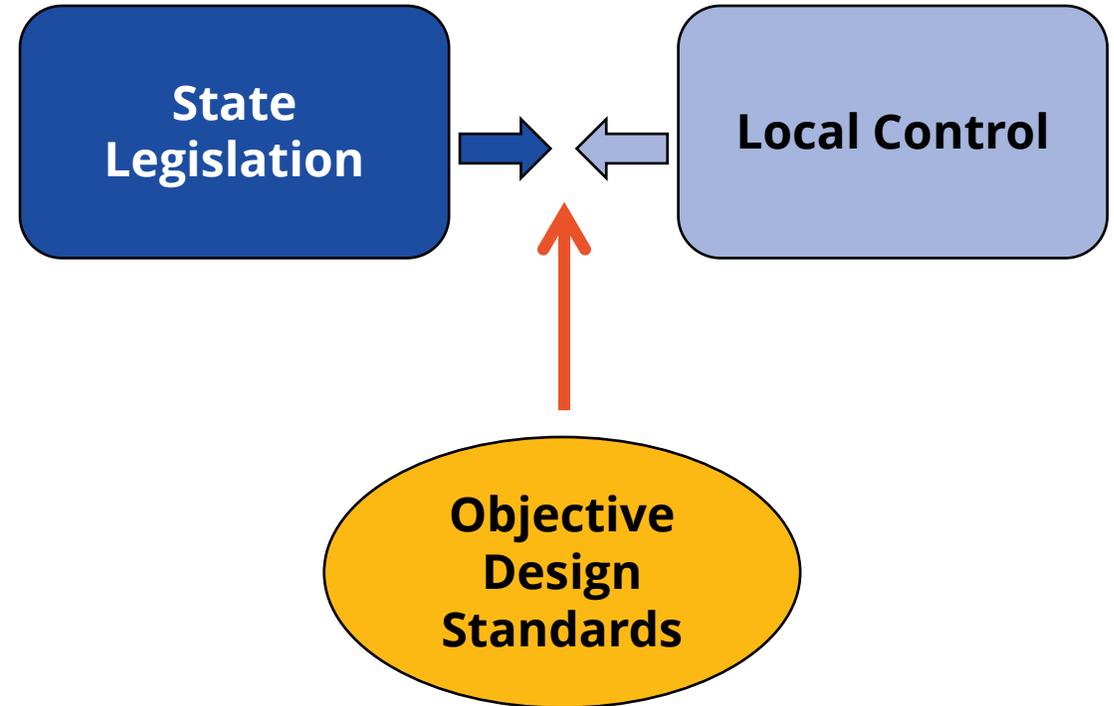
WHAT ARE OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS?

“standards that involve **no personal or subjective judgement** by a public official and are uniformly verifiable by reference to an external and uniform benchmark or criterion available and knowable by both the development applicant or proponent and the public official prior to submittal.”

(California Government Code, Section 65913.4)

OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

- Objective standards are a powerful toolkit that allow communities to respond to State housing laws that are reducing local control over development
- Provide an opportunity to ensure that the appearance of new development is compatible with the Town's vision



Design Guidelines

- Subjective
- Recommendations (not enforceable)
- Unmeasurable and difficult to interpret

**negotiation and
compromise**

Objective Standards

- Supplement Design Guidelines
- Streamlined Review
- Measurable, quantifiable, easily defined, and enforceable

**no personal or
subjective judgment**

DISCRETIONARY VS. MINISTERIAL REVIEW

Discretionary Review

- Project undergoes design review
- Qualitative judgement and review by jurisdiction staff and reviewing bodies
- Reviewing bodies determine the project's compliance with **design guidelines**

**negotiation and
compromise**

Ministerial Review

- Streamlined review by jurisdiction
- Removes personal or subjective judgement
- Consistency with **objective design standards** is primary tool for project review

**no personal or
subjective judgment**

DESIGN GUIDELINES VS. OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

“Pedestrian links **should** be provided between buildings, common open spaces, and parking areas”



SUBJECTIVE



OBJECTIVE

Town of Los Gatos

North 40 Specific Plan

DESIGN GUIDELINES VS. OBJECTIVE STANDARDS

Potential Objective Standard to Address Subjective Guidance

All structures, entries, facilities, amenities, and parking areas **shall** be internally connected with pedestrian pathways.



Internally connected pedestrian paths

Source: <https://www.elevatetosequoia.com/apartments/ca/antioch/cross-pointe-apartment-homes/>

