

Affordable Housing Strategies

for Dutchess County Municipalities



A guide for local officials & planning boards

Dutchess County Planning & Development | May 2026

Scan to participate in live polling:



Or go to
slido.com

Code: DCPF

Wifi:
CCEDC_Public1

Password:
publicwifi

Dutchess County Planning & Development

- **Gail Padalino**, Community Development Administrator
- **Paul Hesse**, Community Development Coordinator
- **Emily Dozier**, Senior Planner
- **Tara Dillon**, Senior Planner

dutchessny.gov/planning
plandev@dutchessny.gov
845-486-3600

Agenda

1 Background on Housing Affordability

2 Introducing the Strategy Series

3 The Strategies

4 Funding & Resources

5 Next Steps & Questions



Background on Housing Affordability

Why is it important right now?

Housing Shortage



Demographic Factors

- Slow growth and shrinking households
- Incomes have lagged behind housing costs



Economic Factors

- Cost burdens have risen, especially for renters
- Widening income gaps influence the market



Market/Industry Factors

- Escalating construction costs
- Increasing cost of borrowing/financing projects



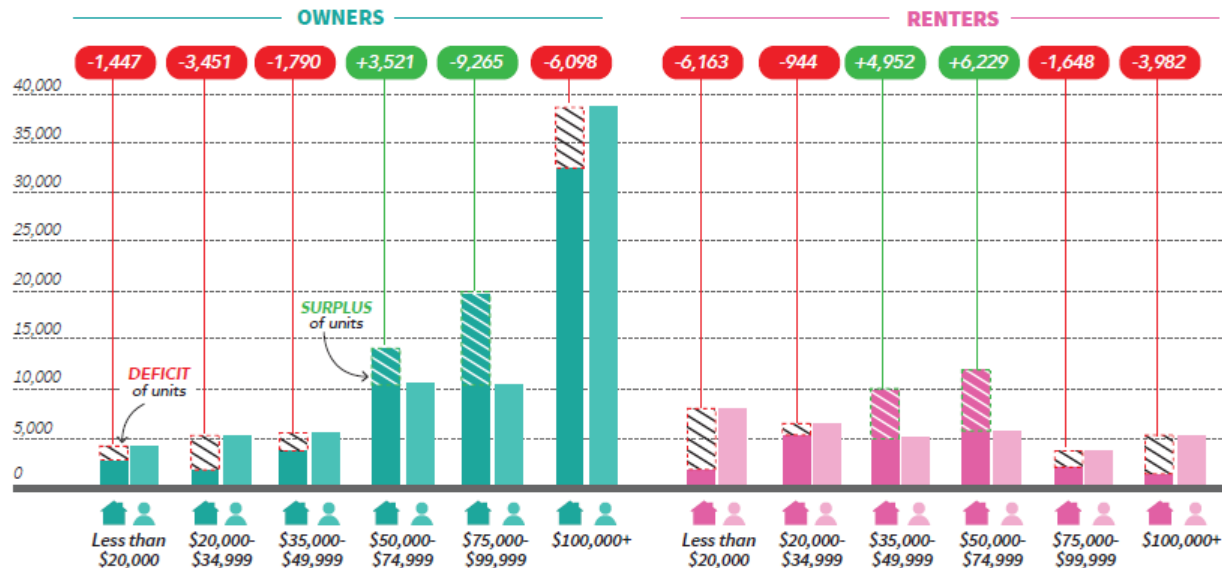
Gap analysis Dutchess County

Gap Analysis for Owner Households
and Renter Households by Income, 2019

UNITS HOUSEHOLDS

DEFICIT OF UNITS

SURPLUS OF UNITS



Source: [Dutchess County Housing Needs Assessment, 2022](#)

Putting it together

Households are changing

Smaller household sizes still generate demand — even communities with flat population growth need more units.

Market gaps are real

High land and construction costs make it difficult for the private market alone to produce housing at all income levels.

Housing pressure moves downward

Shortages at both the highest and lowest ends of the market create pressure throughout the system, pushing the lowest-income households out.

Essential workers need housing

Teachers, nurses, first responders, & countless others must be able to live in the communities they serve.

Local government holds the key

Zoning codes, bulk regulations, & permitting processes are the primary levers municipalities control.

The image features two overlapping light blue speech bubbles. The bubble on the left is partially behind the one on the right. The text "What issues are you seeing?" is centered across both bubbles in a bold, dark teal font.

What issues are you seeing?



