

# Residential Neighborhood Density Review

## GOAL:

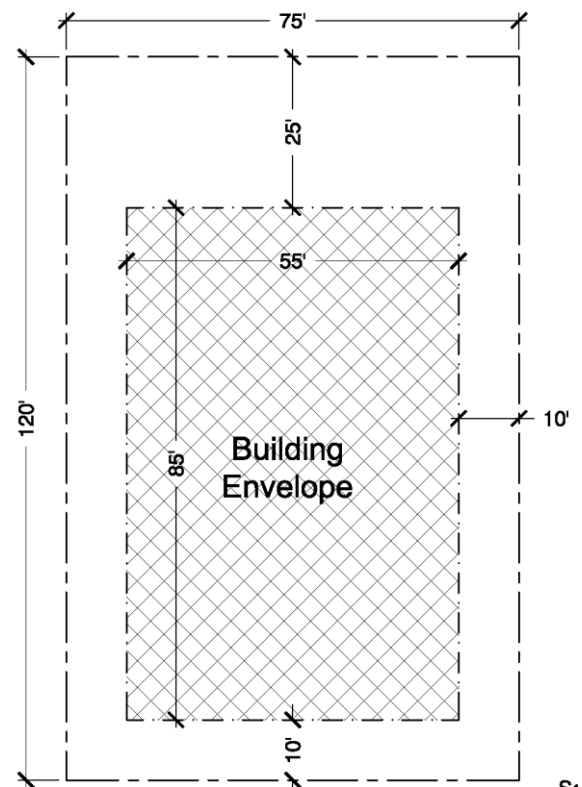
Amend single-family residential development regulations to encourage high-quality neighborhood design and construction and provide a clear regulatory framework for developers to follow.

## OBJECTIVES:

- Provide options for neighborhood development that result in a variety of housing choices, accommodates market conditions, and encourages preservation of environmentally sensitive areas and desirable open space.
- Reduce the number of variance requests submitted for neighborhood developments related to lot size and width

## REVIEW OF CURRENT REGULATIONS:

- 75-ft wide x 120-ft deep (9,000 sqft).
- No open space requirements for neighborhood if minimum lot size and area are met.
- Compensating Open Space requires 1:1 open space area for lots < 9,000 sqft.
- Compensating Open space can be developed or undeveloped.



IN-CITY NEIGHBORHOOD REVIEW:

**Hills of Town Creek Single Family Development (Stylecraft developer & builder)**



- (131) 50-foot wide lots
- 31.6 acres (29.3 ac houses / streets, 2.3 ac reserves)
- Overall density = 4.2 homes per acre
- 7.3% of site open space



**Buffalo Springs (LeFevre developer, multiple builders)**



- Original Section mostly 100-ft wide lots
- Lake Creek Village 50-ft wide lots
- Estates of Lake Creek Village 80-ft wide lots
- Small number of duplexes near library

**Terra Vista (Bowen developer, multiple builders)**



- (61) 50-foot wide lots
- 13.8 acres (13.66 ac houses / streets, 0.14 ac reserves)
- Overall density = 4.4 homes per acre
- 1.0% of site open space



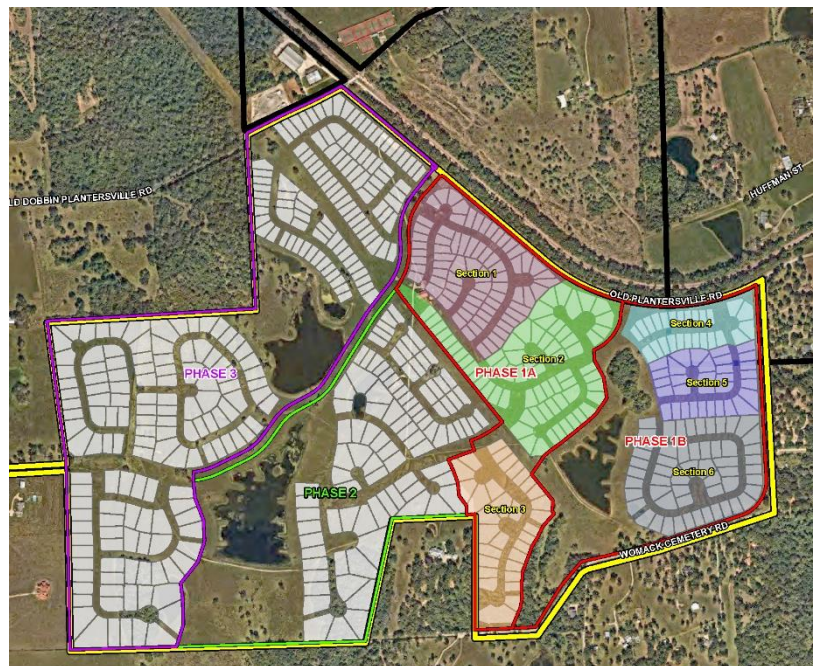
## Montgomery Bend (Pulte developer & builder)