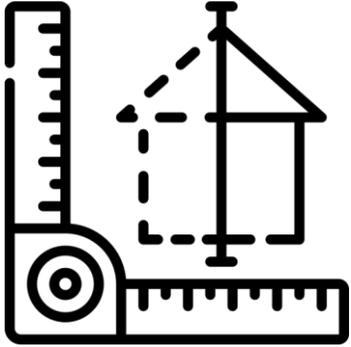


SUBJECTIVE



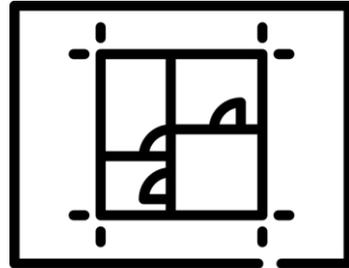
OBJECTIVE

TOOLS FOR OBJECTIVE STANDARDS



Counts and Measurements

- Height
- Distances
- Setbacks



1:100

Ratios

- Roof Pitch
- Step Back Ratio



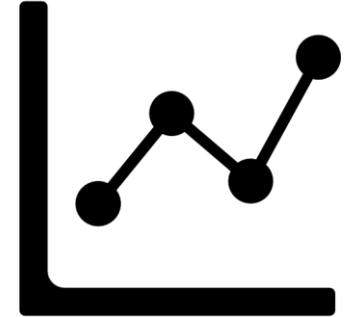
Checklists

Checklist of required architectural features



Scorecards

Minimum total of combined scores for eligible design treatment



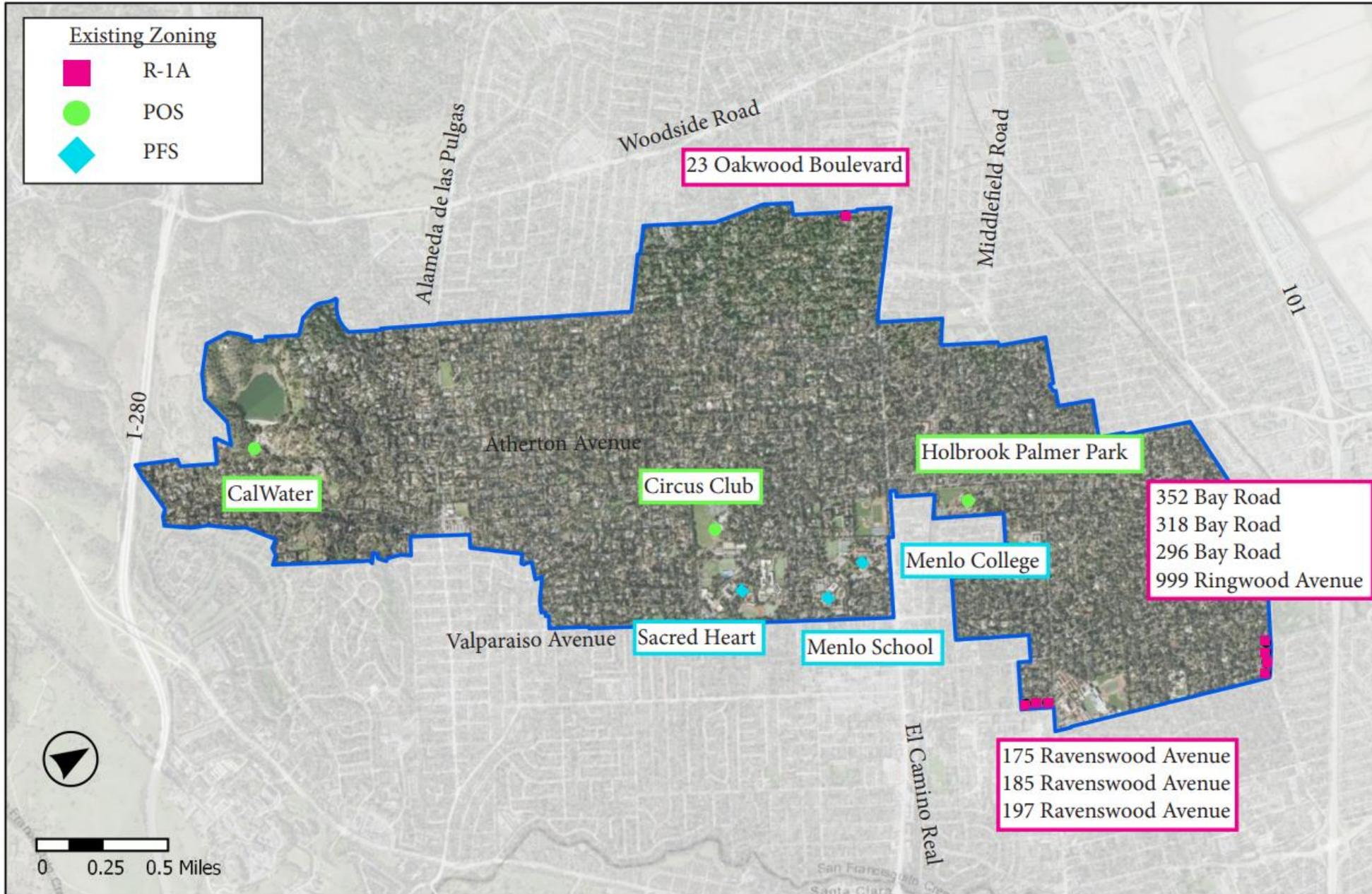
Performance Measures and Benchmarks

Minimum amount of open space provided



REGULATORY TOOLS

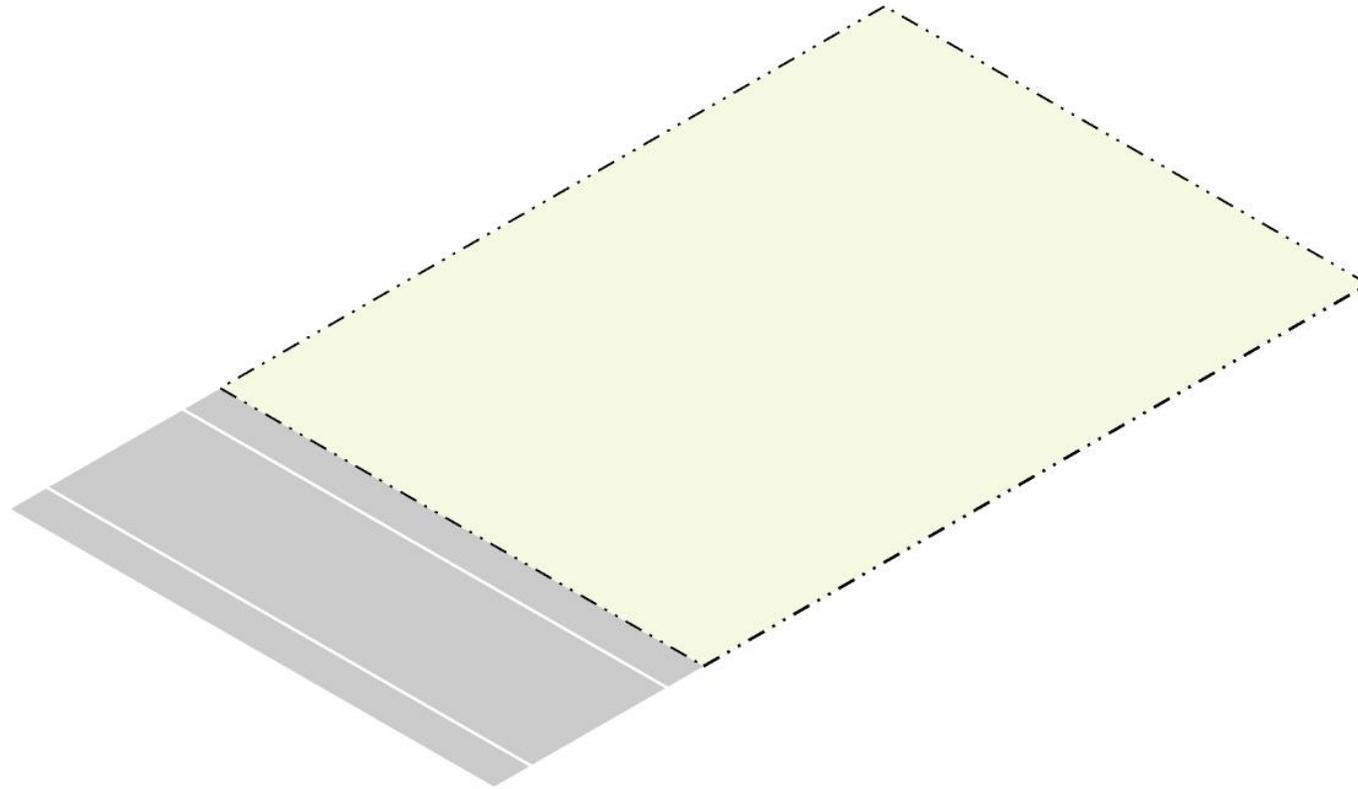
IDENTIFIED HOUSING ELEMENT SITES



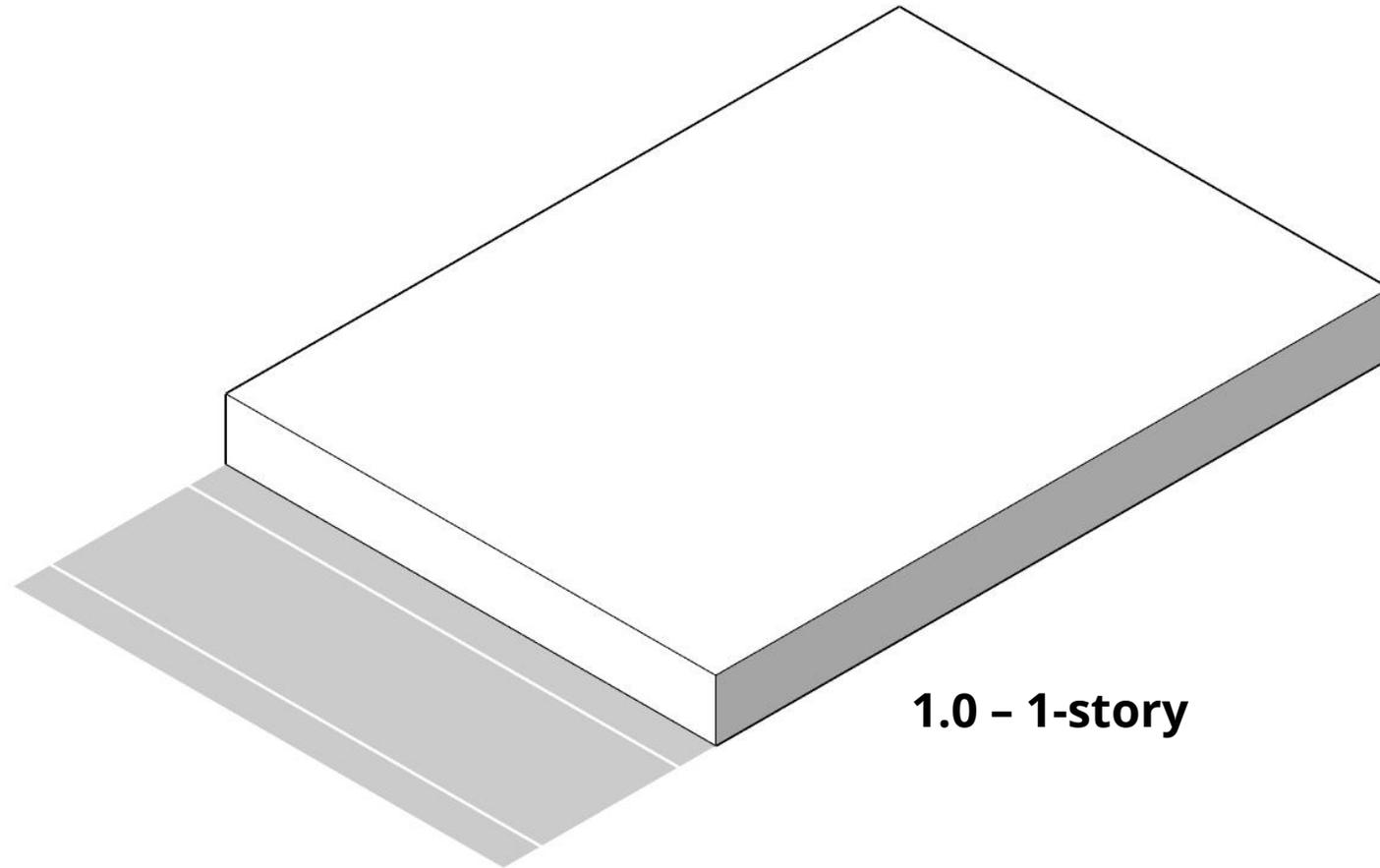
SITE INFORMATION

Existing Zoning District	Housing Element Sites	Proposed Zoning Overlay	Proposed Density
R-1A	999 Ringwood Avenue 352 Bay Road 318 Bay Road 296 Bay Road 175 Ravenswood Avenue 185 Ravenswood Avenue 197 Ravenswood Avenue 23 Oakwood Boulevard	R-10	10 Dwelling Units/Acre
POS	Gilmore House (Holbrook Park Palmer) Circus Club CalWater	R-10	10 Dwelling Units/Acre
PFS	Menlo College Sites Menlo School Sites Sacred Heart Site	R-20, R-40 (Menlo College O'Brien Lot and site near Admin Building)	20 Dwelling Units/Acre (R-20), 40 Dwelling Units/Acre (R-40)

PARCEL

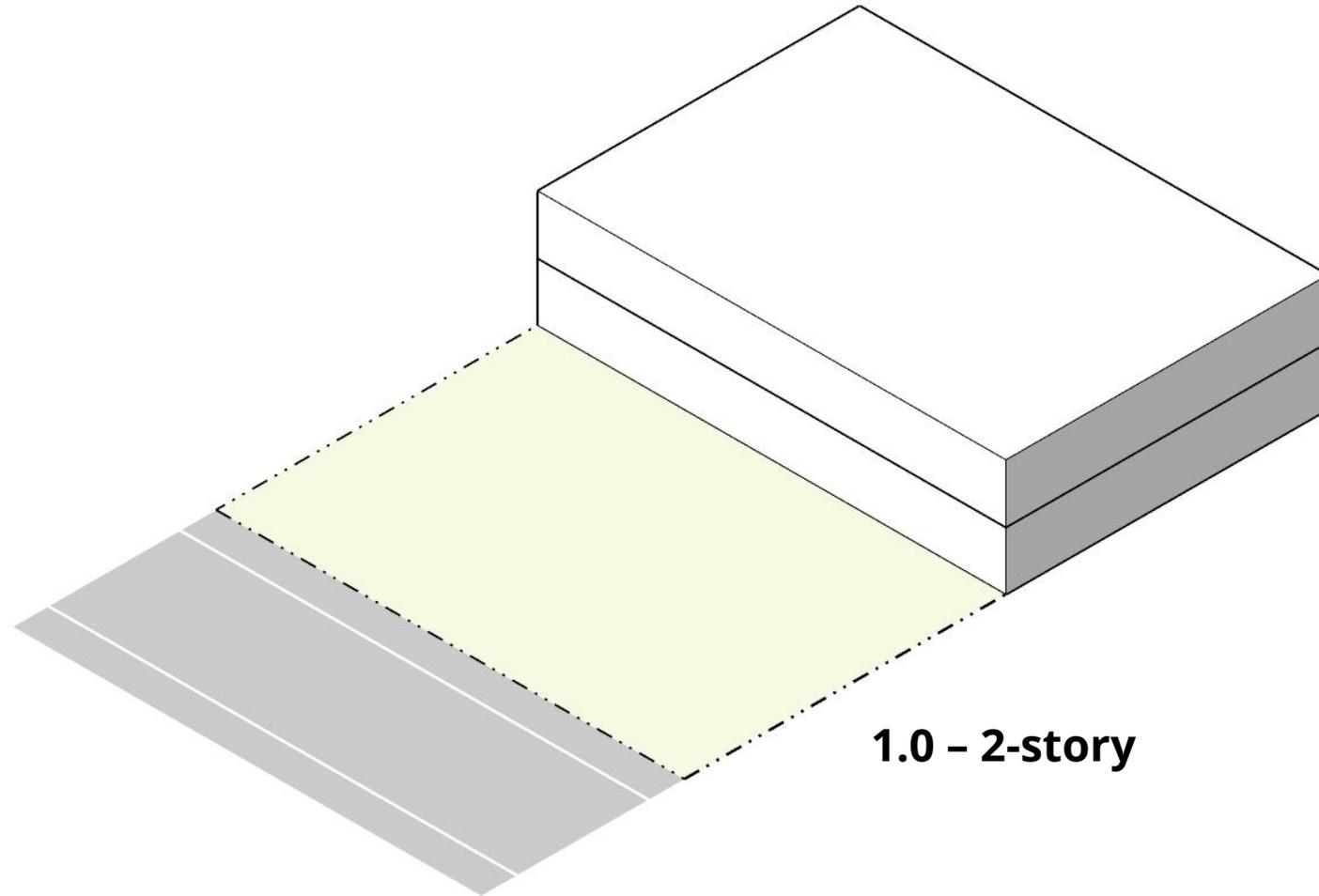


FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR)