Introducing the Strategy Series

Before choosing strategies, understand your community's context

Introducing the Strategy Series

- Created in response to frequent requests for housing affordability guidance in Dutchess County
- Designed to support municipalities, recognizing that each community has different needs
- Includes general considerations and a list of strategies
- Six strategies include detailed information sheets



Affordable Housing Strategies for Dutchess County Municipalities

Our department has received numerous requests for guidance on tackling housing affordability at the local level. This resource is designed to help Dutchess County municipalities address this complex issue.

Since each community's needs are different, the strategies below are not listed by priority, but are instead organized alphabetically. Several of the strategies have detailed information sheets, which can be found by clicking the hyperlinked title or scrolling down.

General Considerations



Acknowledge Urban & Rural Distinctions

Strategies that make sense in cities, villages, and town centers will be different than strategies in more rural areas.



Consider Infrastructure Needs

Areas with centralized water and/or sewer infrastructure (or the potential to create such systems) will use different strategies from those on wells/septic.



Research Demographic Trends

Evaluate trends in local population and employment. These trends can help you determine not just how much housing to encourage, but what types. For example, many communities are experiencing little or no population growth but still adding new households, due in part to smaller household sizes, resulting in demand for smaller housing types.



Understand School Enrollment

Seek updated enrollment data and projections from your local school district(s) and learn about accepted methodologies for projecting the number of school children from new housing development. Most schools are seeing declining enrollments, which leaves room to add households with schoolchildren without causing school overcrowding.



Understand 'Affordable' and 'affordable' Housing

Affordable housing can either be subsidized (what we sometimes call 'Big A' Affordable) or unsubsidized ('little a' or naturally affordable). 'Big A' Affordable housing uses grants, tax credits, and other public funding sources to offset the loss from providing below-market rents or sale prices. Given the costs of land and construction, subsidies are often the only way to build housing that is affordable for the lowest income brackets, but these resources are limited and complex to navigate. 'Little a' affordable housing is just housing that is naturally more affordable – it might be on a smaller lot, have a smaller square footage, be older, or have a simpler design. Zoning codes are often an obstacle to creating new 'little a' affordable units.

Strategy Overview (Alphabetical)

★ Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

- Bulk Regulations

★ Centralized Infrastructure

- Conservation Subdivisions
- Commercial → Mixed-Use Zoning

★ Inclusionary Zoning

- Local Small-Scale Builders

★ Manufactured Housing

- Municipally Owned Properties
- NYS Pro-Housing Community Designation

★ Parking Requirements Reform

- Short-Term Rental Regulations
- Streamlining the Review Process

★ Variety of Housing Types (Missing Middle)

★ = *detailed info sheet available*

Four Things to Consider Before You Start

Urban vs. Rural Distinctions



City/village strategies can differ from rural ones. Know your context before selecting an approach.

Infrastructure Needs



Water & sewer access determines what housing types are feasible. No central system = more limited options.

Demographic Trends



Evaluate local population and employment trends to determine how much and what types of housing to encourage.

School Enrollment



Most schools have declining enrollment — room to add households without crowding classrooms.

See *Pattern for Progress's* [*Closed Schools, Open Minds*](#)



**What does “affordable housing”
mean to you?**

Understanding Types of Affordable Housing

'Big A' Affordable

- Subsidized - uses grants, tax credits, & public funding
- Below-market rents or sale prices
- Income-restricted
- Complex to finance & navigate

'little a' or naturally affordable

- No subsidies – just naturally lower-cost
- Smaller lots, smaller footprints, simpler design
- Older housing stock
- Local zoning can limit new supply
- **Key opportunity for local action**

Both matter — but 'little a' is where local zoning reform has the greatest impact.



The Strategies

14 ideas and 6 deep dives — use as many as fit your community

The Info Sheets

Each follows a consistent structure:

- **Big-picture description**
- **Key benefits of the strategy**



Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

An accessory dwelling unit is typically a small apartment either within/attached to the primary dwelling or in/as a standalone structure elsewhere on the property (e.g., above a detached garage, in a converted barn, or as its own small building). ADUs are sometimes called in-law apartments or backyard cottages.



Types of ADUs. Source: nrcoco.org/nlusone

Benefits

- Encouraging ADUs in your community can allow for a small but impactful source of additional housing units, which are often naturally more affordable because of their small size.
- ADUs can introduce diversity of housing size and type into your community with little to no impact on any specific neighborhood, as they are spread across the community and built one at a time.
- Shrinking household sizes means that many single-family areas have fewer people in them than they used to – adding ADUs can help bring vibrancy back to neighborhoods.
- ADUs can offer valuable flexibility to residents, providing a way for young people to stay in their hometown and for older residents to remain on their properties.
- ADUs can also provide an income stream to the homeowner, if rented.



