

MOCA
Maine Office of Community Affairs

HOP
Housing Opportunity Program

VISUALIZING DENSITY.

Understanding Maine's New Housing Laws

September 2026

Housing Legislative Summary

Visualizing Density

Housing Types

Additional Resources

AGENDA



HOUSING LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY



130TH THROUGH 132ND MAINE LEGISLATURES

MUNICIPAL APPLICABILITY DATE	PUBLIC LAW	SUMMARY
July 1, 2023	LD 2003 P.L. 2021, Ch. 672	Requires municipalities to update ordinances to permit accessory dwelling units, multiple dwelling units on a lot and allows a density bonus for affordable housing developments in certain areas.
July 1, 2026 *(city/town council municipalities)* July 1, 2027 *(town meeting towns)*	LD 1829 P.L. 2025, Ch. 385	Omnibus housing bill addressing minimum lot size and density requirements, permitting of dwelling units, changes to subdivision law, fire suppression sprinklers in accessory dwelling units, and training of zoning and planning officials.
July 1, 2027	LD 997 P.L. 2025, Ch. 364	Requires municipalities to permit housing in areas zoned for commercial use.
September 24, 2025	LD 427 P.L. 2025, Ch. 374	Prohibits municipalities from requiring more than one off-street parking space per dwelling unit in growth areas.
September 24, 2025	LD 1143 P.L. 2025, Ch. 263	Allows a municipality to adopt an ordinance permitting the board to grant a setback variance for dwelling units, instead of only single-family dwellings.

For more information, please view the Housing Legislation Guidance Document (PDF) available at:
https://www.maine.gov/moca/sites/maine.gov.moca/files/HOP%20Guidance%20Document%20August%202026%20%281%29.pdf

HOP

LOT SIZE AND DENSITY REQUIREMENTS (LD 2173)