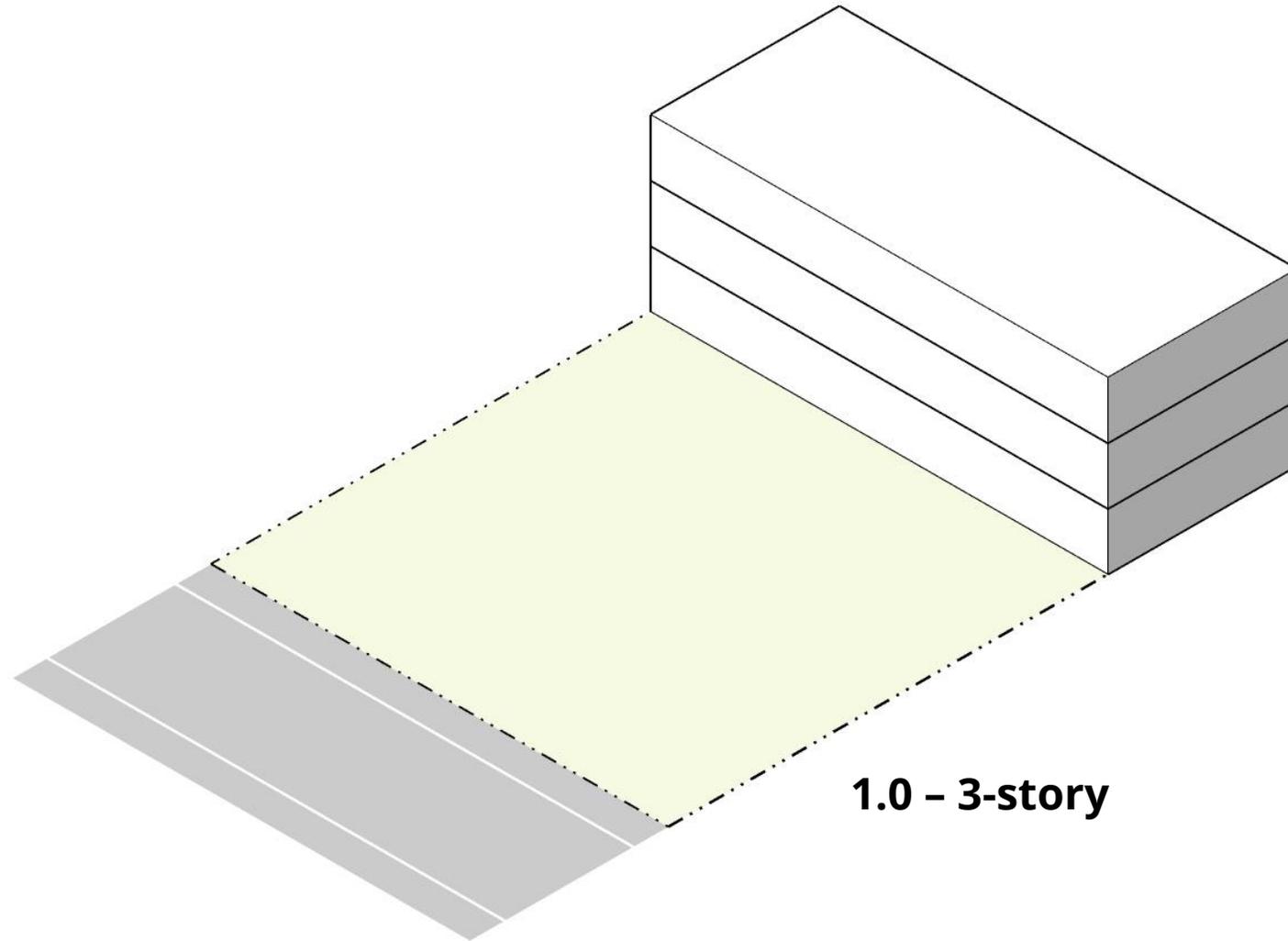


1.0 - 1-story

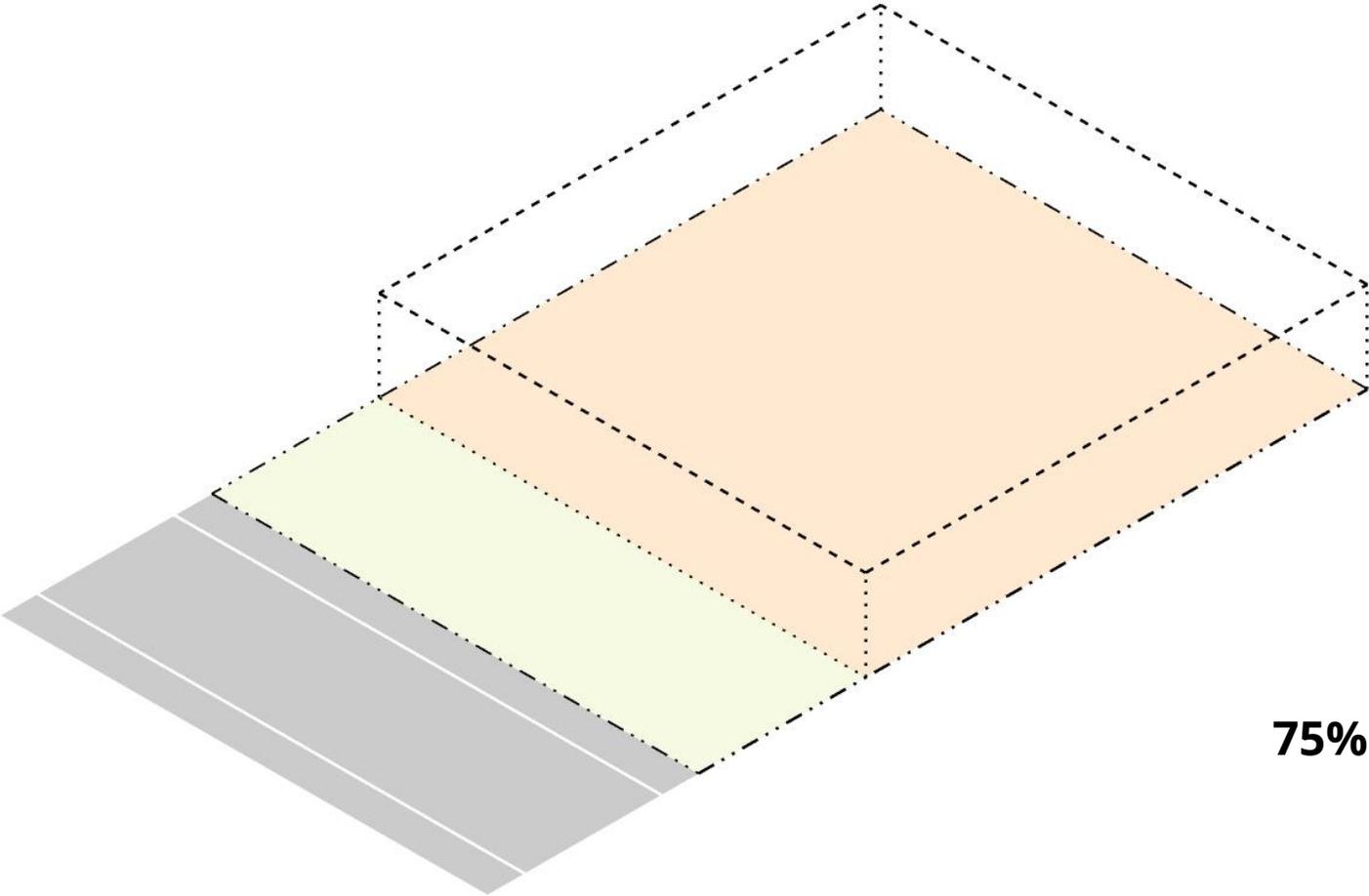
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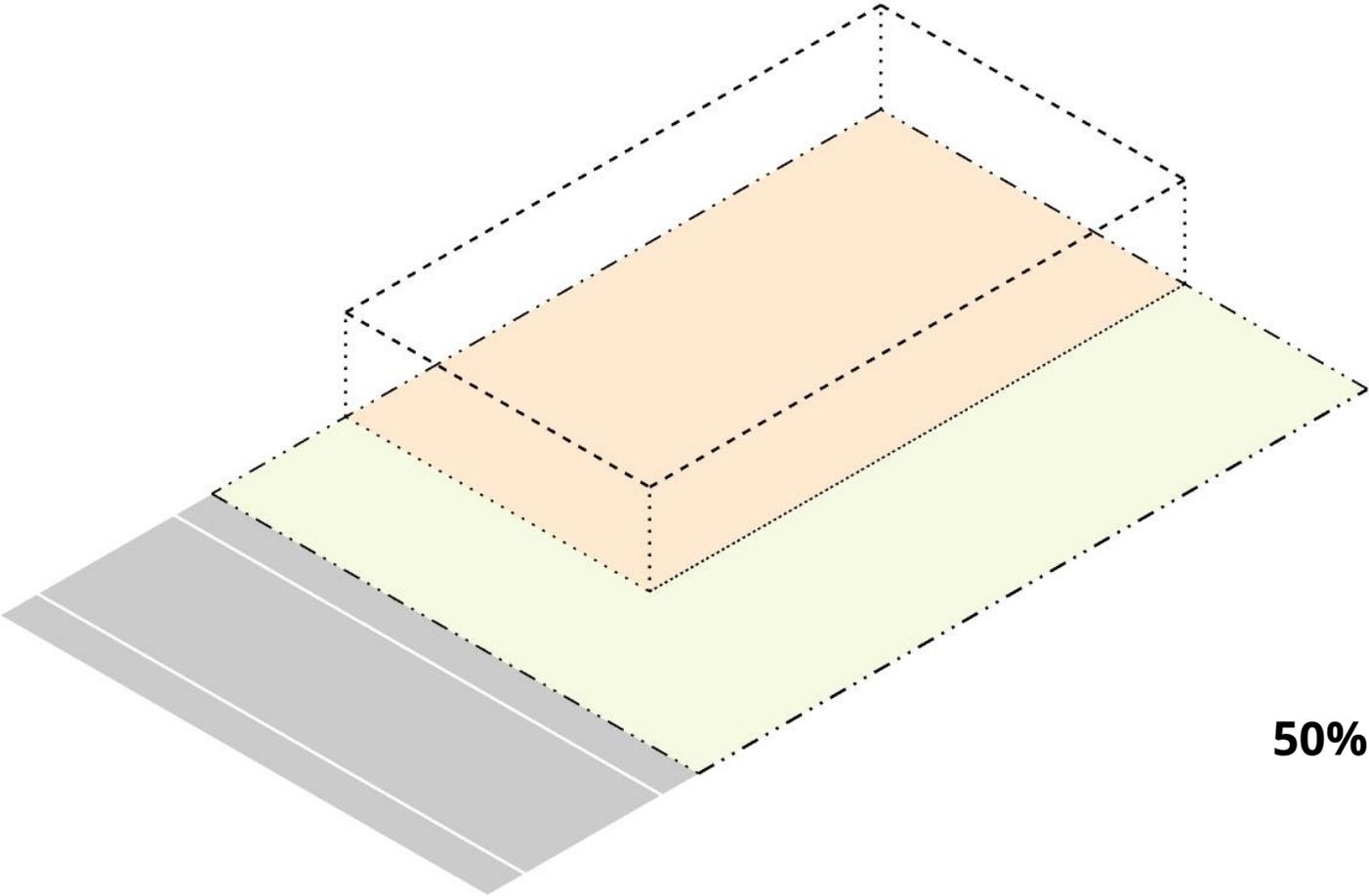
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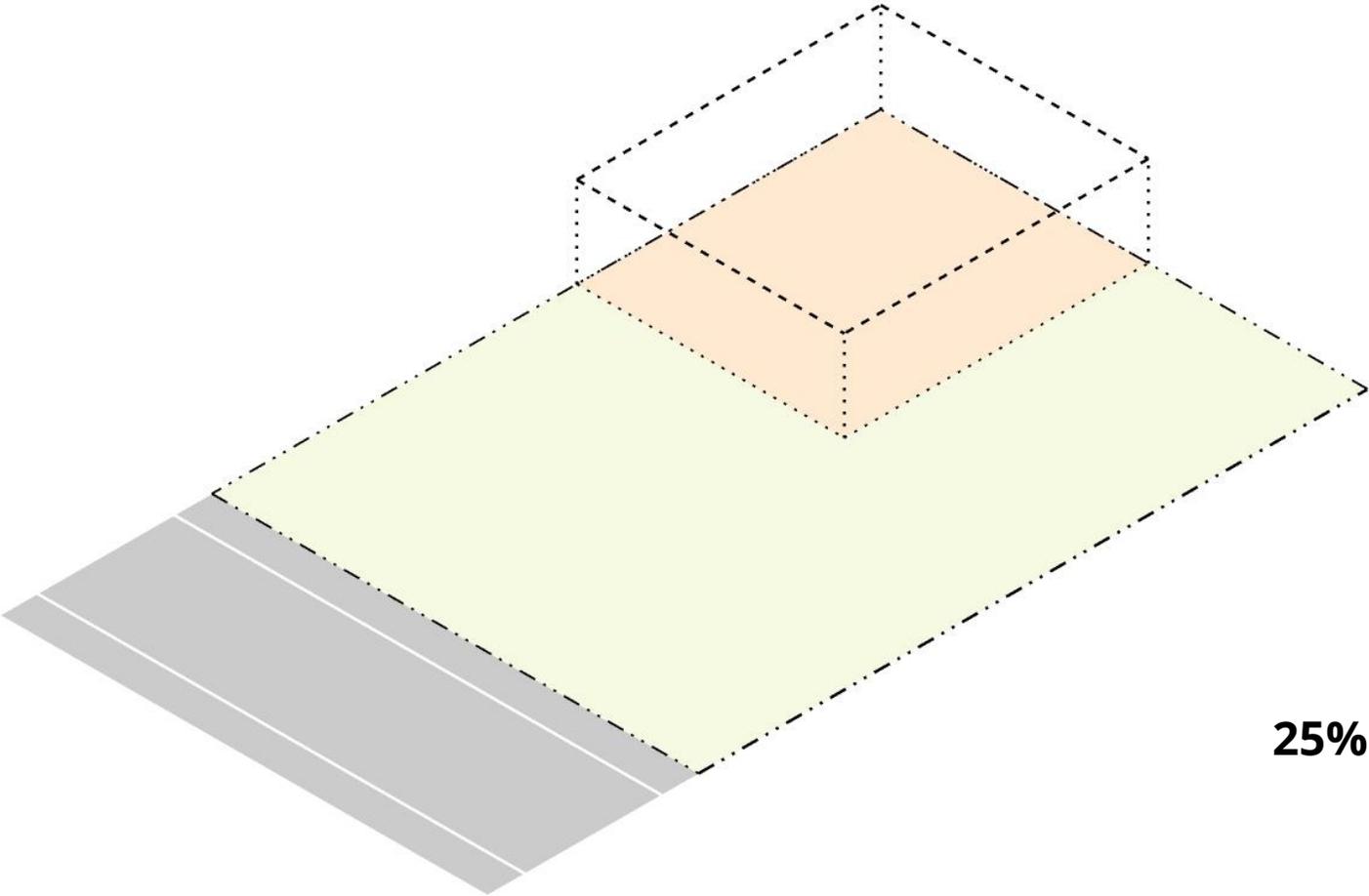
LOT COVERAGE