The Info Sheets

Each follows a consistent structure:

- Big-picture description
- Key benefits of the strategy
- **Common concerns and suggested responses**
- **Specific, actionable strategies within the topic**



Common Concerns

If we allow ADUs as-of-right, our community will be overrun with them, effectively doubling the density in our neighborhoods which will make them crowded and create traffic congestion.

- **Response:** Building an ADU is expensive and challenging, and most homeowners are not interested in being landlords. Septic and well capacity are also limiting factors in areas without central infrastructure. When ADUs are built, they tend to be spread out across a community, with little to no impact in any one area.

Allowing rentals in a largely owner-occupied neighborhood will reduce quality of life.

- **Response:** Rental housing is an important and often underrepresented part of our housing market. It is vital for those starting out, downsizing, and for many of the essential workers we rely on every day. ADUs are also small, with generally only one or two occupants, and the homeowner has more incentive than anyone to ensure they operate smoothly and quietly. Also, some ADUs will be occupied by family members of the homeowners.

Strategies

Many communities technically allow ADUs but regulate them so strictly that they are only truly possible for a very small number of residents. The strategies below address some of the common overregulation issues that prevent these laws from achieving the desired benefits.

- Allow as-of-right; avoid requiring site plan or special use permit approval.
- Avoid including ADUs in density calculations. ADUs should be an allowable accessory use on all residential parcels so long as the structure complies with bulk regulations.
- Avoid overregulating the maximum size – allow at least 800 square feet and/or at least 50% of the size of the primary dwelling. Higher maximums are often appropriate, especially in rural settings. Minimum sizes are also not necessary – state building code provides a natural minimum.
- For detached ADUs, allow new construction or, at a minimum, allow in existing structures that are a given age (e.g. 5 years old) at the time of the application (avoid tying the age of the structure to a fixed date, like the date of adoption, since over time that will make the law unnecessarily stricter).



The Info Sheets

Each follows a consistent structure:

- Big-picture description
- Key benefits of the strategy
- Common concerns and suggested responses
- Specific, actionable strategies within the topic
- **Additional resources for further reading**

Affordable Housing Strategy Series Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)



- Minimize the number and complexity of any supplemental regulations.
- Consider commissioning architectural plans for one or more detached ADU styles that meet local design expectations. Residents could then choose a pre-approved style, saving on design costs and ensuring quality. The City of Kingston [hosted a design competition](#) to choose pre-approved ADU plans.

Other Resources

- The Westchester County Department of Planning's model ordinance could be a good starting point if your community is considering new ADU regulations: www.wmpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/ADU-Model-Ordinance-Westchester-Co-NY-Nov19.pdf
- The AARP is a proponent of ADUs and has many resources, including their own model ordinance: www.aarp.org/adu. Their publication on removing local barriers to ADU construction could be particularly useful: www.aarp.org/pri/topics/livable-communities/housing/expanding-adu-development-solutions-local-barriers
- Municipalities can apply to New York State's ADU +1 program, which provides financial assistance to qualified homeowners who wish to build an ADU. The program is only offered in municipalities that have enrolled in it: hcr.ny.gov/adu
- Affordable housing advocacy group ShelterForce has a series of articles on the benefits of, and barriers to, ADU construction: shelterforce.org/series/adus-explained



6 Deep Dives

1. **Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)**
2. **Centralized Infrastructure**
3. **Inclusionary Zoning**
4. **Manufactured Housing**
5. **Parking Requirements Reform**
6. **“Missing Middle” Housing**



Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)



Types of ADUs. Source: rupco.org/plusone


A small apartment within, attached to, or separate from the primary home (in-law apartment, backyard cottage, garage conversion).

Benefits

- Natural affordability — small = cheaper
- Spread across community, low neighborhood impact
- Supports young people staying & seniors aging in place
- Rental income for homeowners
- Adds units one at a time — gradual change

Key Strategies

- Allow as-of-right (no special permit)
- Don't count ADUs in density calculations
- Avoid overregulating the size
- Minimize supplemental regulations
- Explore NYS ADU +1 financial assistance program

 *Common concern: 'We'll be overrun!' — Reality: Building ADUs can be expensive; most owners don't want to be landlords. Septic/well capacity limits uptake naturally.*

Access to municipal water & sewer can a game-changer for housing affordability.