Applies in all areas that permit residential uses

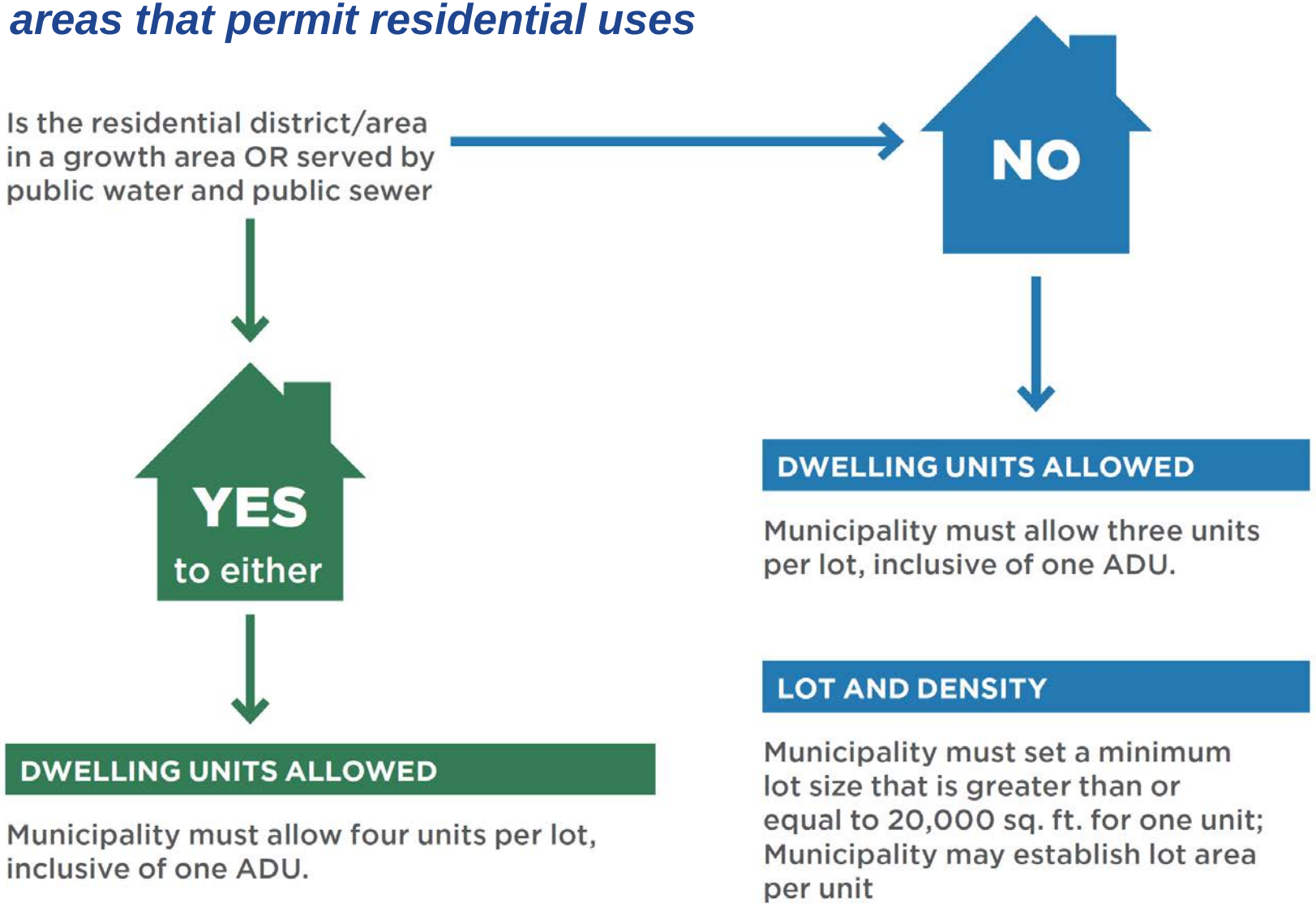
	SERVED BY PUBLIC WATER + SEWER	MINIMUM LOT SIZE	DENSITY (Number of units permitted)	USE TYPES PERMITTED (if lot size is equal to municipal minimum lot size)
WITHIN GROWTH AREA	Yes	≤5,000 sq ft	Four units on 5,000 sq ft lot; ≤1,250 sq ft for each for the first four units	A quadplex; a triplex; a duplex; a single-family dwelling unit. All but the quadplex may have an ADU. Units may also be detached.
	No	20,000 sq ft	One unit on 20,000 sq ft; additional units subject to lot size calculations in subsurface wastewater rules and statutes.	A single-family dwelling unit with ADU (attached or detached), subject to subsurface wastewater lot size calculations.
OUTSIDE GROWTH AREA	Yes	≤10,000 sq ft	One unit on 10,000 sq ft; two units on 20,000 sq ft lot in one structure	A duplex; a single-family dwelling unit. Both unit types may have an ADU (attached or detached).
	No	≥20,000 sq ft	Up to three units per lot subject to lot area per dwelling unit requirements set by municipality.	A single-family dwelling unit with ADU (attached or detached).

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HOP

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MINIMUM LOT SIZE AND DENSITY REQUIREMENTS

Applies in all areas that permit residential uses

LOT SIZE AND DENSITY

If lot is served by public water and public sewer AND in growth area	If lot is served by public water and public sewer but NOT in growth area	If lot is in growth area but NOT served by public water and public sewer
≤5,000 sq. ft. min. lot size ≤1,250 sq. ft. of lot area per unit for first four units	≤10,000 sq. ft. min. lot size ≤20,000 sq. ft. for a duplex ADU permitted without additonal lot area	20,000 sq. ft. for one unit; density for additional units determined by lot size formula in subsurface wastewater rule and statutes