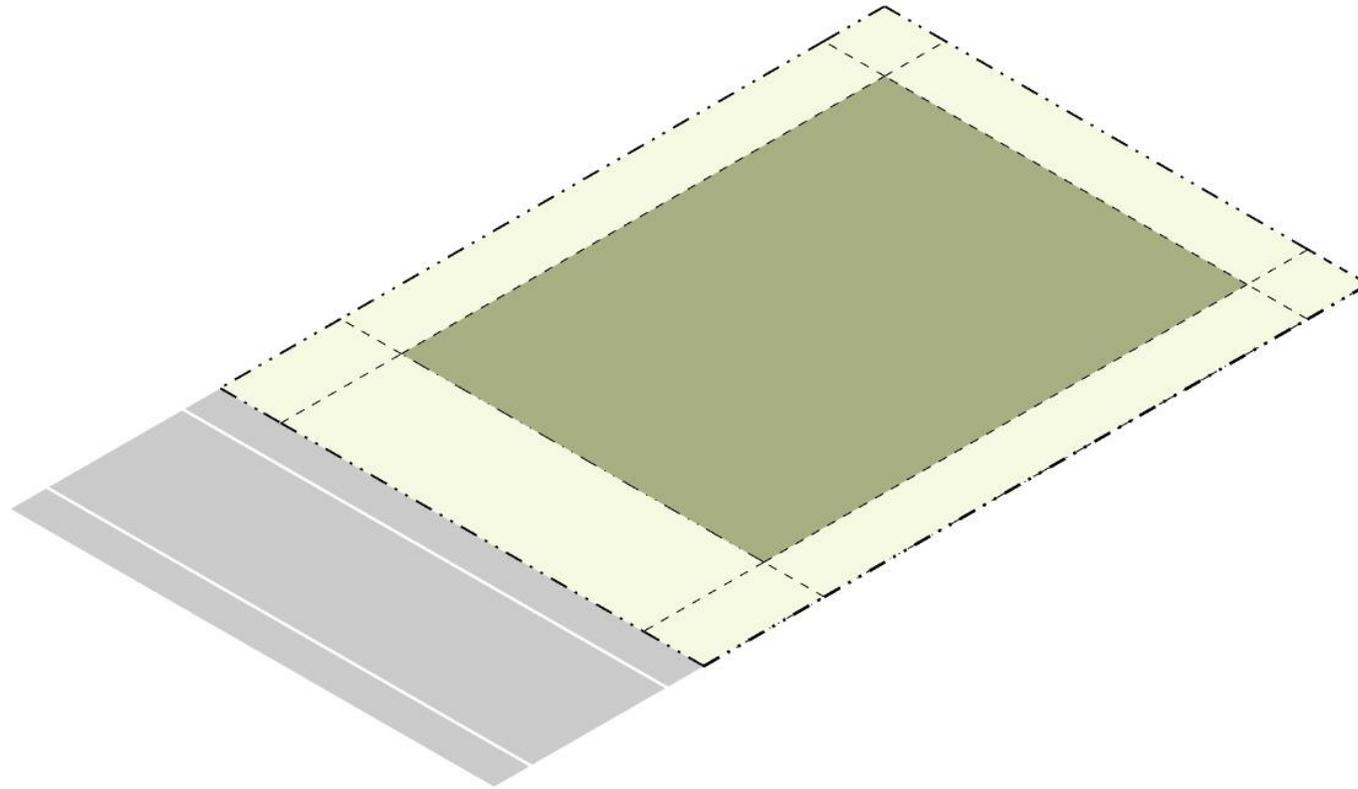
LOT COVERAGE



LOT COVERAGE



SETBACKS





DESIGN ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

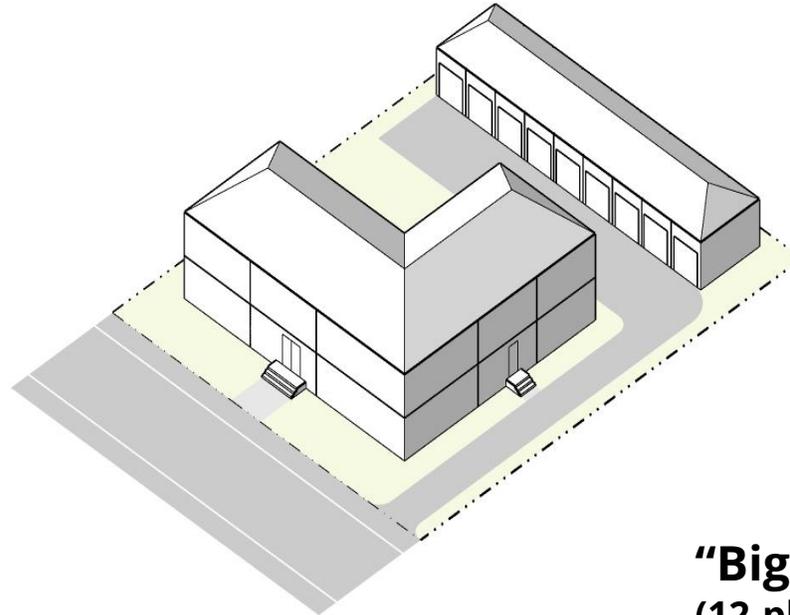
LARGE HOUSE TYPOLOGIES



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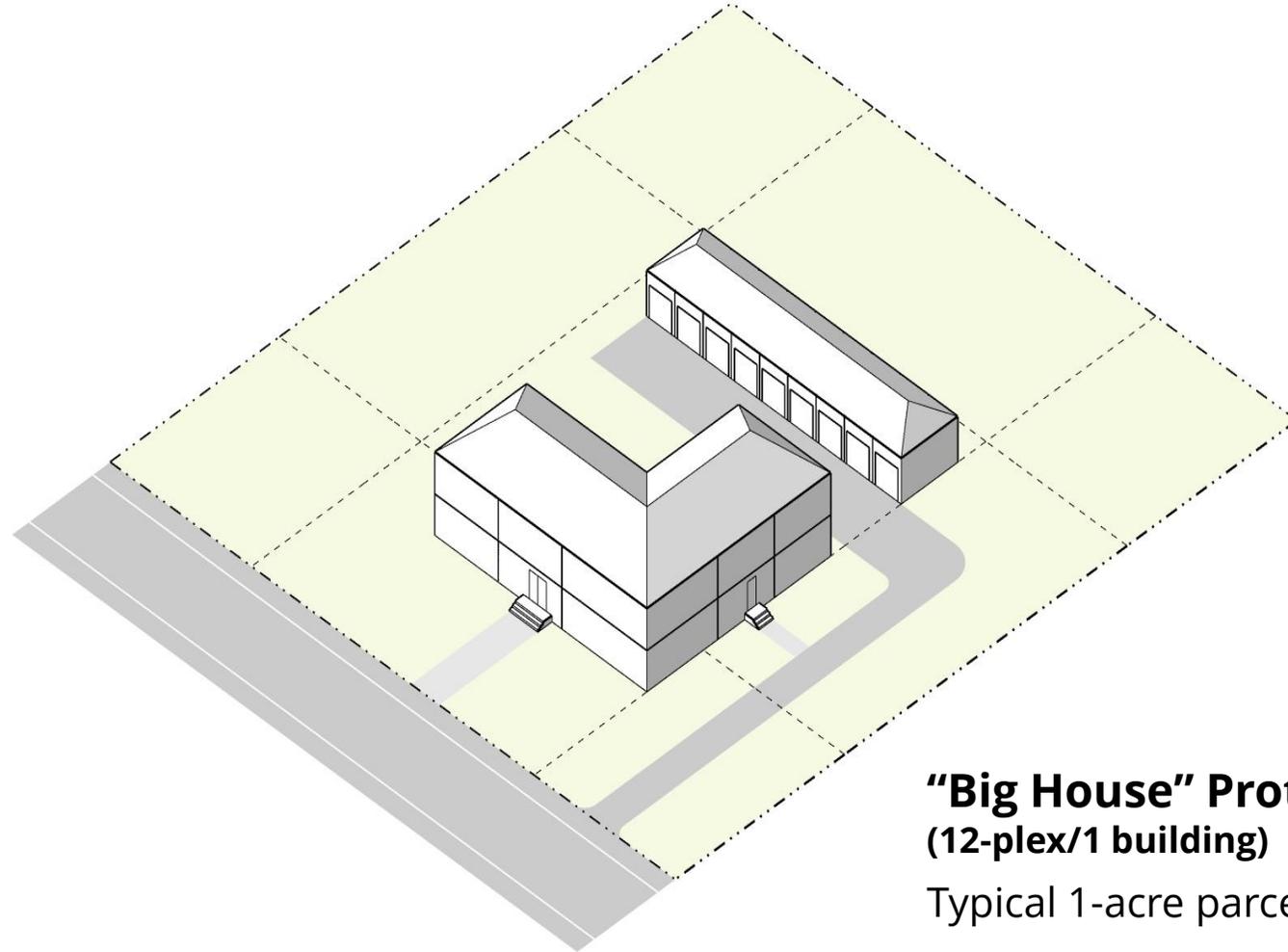
LARGE HOUSE TYPOLOGIES



“Big House” Prototype
(12-plex/1 building)

14,000 sq ft parcel

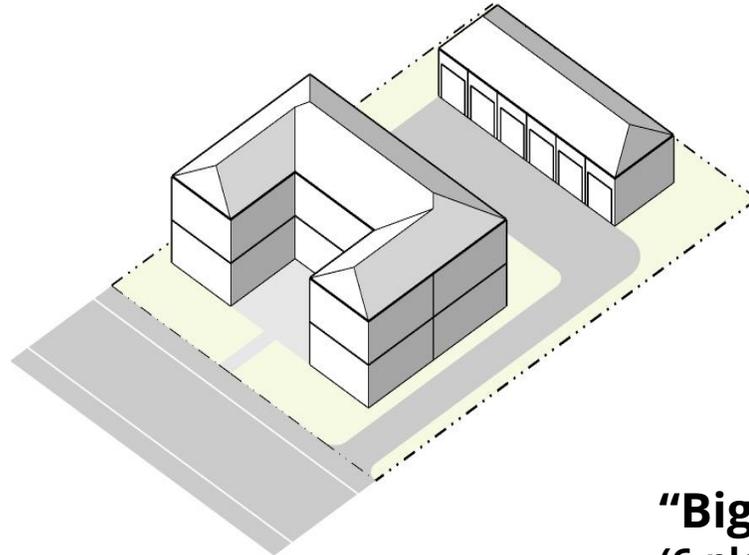
LARGE HOUSE TYPOLOGIES



“Big House” Prototype
(12-plex/1 building)