With Existing Infrastructure

- Enables smaller, more affordable units
- Reduces land-per-unit costs
- Cost savings flow to buyers & renters
- Unlocks economies of scale

Without Infrastructure

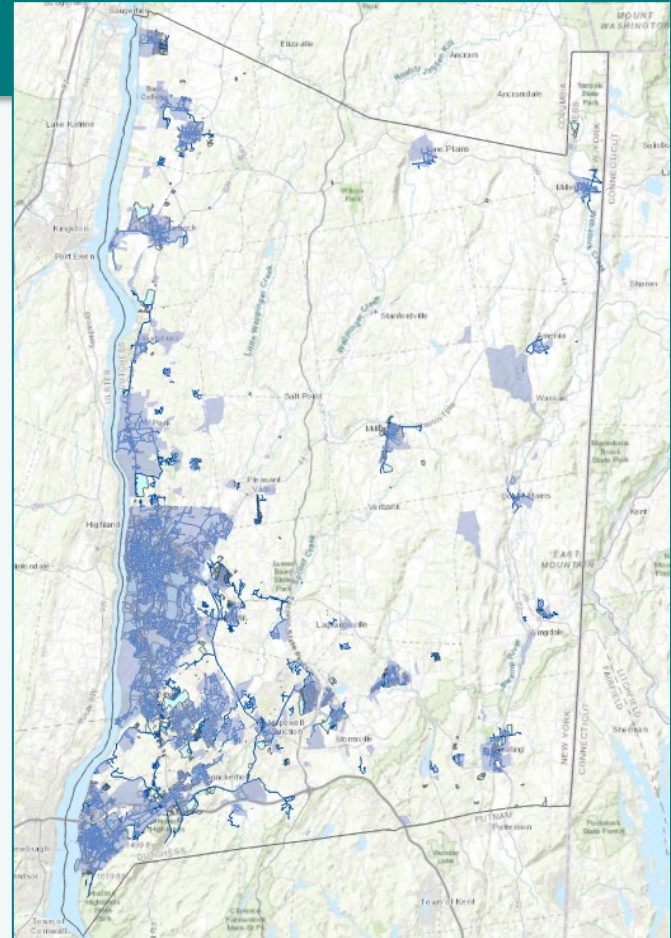
- Focus on flexible housing types (ADUs, duplexes)
- Explore technologies that reduce onsite system footprint
- Consider feasibility study for new centralized system
- Collaborate with County Dept. of Health early

Key Strategy: Prioritize development where capacity exists. Foster collaboration between municipality, water/sewer providers, County Health, and developers.

Examples: Red Hook (with existing), Stanford (without)

Dutchess County Water & Sewer Mapping Initiative

- County-led effort by Planning & Development and Department of Health
- Create a single, accurate map of all public water and sewer systems
- Identifies where capacity exists – and where constraints limit development
- Help municipalities plan for growth and target the right housing strategies
- Pilot effort underway




Requires or incentivizes a percentage of units in new developments to be below-market.

Benefits

- Integrates affordable units across new development projects
- Less state/federal subsidy needed (vs a 100% affordable project)
- Burden falls on developer (but can result in higher cost for other units)
- Gradual, steady growth of affordable housing stock

Implementation Tips

- Consult local developers before adopting
- Mandatory IZ works best in high-pressure markets, with in-lieu fee option
- Most communities → optional, incentive-based policy is better
- Offer density/height bonus, fee waiver, tax relief
- Partner with a nonprofit to manage compliance
- Review regularly to ensure policy is meeting goals

 *Watch out: Overly strict IZ policies can kill projects entirely, resulting in zero new units — affordable or otherwise. Calibrate incentives to your local market.*



**What's your community's IZ policy?
How is it working?**

What type of housing is this?





Source: [ManufacturedHousing.org](https://www.ManufacturedHousing.org); [Zillow.com](https://www.zillow.com)

Factory-built homes are a vital, underutilized source of non-subsidized affordable housing. Dutchess County ranks 2nd in NYS with 88 Manufactured Home Communities (MHCs).

Why It Works

- Costs ~40% less per sq ft than site-built (NYU data)
- HUD energy standards reduce utility costs
- Modern styles blend with any neighborhood
- Flexible siting: private land, MHCs, ADUs, infill
- Sustainable factory process minimizes waste

Strategies

- Expand zoning to allow in more districts
- Allow as ADUs or infill projects
- Apply basic (not restrictive) design standards
- Promote cooperative MHC ownership models
- Educate public on modern manufactured homes

Cooperative ownership: residents collectively own land → depreciating asset becomes an appreciating stake in real property.

Most parking minimums are based on outdated studies with no regard for local context. Over-parking increases housing costs and wastes buildable land.

