

The SmartCode and Affordability

How does the SmartCode address affordable housing?

The real issue is affordable *living*, not just housing. To have an affordable life, people need affordable access to jobs, transportation, parks and recreation, and goods and services, as well as affordable housing.

The SmartCode is a land development ordinance, so by itself cannot solve a public policy problem like affordability. However, there are several ways that the SmartCode contributes to affordable living in a community:

1. **Mix of Housing:** The SmartCode requires a mix of housing types within every walkable neighborhood. A variety of housing types and sizes allows people with different incomes and different kinds of families to live in the same neighborhood.
2. **Smaller Lots:** The SmartCode allows smaller lots sizes than typical conventional zoning codes, reducing land costs.
3. **Outbuildings:** In most of the zones in the SmartCode, one outbuilding is allowed by right. The outbuilding can be used as an accessory dwelling unit. If the unit is rented, it provides an affordable rental option and also makes owning the principal building more affordable.
4. **No Car Required:** Because the SmartCode is based on a walkable neighborhood structure and most of the zones are mixed use, people can meet many of their basic daily needs by walking or biking. If a family can reduce their needs for multiple cars, more income is available to spend on housing.
5. **Shorter Travel Times:** Because the SmartCode is based on a walkable neighborhood structure and most of the zones are mixed use, more people are able to live closer to their jobs, shopping, and recreation, reducing commuting and travel times.
6. **Home Occupations:** The SmartCode allows home occupations by right and reduces barriers to live-work units, making it more affordable to start a small business.
7. **Convenient Parks:** Because the SmartCode requires frequent neighborhood pocket parks, more people have free access to open space and recreation.
8. **Reduced Development Costs:** Because the requirements in the SmartCode are clear and specific, there should be more predictability and timeliness in the development approval process, reducing the cost of development over time.
9. **Affordable Housing Incentives:** Inclusionary zoning requirements or affordable housing density bonuses can be included in the SmartCode. The specific affordable housing incentives can be applied everywhere or varied with transect zones.

For more information about the SmartCode, visit <http://www.smartcodecentral.com/>.