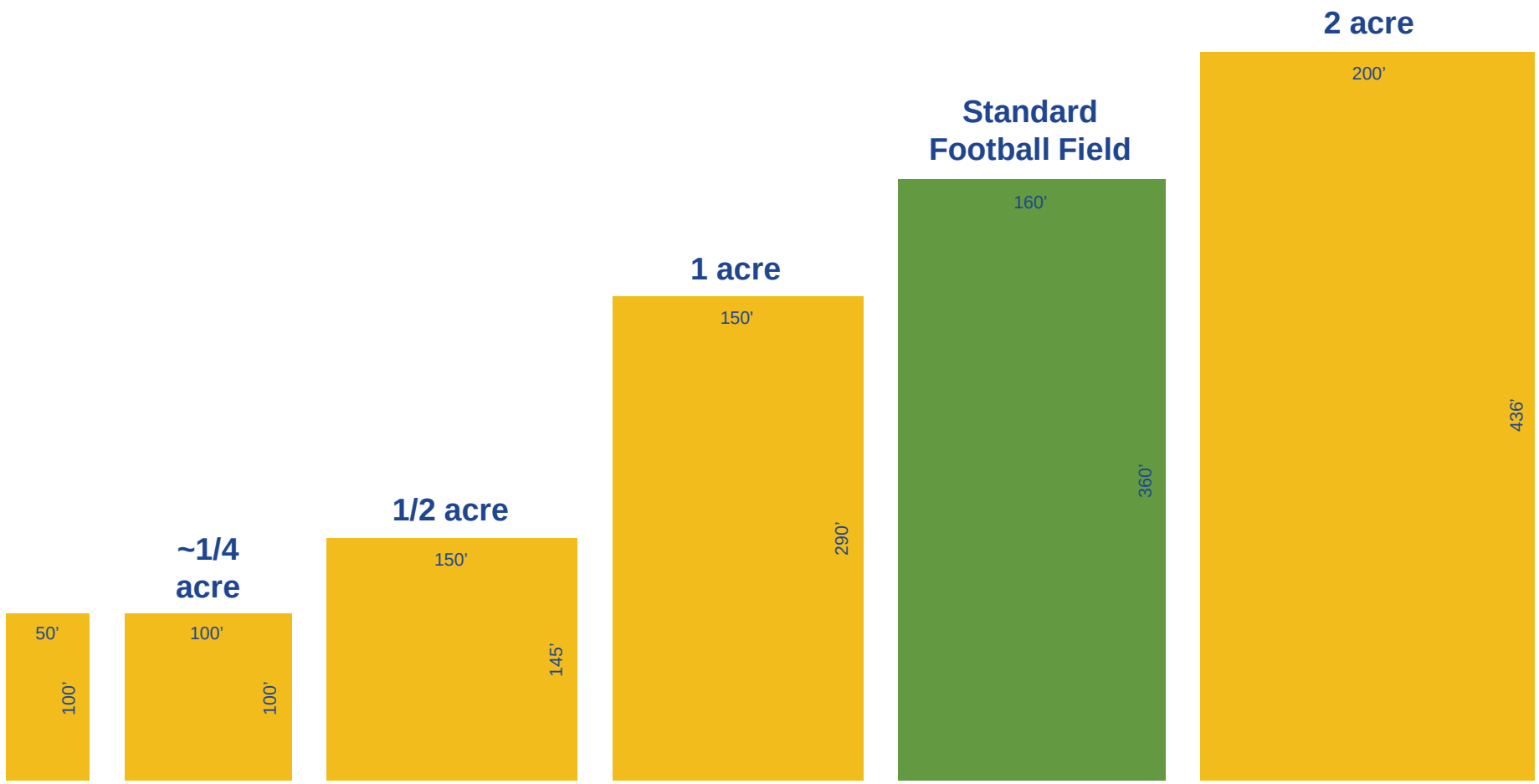
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VISUALIZING DENSITY



Park Row, Brunswick

TYPICAL LOT SIZES



"Builder's Acre"
= 40,000 sq ft

16+ Units per Acre

Typical Lot Size: 2,500 square feet



16+ Units per Acre

Typical Lot Size: 2,500 square feet



12 Units per Acre

Typical Lot Size: 3,600 square feet



12 Units per Acre

Typical Lot Size: 3,600 square feet



8 Units per Acre

Typical Lot Size: 5,460 square feet



This is the minimum density to support regular bus service.