Benefits of Less Parking

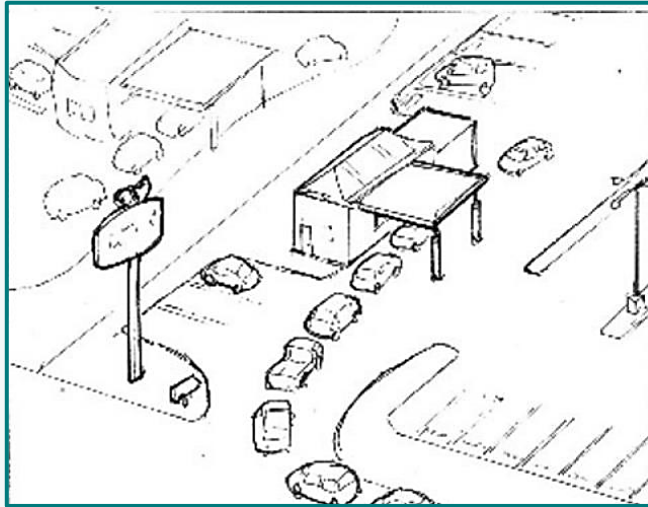
- Lowers cost → housing is less expensive; infill development is more feasible
- Frees up land for more housing units
- Reduces impervious surfaces & runoff
- Walkable, attractive streets

Reform Options

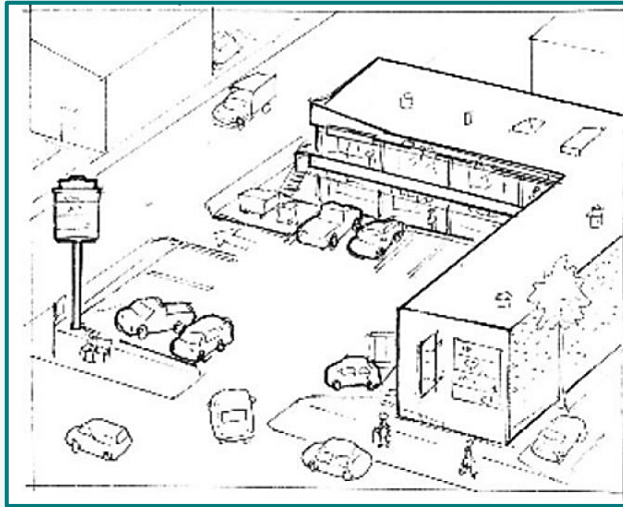
- Remove minimums (especially in walkable areas and near transit) – provide flexibility
- Replace minimums with maximums
- Reduce minimums & use as guidance rather than mandated
- Allow shared parking with adjacent/nearby uses
- Don't require new parking for renovations of non-conforming uses

NYS examples: Buffalo, City of Hudson, Village of Saranac Lake, & Town of Canandaigua all removed parking minimums — with positive results.

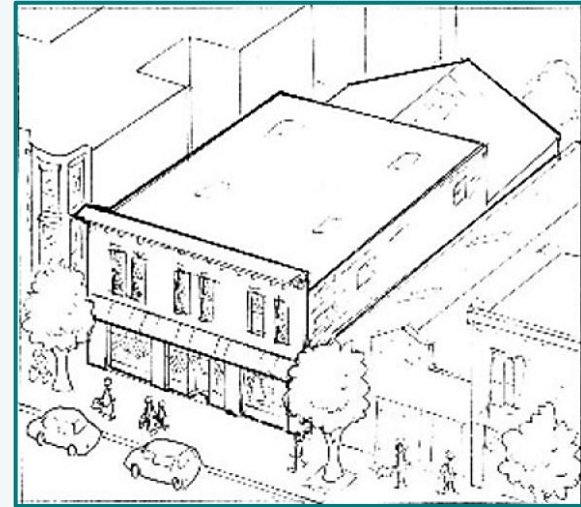
Impact of various levels of parking requirements on urban form



1 space per
100 square feet



1 space per
500 square feet



No Required
Minimum

Source: www.gacities.com/Resources/Reference-Articles/Shining-a-Light-on-Parking-Reform.aspx