- (309) 45-foot wide lots
- 79.9 acres (65.4 ac houses / streets, 14.5 ac reserves)
- Overall density = 3.7 homes per acre
- 18.1% of site open space



## Redbird Meadows (Canterra Classics developer, multiple builders)

- (690) lots
- 385.3 acres (268.6 ac houses / streets, 116.6 ac reserves)
- Overall density = 1.8 homes per acre
- 30.3% of site open space





OTHER EXAMPLES:

**Del Webb near The Woodlands (Pulte developer & builder)**

- 190 acres +/- total with 558 lots
- 50 acres +/- drainage, amenity & open space (26%)
- 140 acres +/- homes & streets
- Overall Density = 2.9 homes / acre



**Fairwater on FM2854 (DR Horton developer & builder)**



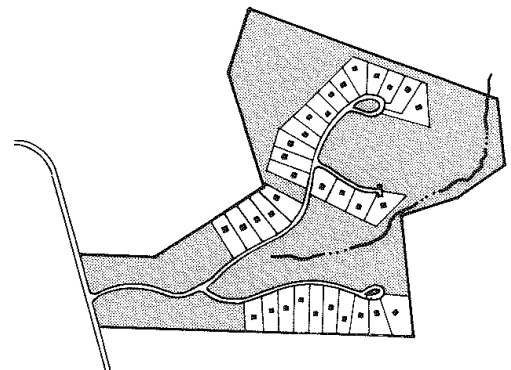
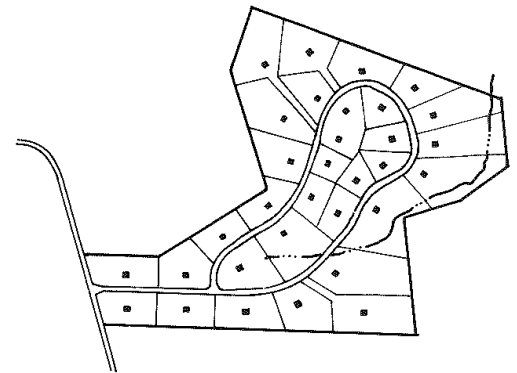
- 150 acres +/- total with 482 lots (Overall Density = 3.2 homes / acre)
- 40 acres +/- drainage amenity & open space (26%)
- 110 acres home & streets

## DISCUSSION:

- Smaller lot sizes in conjunction with Compensating Open Space can encourage more compact, efficient development and provide open space for residents while protecting environmentally sensitive areas.
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- Reducing the minimum required lot width takes away the requirement to provide Compensating Open Space—resulting in higher total land density.
- What do we want to be included in smaller lot subdivisions? Active parks? Trails (in addition to sidewalks)? Keep in mind future funding for amenity maintenance needs...City? HOA? MUD? Shouldn't require what can't be funded
- 1-size-fits-all approach to lot size has pros/cons
  - Moderate lot size (reduction in open space)
  - Townhomes possible at front of subdivision to aid in density targets
  - Allow ADU's as a means of income on property & increasing housing options
- Land-based / conservation design option
  - Smaller lots based on preserved open space
  - Require connectivity and amenities like trails, benches, etc.
  - Follows philosophy of Compensating Open Space requirements

## CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Best course of action is to engage a planning consultant to overhaul existing regulations as a single project rather than band-aid approach to get the best result.
  - Different types of single-family neighborhood design options that account for site and market conditions.
- Acknowledge there are different products for the same lot size.
- Trees make a big difference in aerial imagery – see the forest through the (lack of) trees.
- Leave 75' as minimum lot width for standard design.
- Improve regulations to encourage better design.
- Increasing Scale of Compensating Open Space as lot size decreases. As an example:
  - 0 sqft for 75-ft wide, 9,000 sqft lots (...?)
  - 1:1 Compensating Open Space for 60-ft lots
  - 2:1 Compensating Open Space for 55-ft lots
  - 3:1 Compensating Open Space for 50-ft lots



Example: Same site, same number of lots with very different results.