8 Units per Acre

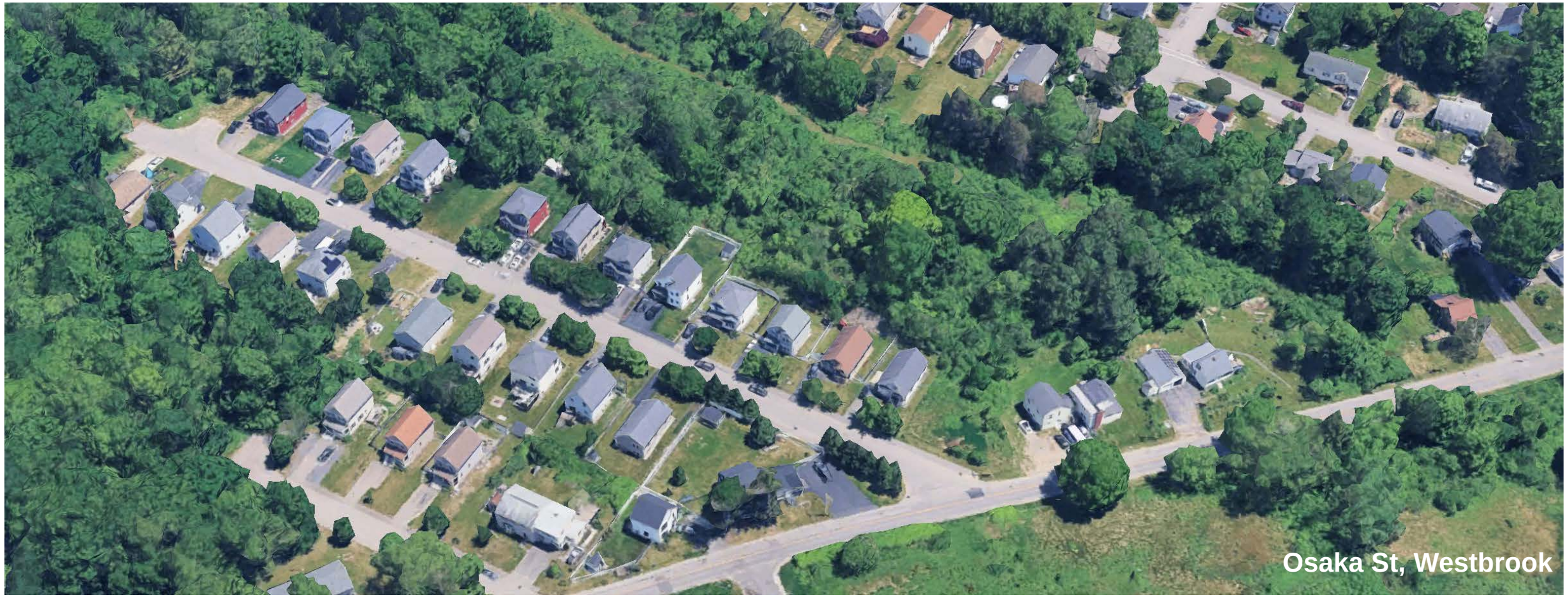
Typical Lot Size: 5,460 square feet



This is the minimum density to support regular bus service.