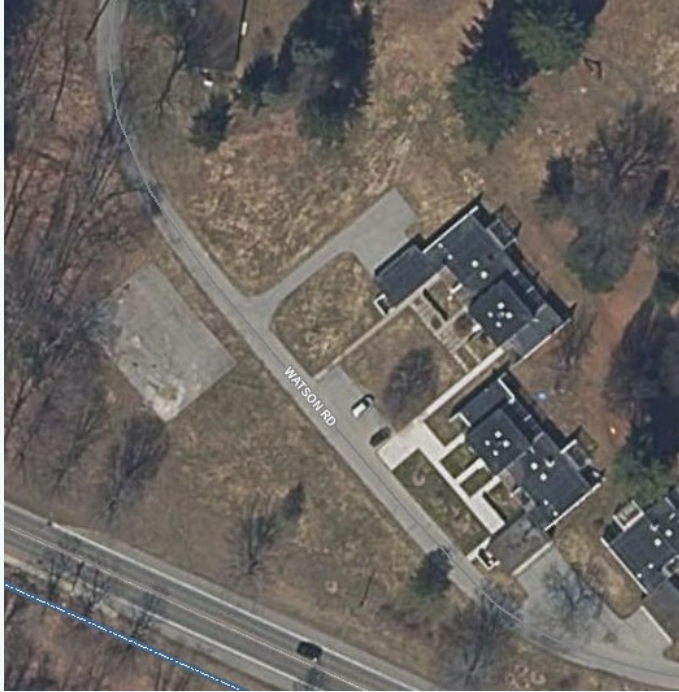
Before



After

Source: Google street view

Example: Orchard Lane Apartments, Town of Poughkeepsie



Before



After

Source: Dutchess County Aerial Access

The image features two overlapping light blue speech bubbles. The bubble in the foreground is on the right and contains the text. The second bubble is behind it and to the left, partially obscured. The text is centered within the foreground bubble.

**Have you heard of the term
“Missing Middle” housing?**

Variety of Housing Types: 'Missing Middle'



1. COTTAGE COURT



2. SIDE-BY-SIDE DUPLEX



3. STACKED DUPLEX



4. FOURPLEX



5. SIXPLEX



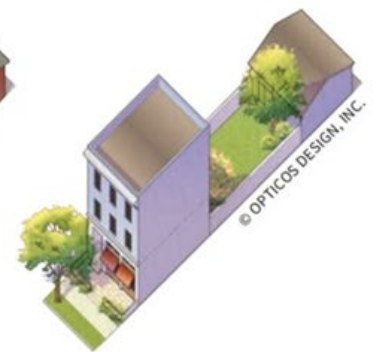
6. EIGHTPLEX



7. COURTYARD



8. TOWNHOUSE



9. LIVE/WORK

Source: *Discovering and Developing Missing Middle Housing*, AARP and Opticos Design

Most zoning allows only two extremes: large-lot single-family OR big apartment complexes. The middle — duplexes, triplexes, cottage courts, townhomes — has been regulated away.

Why It Works

- Uses land more efficiently → lower costs
- Compatible in scale with single-family neighborhoods
- Allows people to stay as their needs change (age, family size)
- Adds units without fundamentally changing neighborhood character

How to Pursue It

- Map where missing middle already exists locally
- Update zoning to allow by-right in appropriate zones
- Avoid terms like 'density' — talk form & scale instead
- Host community tours of existing examples
- Rhinebeck alone has ~100 buildings with 2–10 units!

Variety of Housing Types: 'Missing Middle'



A new 2-family home in the Village of Rhinebeck




A 4-family home in rural Stanford



A 4-family home in Wappinger

(images sourced from Google Streetview, accessed September 2024)



**Does your code allow Missing
Middle housing?**

More Strategies at a Glance

Bulk Regulations Reform

Review min. lot sizes, setbacks, unit sq footage. These quietly inflate housing costs without serving any real purpose.

Commercial → Mixed-Use

Allow housing above/beside commercial uses in strip-mall corridors. Adds units, adds foot traffic, reduces vacancy risk.

Conservation Subdivisions

Cluster homes on smaller lots to preserve open space AND reduce home prices and maintenance costs.

Municipally Owned Properties

Release public land via RFP with affordability requirements baked in. The municipality sets the terms.

More Strategies, continued

Streamline Review

Every extra permit, condition, or delay adds cost and uncertainty. Review your code for unnecessary barriers.

Short-Term Rental Regs

Targeted STR rules can protect housing supply without harming tourism — a careful balance.

Local Small-Scale Builders

Municipalities can support local developers to deliver small-scale housing and rehab projects that expand affordability.

NYS Pro-Housing Community

State designation tying housing progress to eligibility for key grant funding (details follow)

Addressing Common Community Concerns

How the Info Sheets Support You

- Board members often hear concerns first during project reviews
- Info sheets include adaptable talking points for common issues
- Helps explain why strategies are being considered in clear terms
- Flexible language you can borrow and tailor for your community

'It will change neighborhood character'


Missing middle housing is compatible in scale with single-family homes. Show local examples.

'Our schools will be overcrowded'

Most districts have declining enrollment. New data + accepted projection methods typically show room to grow.

'Developers will take over'

Zoning still sets the rules. You control form, scale, design standards, and where new housing is allowed.