Typical 1-acre parcel

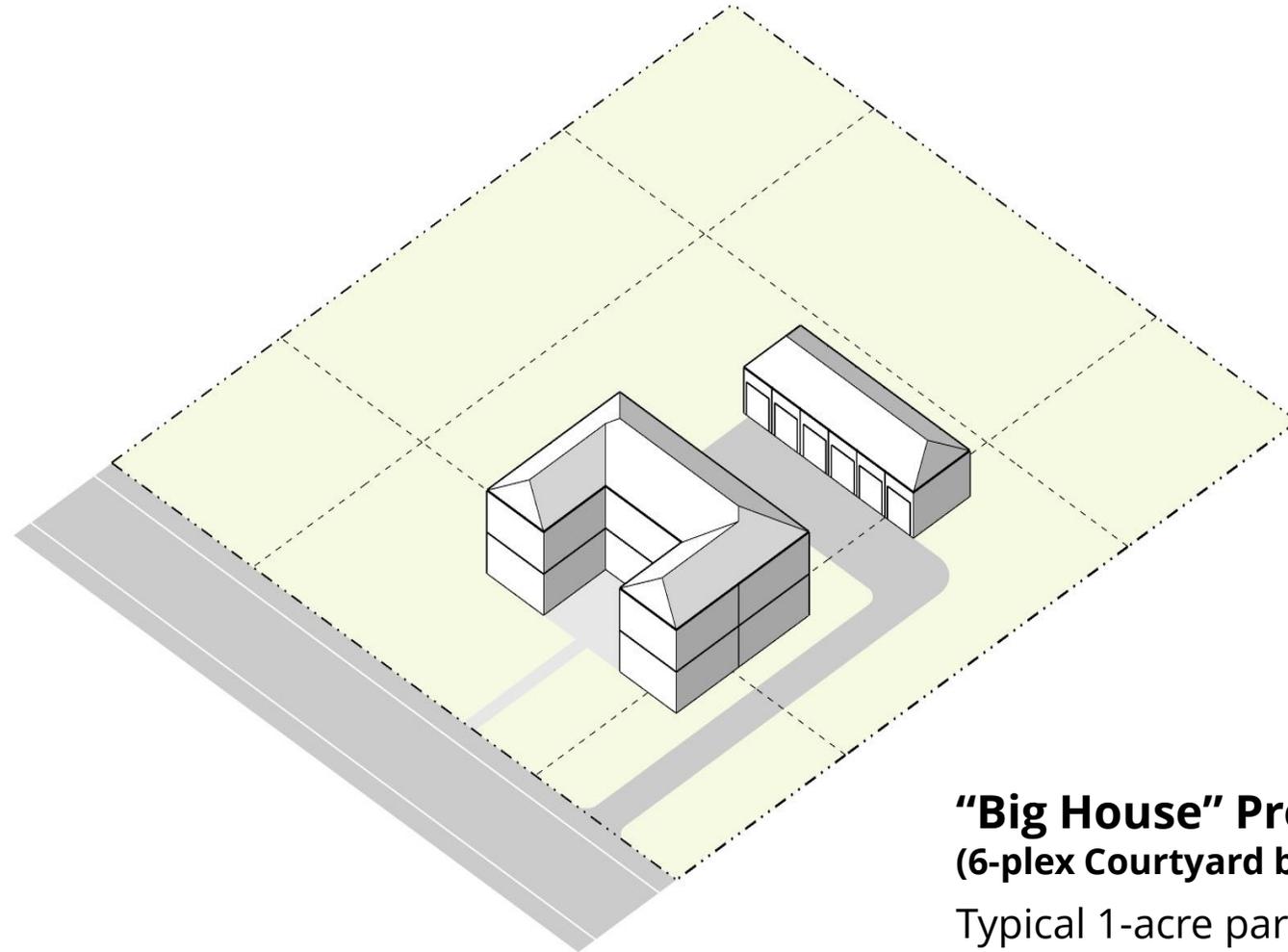
LARGE HOUSE TYPOLOGIES



“Big House” Prototype
(6-plex Courtyard building)

12,000 sq ft parcel

LARGE HOUSE TYPOLOGIES



“Big House” Prototype
(6-plex Courtyard building)

Typical 1-acre parcel

DESIGN ISSUES FOR OBJECTIVE STANDARDS DISCUSSION

- Setbacks and Height
- Site Coverage
- Building Massing
- Site Design
- Screening and Walls
- Façade Articulation
- Parking
- Other Issues

GOAL

What is your desired outcome?

COMMENT

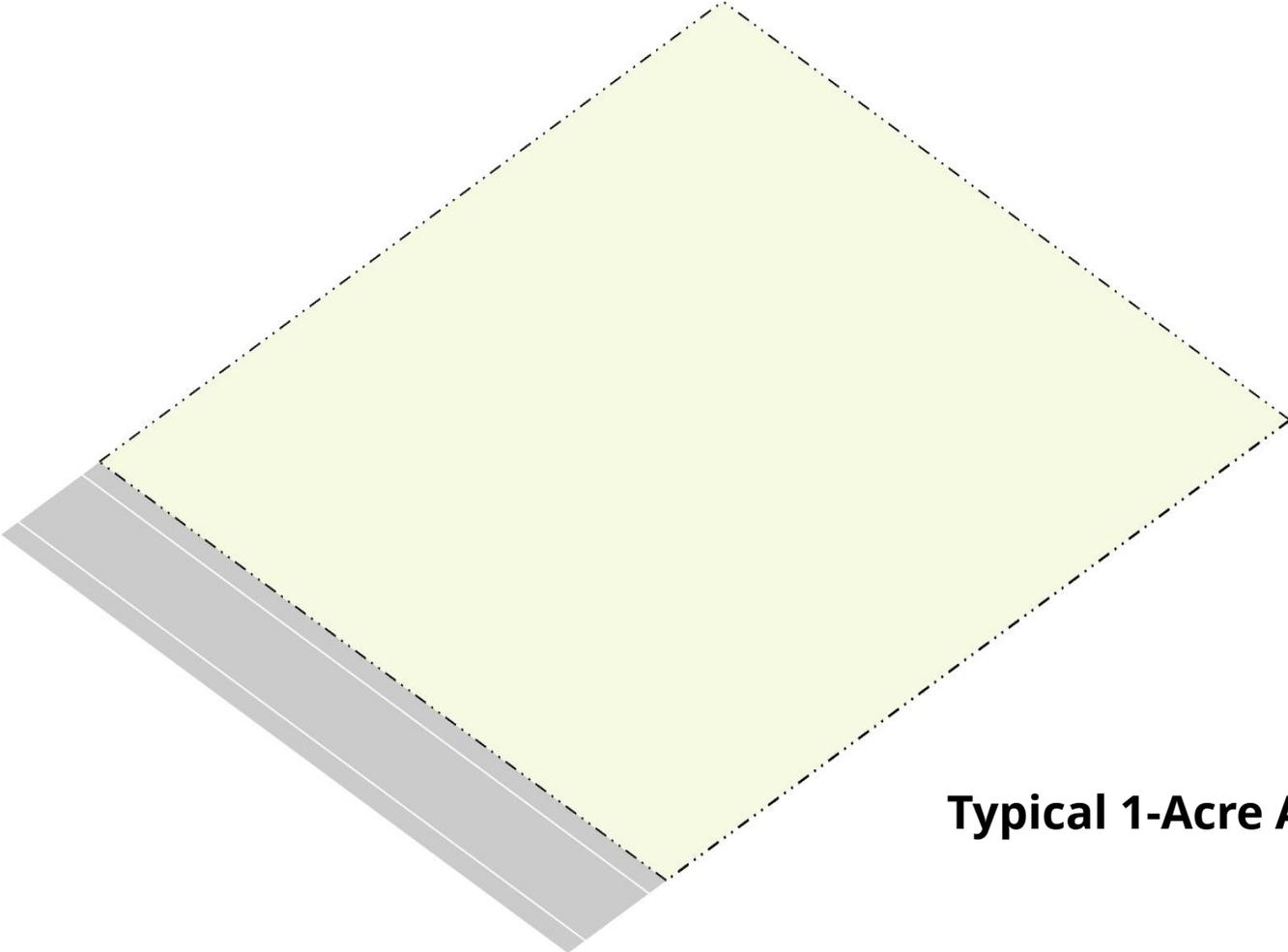
how to potentially
achieve that goal

- Setbacks and Height
- Site Coverage
- Building Massing
- **Site Design**
- Screening and Walls
- Façade Articulation
- Parking
- Other Issues