~10 Units per Acre

Typical Lot Size: 10,000 square feet



~10 Units per Acre

Typical Lot Size: 10,000 square feet



~6 Units per Acre

Typical Lot Size: 20,000 square feet



~6 Units per Acre

Typical Lot Size: 20,000 square feet



~5 Units per Acre

Typical Lot Size: 10,000 square feet



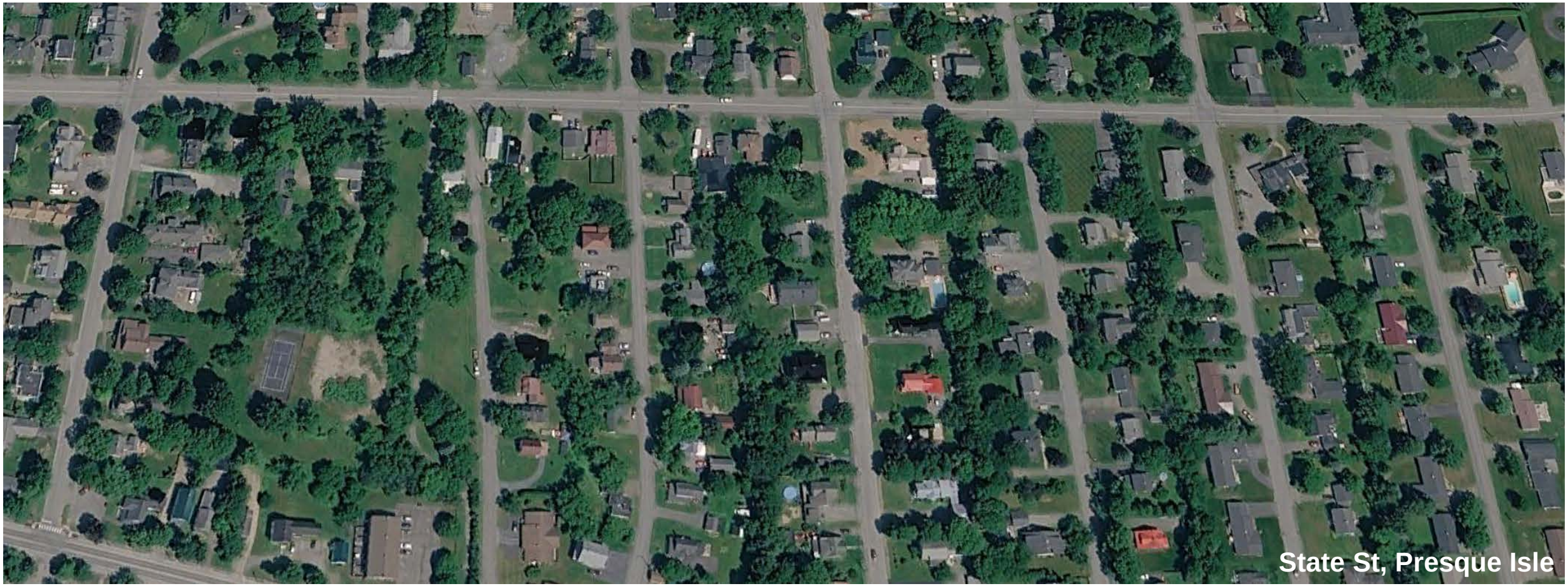
~5 Units per Acre

Typical Lot Size: 10,000 square feet



3 Units per Acre

Typical Lot Size: 14,500 square feet



This density requires either public sewer service or individual septic tanks with a shared leach field.

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This density requires either public sewer service or individual septic tanks with a shared leach field.