**What other concerns are
you hearing?**



Funding & Resources

Help is available — you don't have to start from scratch

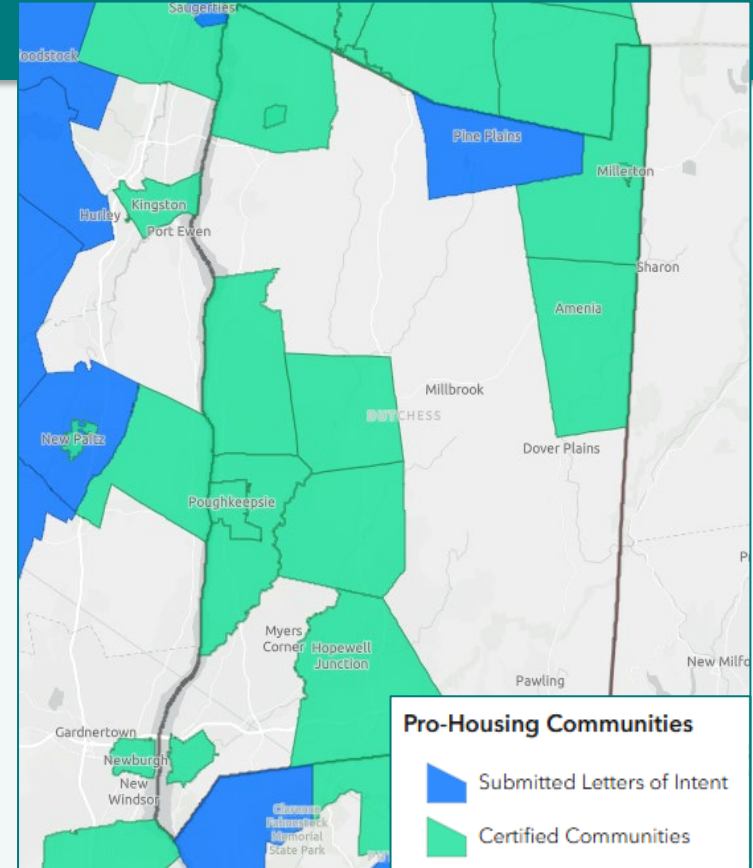
NYS Pro-Housing Community Designation

Becoming a Pro-Housing Community is a requirement for several NYS grant programs.

New York State uses this designation to reward municipalities actively working to increase housing availability and affordability.

Why It Matters

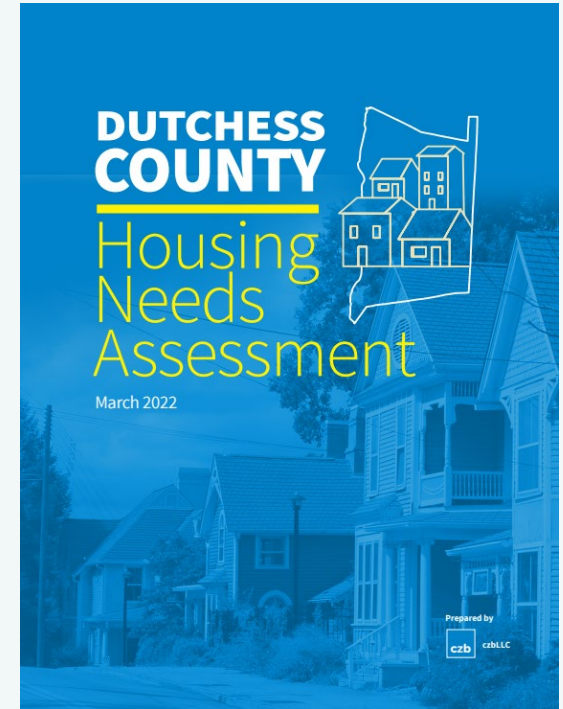
- Unlocks eligibility for state competitive grants
- Signals to developers that your community is open for business
- Requires demonstrable pro-housing policy actions
- Low barrier to entry — worth pursuing early



Source: [HCR Pro-Housing Community Program Dashboard](#)