SETBACKS AND HEIGHT

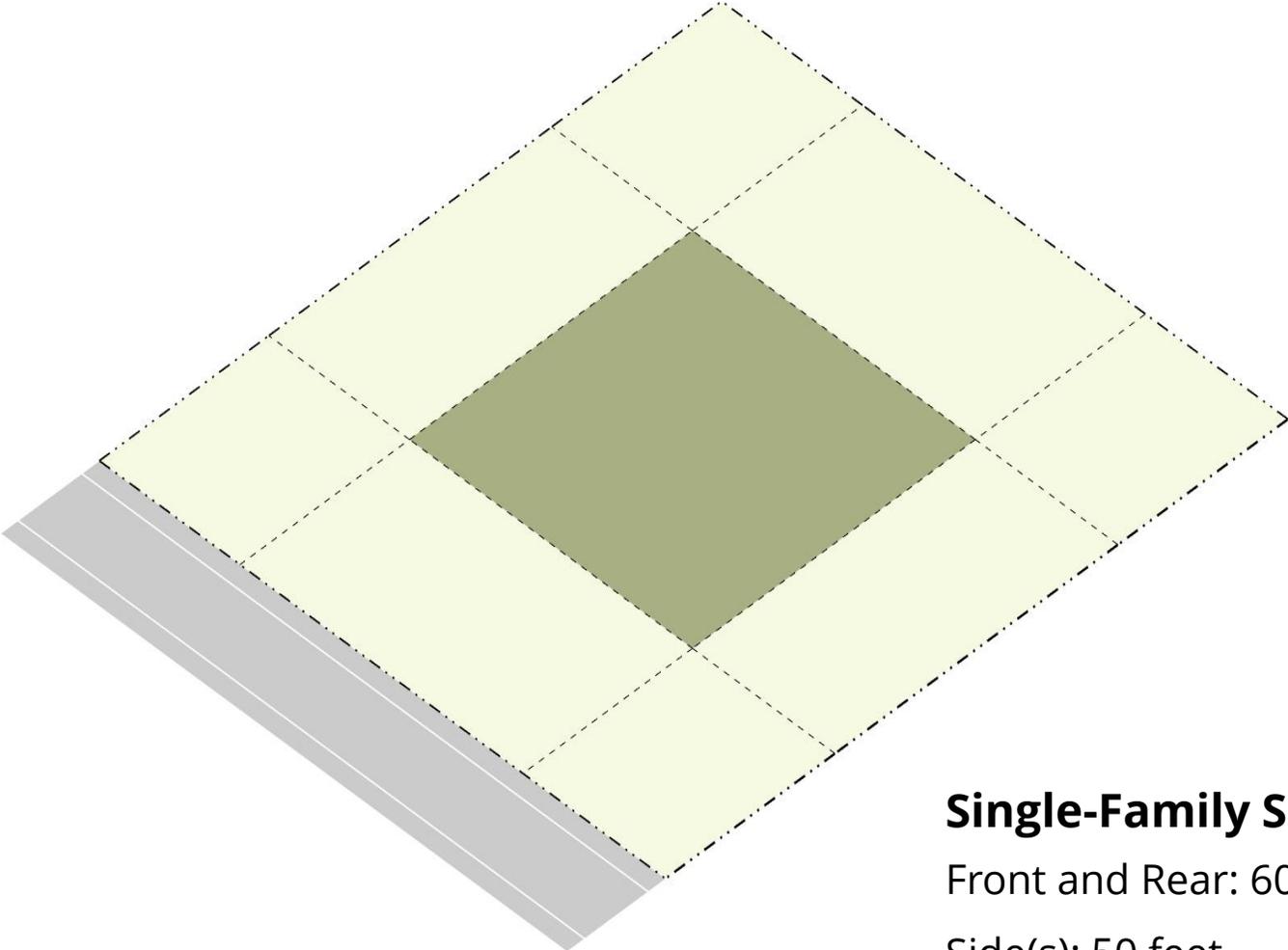


SETBACKS AND HEIGHT



Typical 1-Acre Atherton Parcel

SETBACKS AND HEIGHT



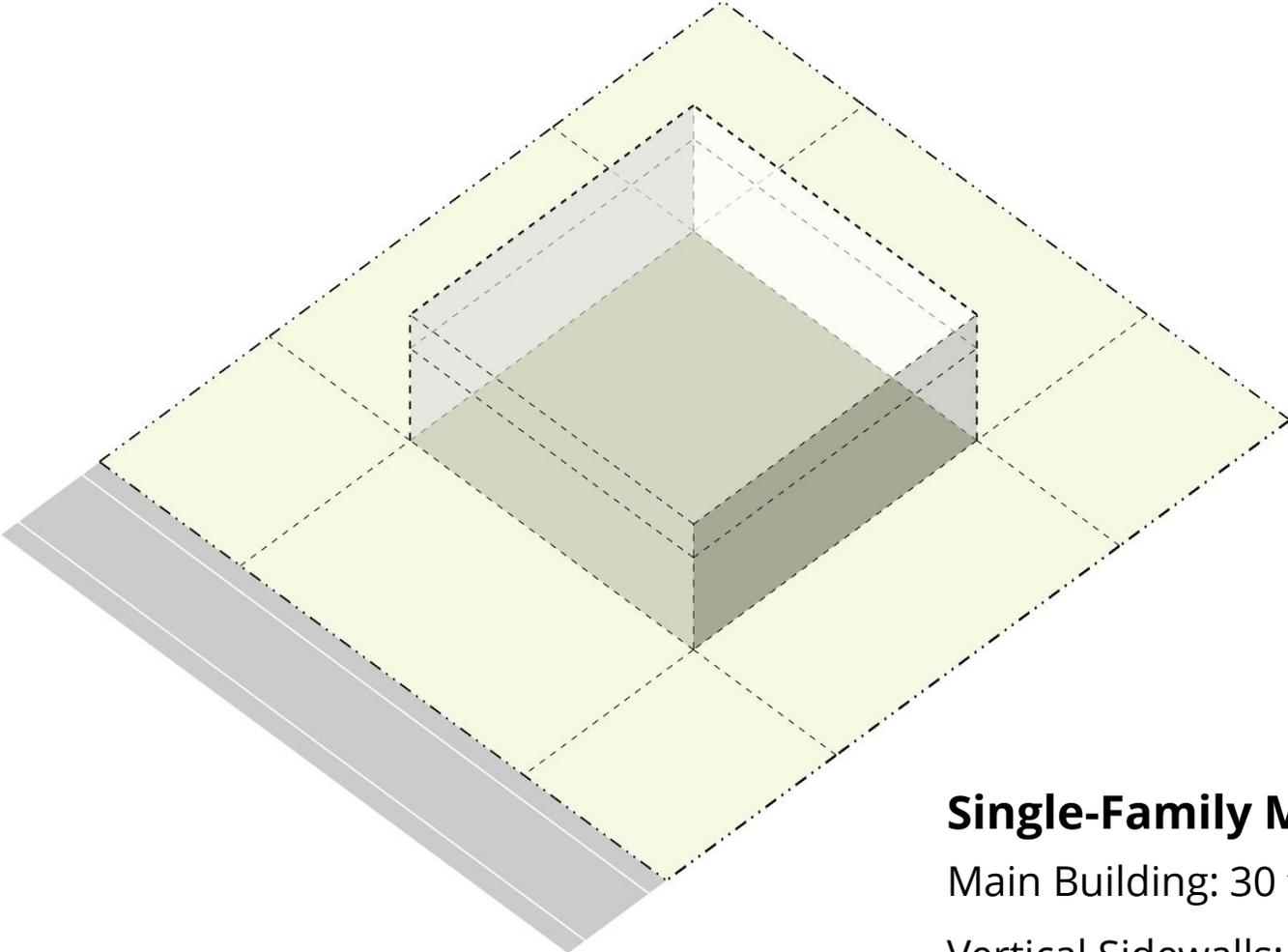
Single-Family Setbacks

Front and Rear: 60 feet

Side(s): 50 feet

Buildable area: 10,000 sf

SETBACKS AND HEIGHT

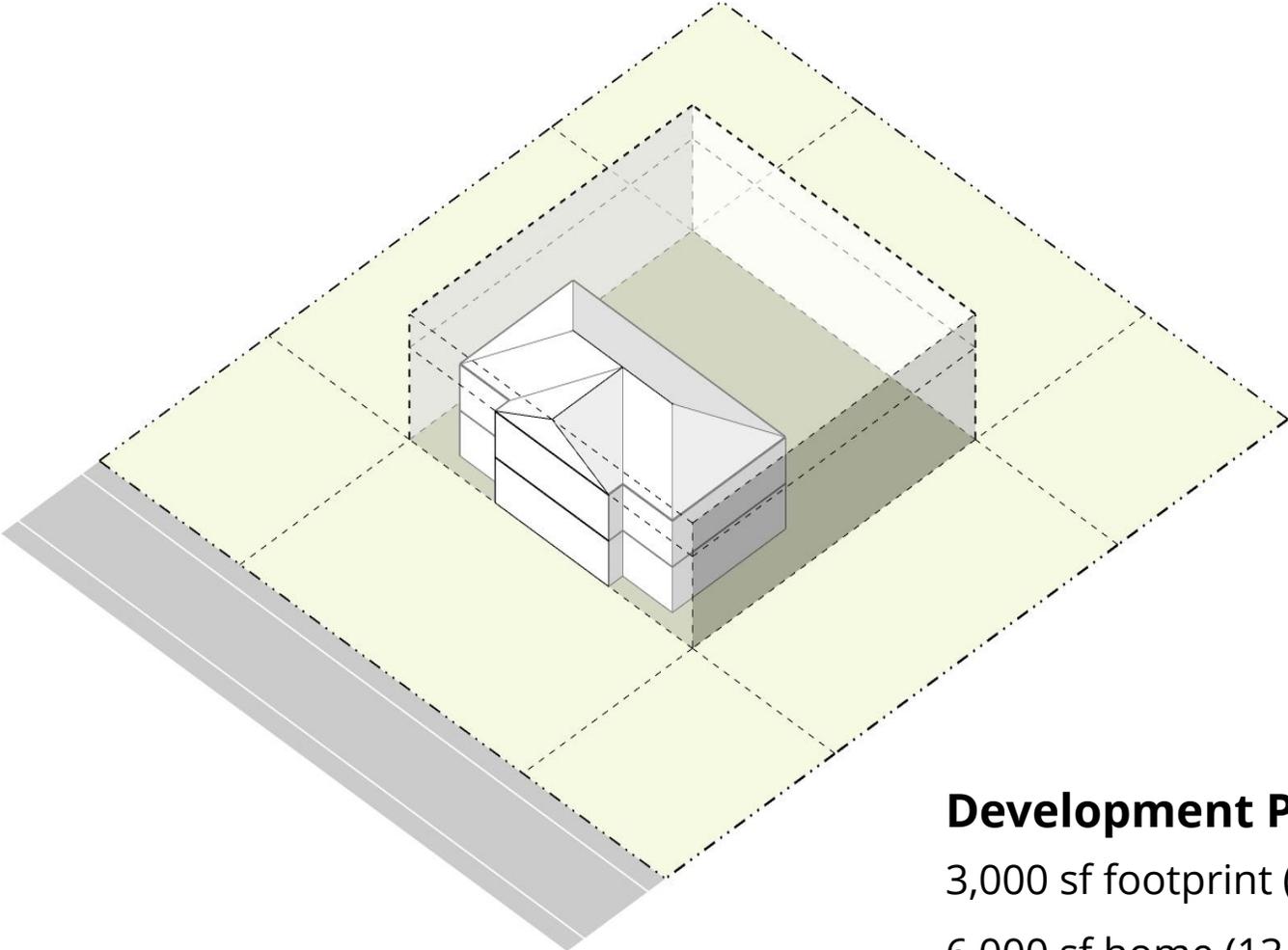


Single-Family Maximum Height

Main Building: 30 feet

Vertical Sidewalls: 22 feet

SETBACKS AND HEIGHT



Development Potential

3,000 sf footprint (lot coverage)

6,000 sf home (13.7% FAR)