2 Units per Acre

Typical Lot Size:
1/2 acre / 21,750 square feet



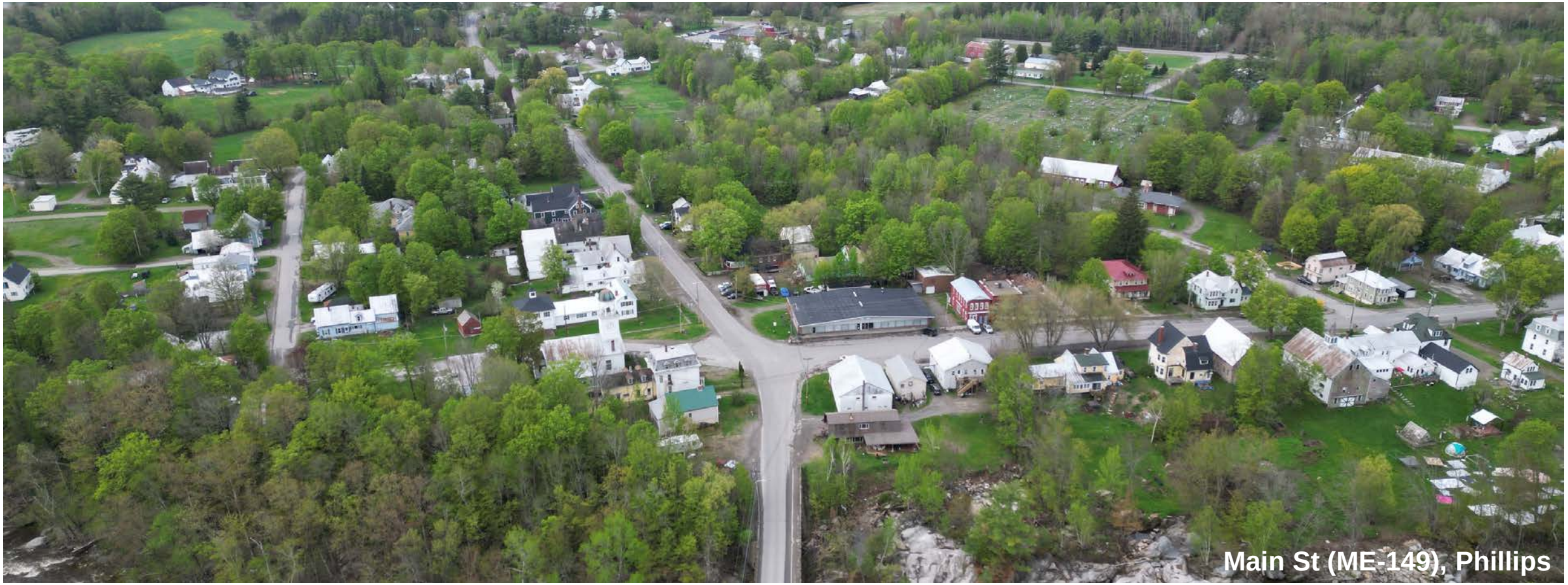
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2 Units per Acre

Typical Lot Size:
1/2 acre / 21,750 square feet



1 Unit per Acre

Typical Lot Size:
1 acre / 43,560 square feet



1 Unit per Acre

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1 acre / 43,560 square feet



1 Unit per Acre

Typical Lot Size:
1 acre / 43,560 square feet



1 Unit per Acre

Typical Lot Size:
1 acre / 43,560 square feet



Weld

1 Unit per 2 Acres

Typical Lot Size:
2 acres / 87,120 square feet



1 Unit per 2 Acres

Typical Lot Size:
2 acres / 87,120 square feet



1 Unit per 5 Acres

Typical Lot Size:
5 acres / 217,800 square feet



1 Unit per 5 Acres

Typical Lot Size:
5 acres / 217,800 square feet



MIXED DENSITIES

In this neighborhood, duplexes are interspersed with single family homes, resulting in an overall density of 8 units per acre.