Resources

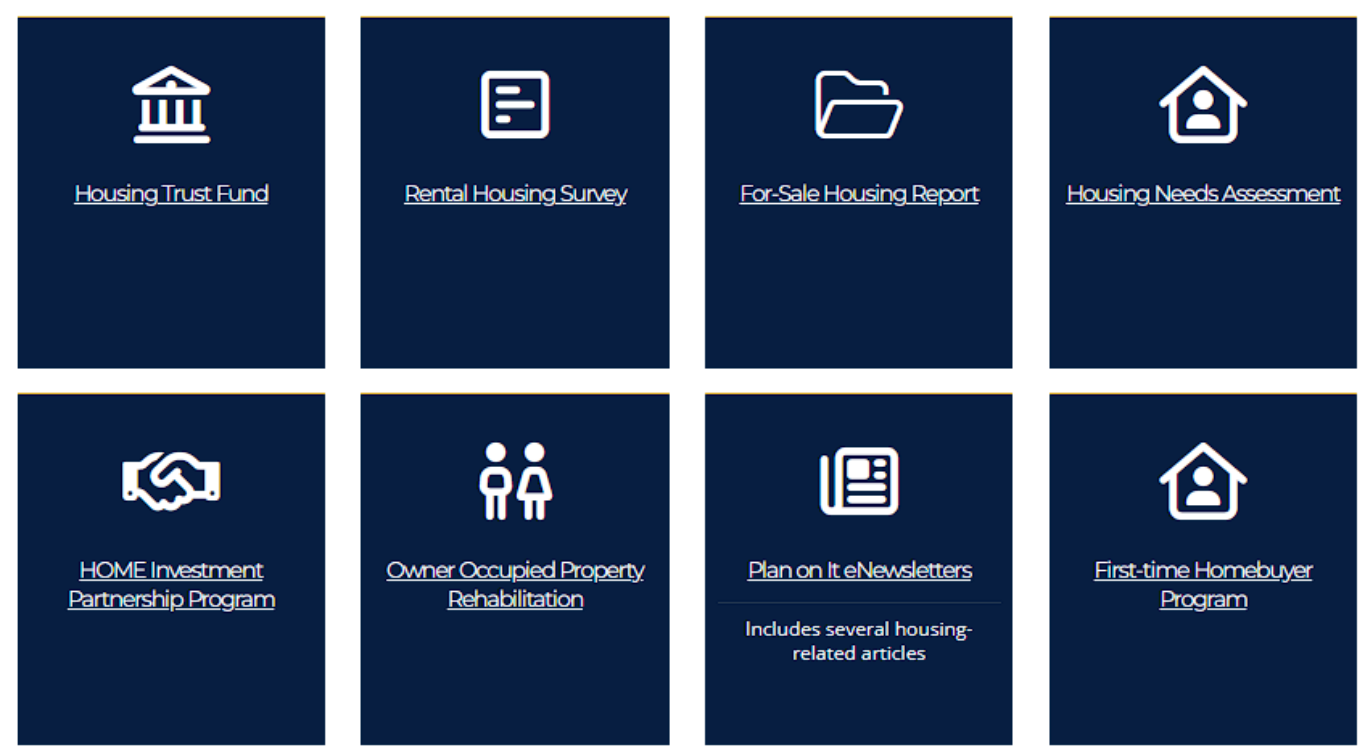
- [Dutchess County 2022 Housing Needs Assessment](#)
Data on local housing gaps, demographics & demand
- [Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress](#)
Regional housing studies and data
- [APA 2024 Housing Supply Accelerator Playbook](#)
National best practices for municipalities
- [Grounded Solutions Network](#)
Inclusionary zoning calculator & case studies
- [AARP ADU Resources](#)
Model ordinances & guides for ADU policy
- [Strong Towns Housing Ready Toolkits](#)
Take a quiz to see if your community is housing ready



Source: [Dutchess County Planning](#)

Dutchess County Planning - Role and Resources

- Visit our website: [Dutchess County Planning - Housing](#)
- Annual housing reports
- Owner-occupied property rehabilitation program
- Funding for rental and homeowner housing



Source: [Dutchess County Planning](#)

Funding Opportunities

- [Dutchess County Housing Trust Fund](#)
Local funding for affordable housing projects in Dutchess County
- [HOME Investment Partnership Program](#)
Federal formula grants for affordable housing
(via HUD)
- [NYS ADU +1 Program](#)
Financial assistance to homeowners building ADUs (municipalities must enroll)

Hudson River Housing, Inc. ^{OVER} **40** _{YEARS} *of Housing with Compassion and Development with Vision*

WHO WE ARE ▼ WHAT WE DO ▼
HOW TO HELP ▼ RESIDENT PORTAL ▼
APPLY FOR HOUSING ▼

DONATE

PLUS ONE ADU

FILL OUT THE INTEREST FORM

Source: [Hudson River Housing](#)



Next Steps & Questions

How to get started

Next Steps for Your Municipality

- 1 Assess your zoning**

What's allowed vs. what's actually buildable.
- 2 Understand your infrastructure**

Where water/sewer exists, where it doesn't, and any constraints.
- 3 Know your market**

Is development pressure high or low?
Tailor tools accordingly.
- 4 Start with quick wins**

Examples: ADUs, parking requirements, small code fixes.
- 5 Layer approaches**

No single strategy solves affordability — a combination can build momentum.
- 6 Work with Dutchess County Planning**

We can help review zoning, discuss sites, and identify resources.

Questions & Discussion

We're here to help — no question too small.

Dutchess County Planning & Development

dutchessny.gov/planning

plandev@dutchessny.gov

845-486-3600