SITE COVERAGE

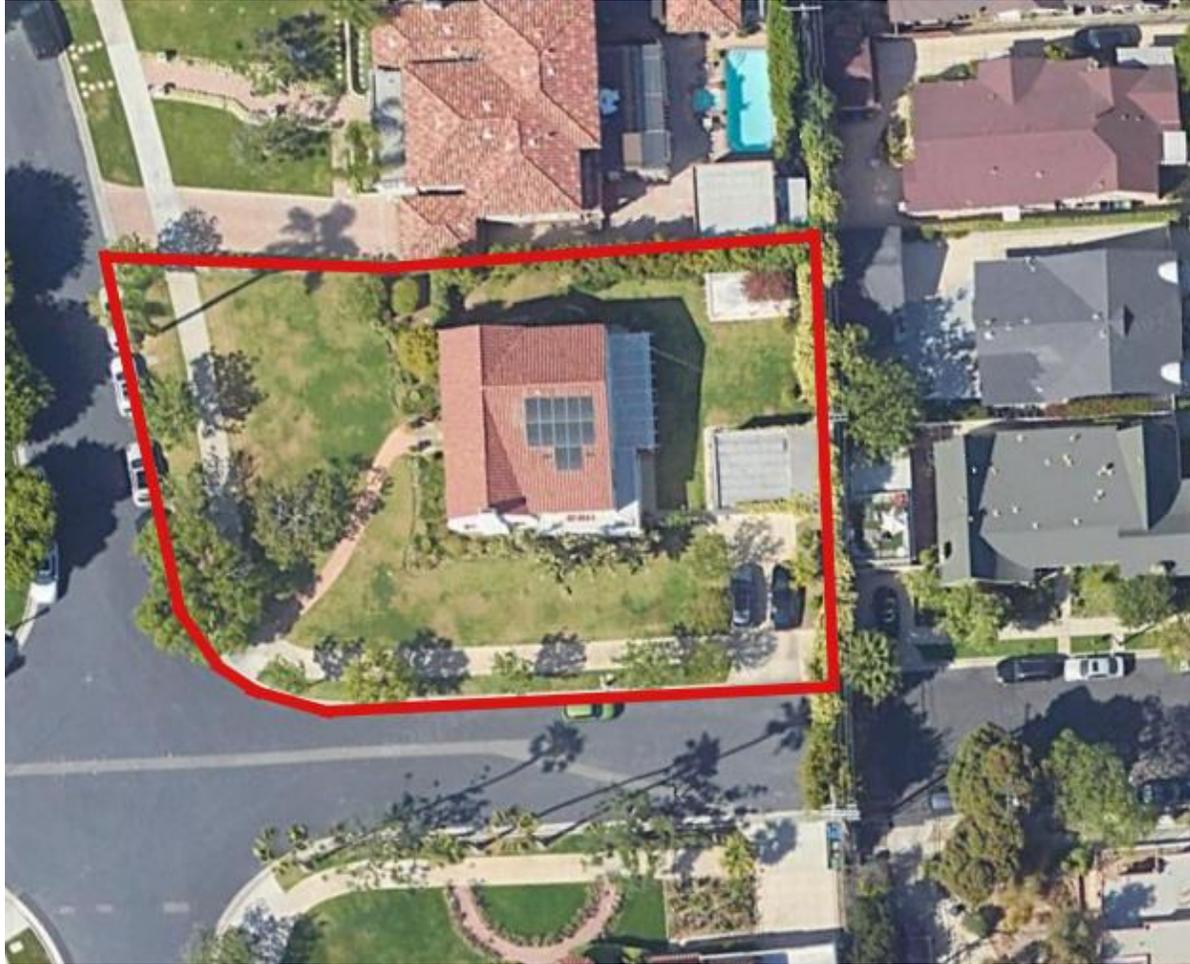


**Fourplex Surrounded by
Single Family Homes**



**Single Family Home
in Atherton**

SITE COVERAGE

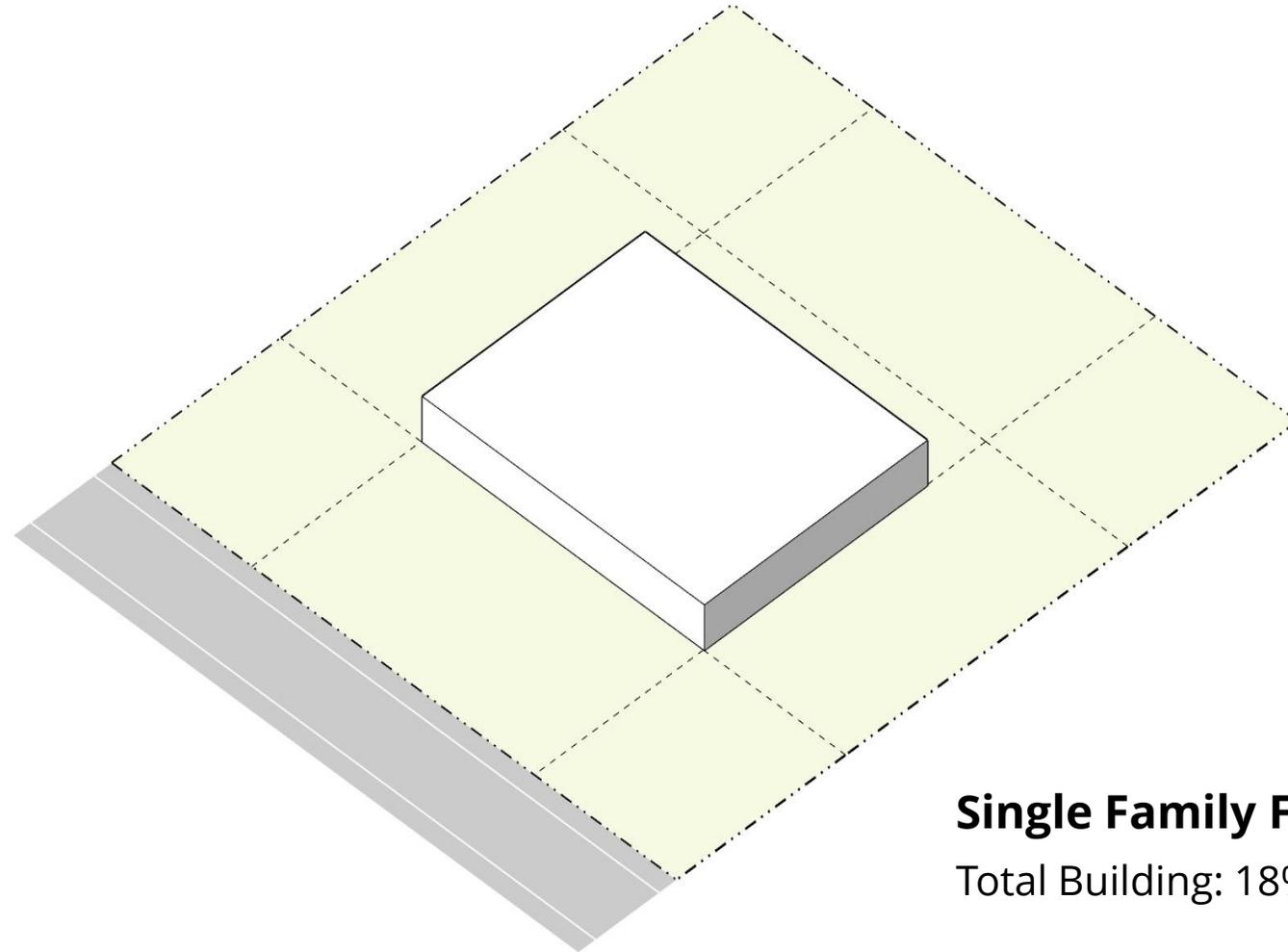


**Fourplex Surrounded by
Single Family Homes**



**Single Family Home
in Atherton**

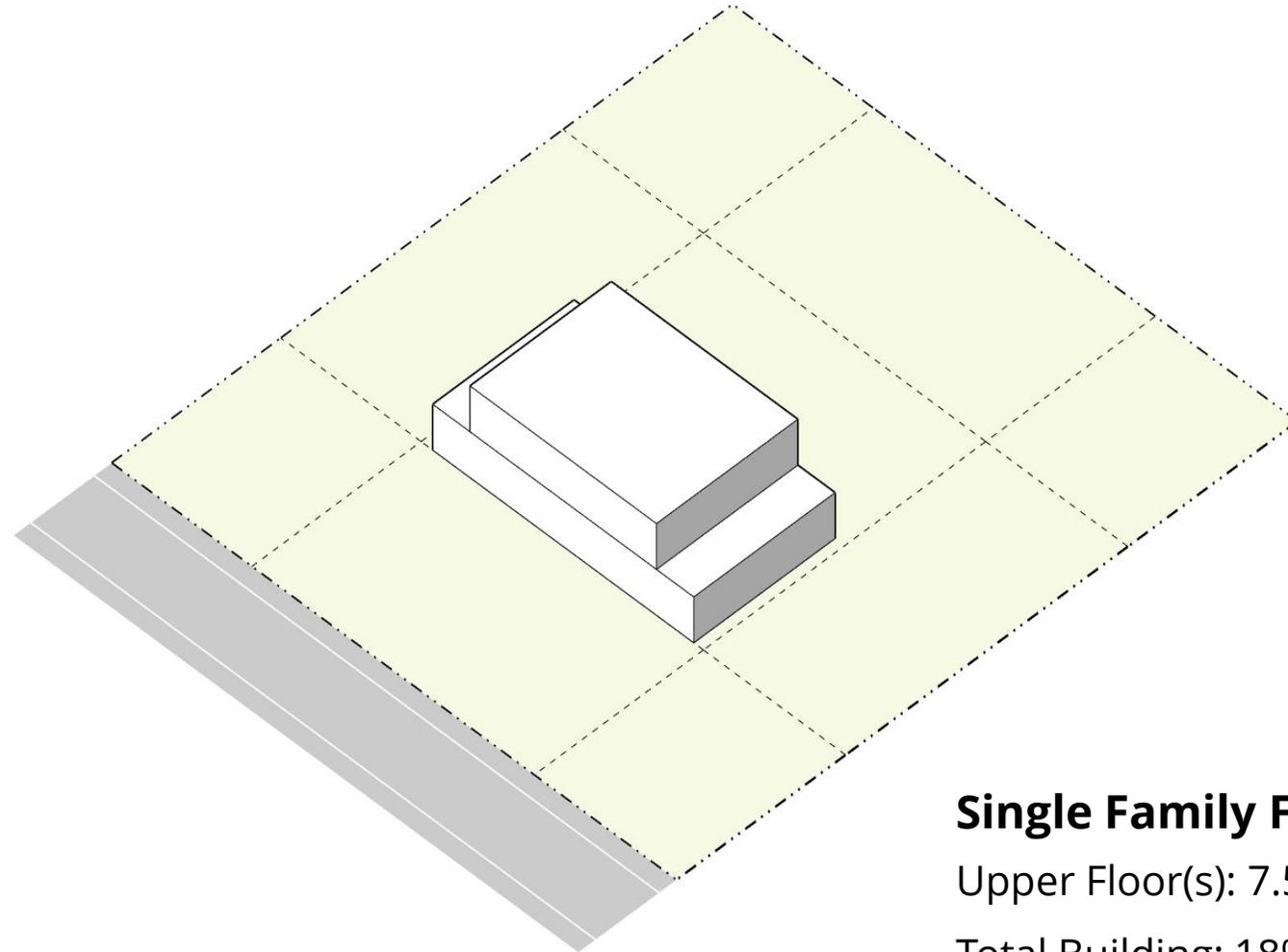
FLOOR AREA RATIO



Single Family FAR

Total Building: 18% Max. FAR

FLOOR AREA RATIO

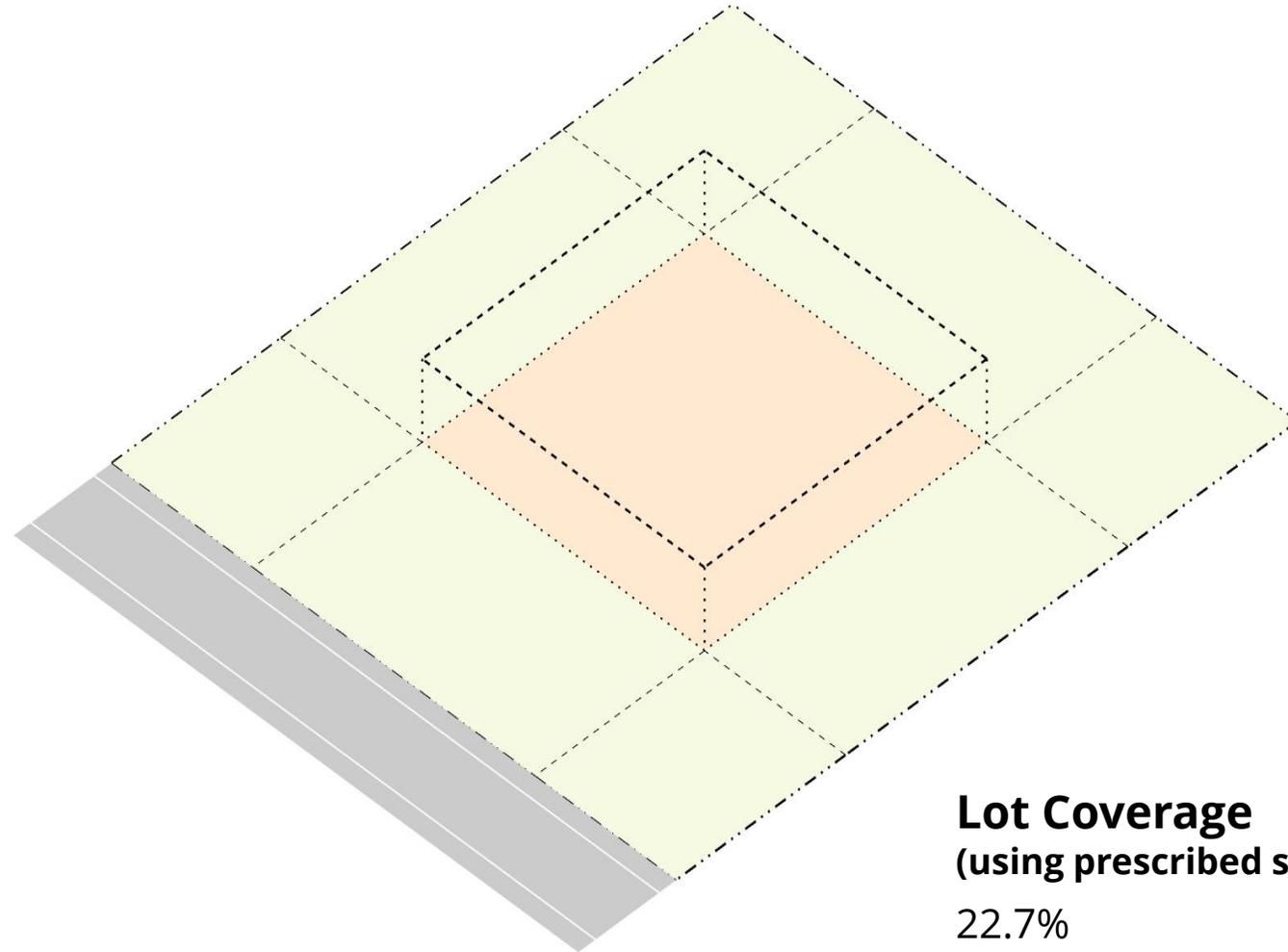


Single Family FAR

Upper Floor(s): 7.5% Max. FAR

Total Building: 18% Max. FAR

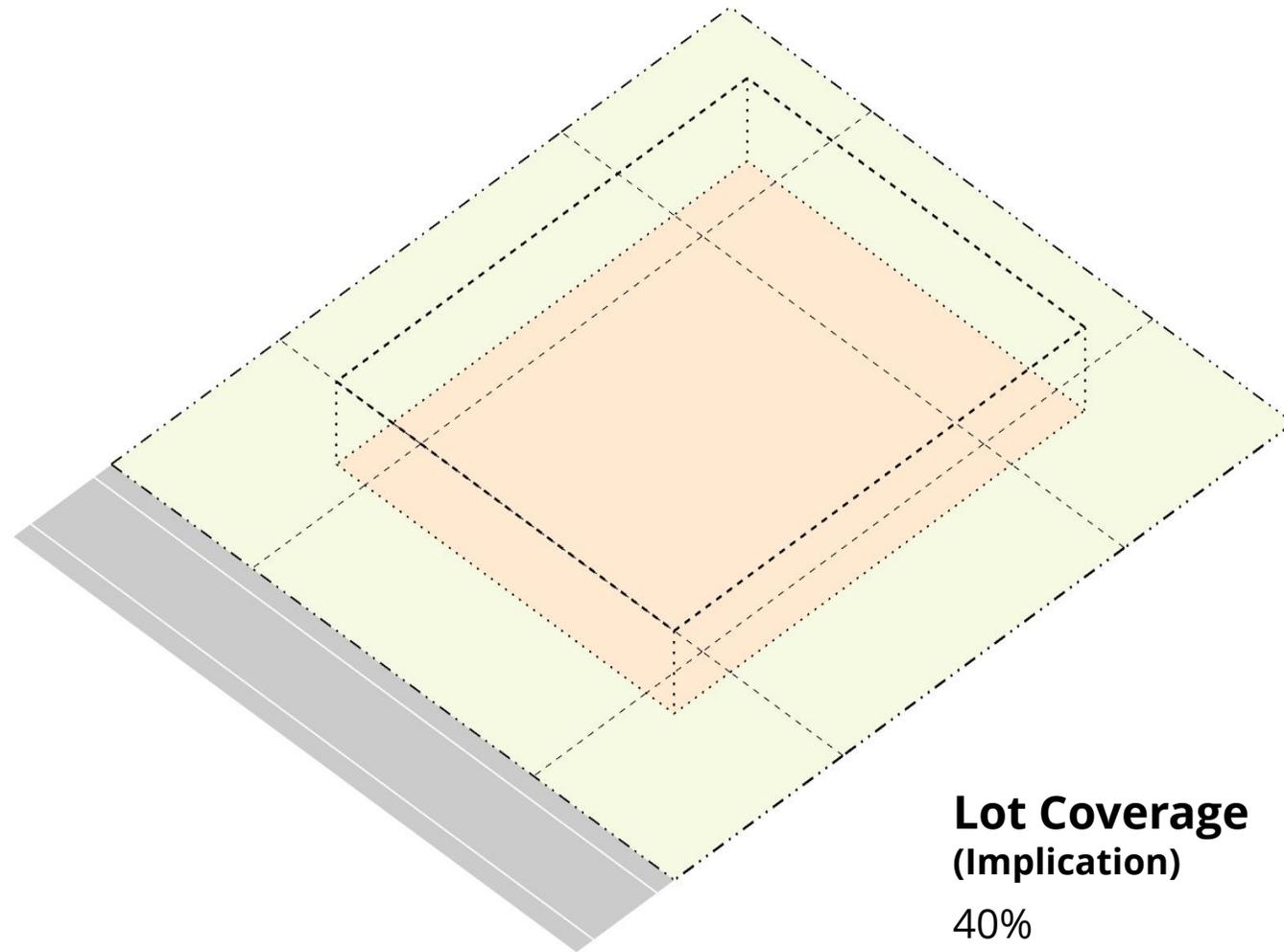
SITE COVERAGE



Lot Coverage
(using prescribed setbacks)

22.7%

SITE COVERAGE



GOAL

What is your desired outcome?

COMMENT

**how to potentially
achieve that goal**

- Setbacks and Height
- Site Coverage
- Building Massing
- Site Design
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- Façade Articulation
- Parking

BUILDING MASSING



FLOOR AREA RATIO

BUILDING MASSING



UPPER FLOOR SETBACKS

BUILDING MASSING



PRIVACY FROM UPPER-LEVEL DEVELOPMENT

BUILDING MASSING



COURTYARDS (SHARED OPEN SPACE)

SITE DESIGN



ENTRY GATES/ACCESS TO THE STREET

SITE DESIGN



PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO THE STREET

SITE DESIGN



SHARED AMENITIES (POOLS, SPORTS COURTS, SPAS)

SITE DESIGN