Strathglass Park, Rumford


Strathglass Park, Rumford

MIXED DENSITIES



Penobscot St, Rumford



School St, Canton

MIXED USE WITH PARKING



HOUSING TYPES


South Portland

ATTACHED SINGLE-FAMILY



Scarborough

DETACHED SINGLE-FAMILY



Gorham

DETACHED SINGLE-FAMILY



Scarborough

DUPLEX



South Portland

DUPLEX



Westport

TRIPLEX



South Portland

TRIPLEX



South Portland



South Portland

QUADPLEX



Westbrook

QUADPLEX



South Portland

TOWNHOMES



Hallowell

Photo Credit: Magicpiano

APARTMENT BUILDING



Skowhegan

Photo Credit: Developer Rendering

APARTMENT BUILDING



Brunswick

APARTMENT BUILDING



Scarborough

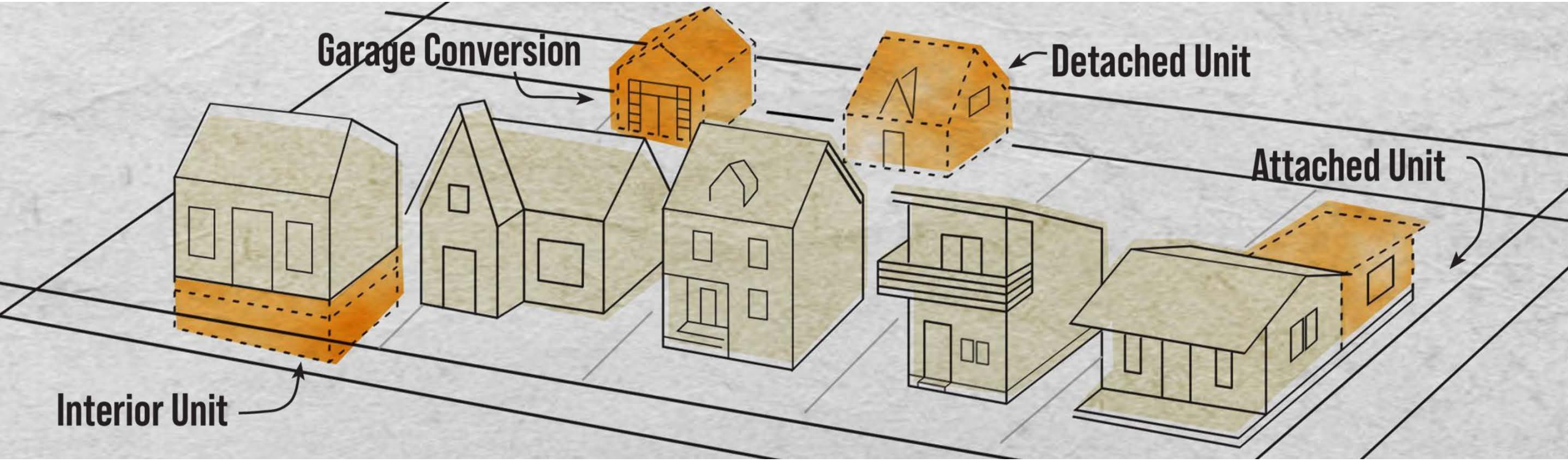
MANUFACTURED HOUSING



Gorham

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUs)

Come in many forms!



Credit: South Portland ADU Guide

https://www.southportland.gov/DocumentCenter/View/299/City-of-South-Portland-ADU-Guidebook-PDF

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUs)



Gorham

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUs)



South Portland

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUs)



Portland

Photo Credit: maineaduguide.org

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUs)



Portland

MIXED HOUSING



Scarborough

MIXED HOUSING



Scarborough

MIXED HOUSING



Westbrook

MIXED USE



South Portland



Hallowell

MIXED USE



Westbrook



Belfast

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES


Elm St, Andover

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Maine Office of Community Affairs (MOCA)
Housing Opportunity Program (HOP): https://www.maine.gov/moca/programs/housing-opportunity-program

HOP Technical Assistance
https://www.maine.gov/moca/programs/housing-opportunity-program/technical-assistance

Greater Portland Council of Governments
ADU Guide: https://maineaduguide.org/

South Portland ADU Guide
chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.southportland.gov/DocumentCenter/View/299/City-of-South-Portland-ADU-Guidebook-PDF

Saco ADU Guide
chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://cms1files.revize.com/sacome/231115_adu_booklet_v10.pdf?t=202311151248260

Backyard ADUs – Maine ADU Workbook
https://backyardadus.com/maine-adu-workbook