SITE LIGHTING

SITE DESIGN



REFUSE/RECYCLING FACILITIES

SCREENING AND WALLS



FENCES AND WALLS

SCREENING AND WALLS



LANDSCAPING SCREENING AND BUFFERING

GOAL

What is your desired outcome?

COMMENT

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FAÇADE ARTICULATION



ROOF AND EAVE DETAILS

FAÇADE ARTICULATION



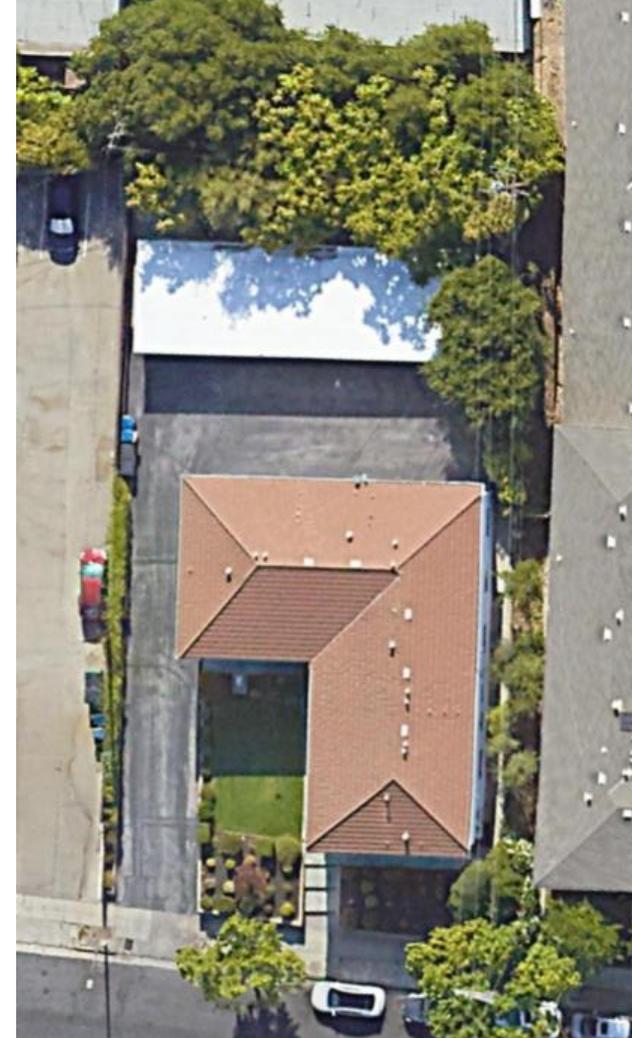
WINDOW ARTICULATION

FAÇADE ARTICULATION



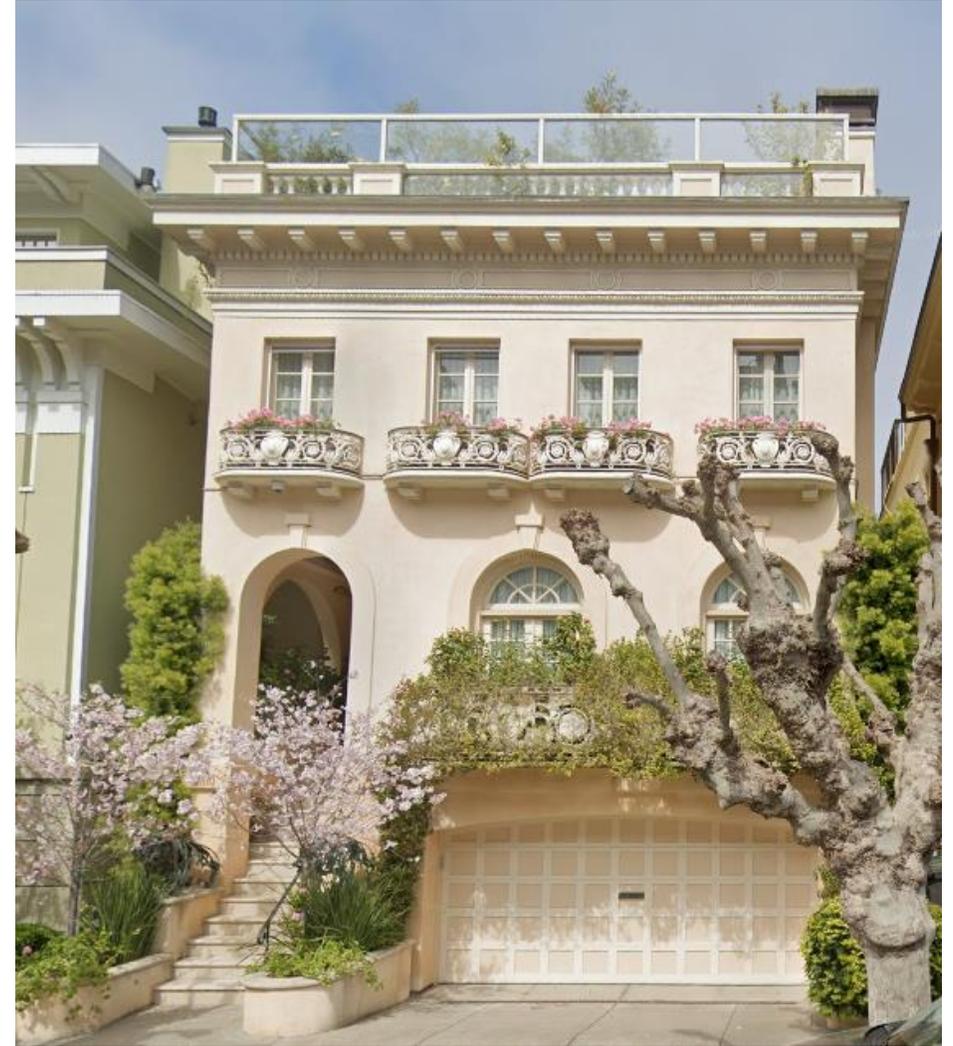
PORCH AND ENTRY DETAILS

PARKING



PARKING LOCATION

PARKING



INTEGRATION OF STRUCTURED PARKING

GOAL

What is your desired outcome?

COMMENT

how to potentially
achieve that goal

- Setbacks and Height
- Site Coverage
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- Façade Articulation
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COMMUNITY IDENTIFIED ISSUES

GOAL

What is your desired outcome?

COMMENT

how to potentially
achieve that goal

- Setbacks and Height
- Site Coverage
- Building Massing
- Site Design
- Screening and Walls
- Façade Articulation
- Parking
- *What have we missed?*



NEXT STEPS

NEXT STEPS

- Joint Study Session – November 1st
- Workshop #2 – November 13th
- Planning Commission Meeting
- City Council Hearing

Objective Design Standards for Multi-Family Housing

Community Workshop

Town of Atherton

October 23, 2023