



# Middle Housing Code Amendments

## City Council Study Session #2

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City of Bellevue



# Direction for Council Consideration

Consider directing staff to:

- Incorporate identified alternatives for density near transit, middle housing types, dimensional standards, and cottage housing; and
- Finalize the LUCA Ordinance for action before the June 30 deadline.



# Agenda

1. Project Background
2. May 13 Study Session Recap
3. Policy Options
4. Council Direction







# Project Background

- Comprehensive Plan periodic update work began **February 2022**
- Council initiated work on middle housing and ADUs in **January 2023** as part of “Next Right Work”
- HBs 1110 & 1337 passed in **July 2023**
- Began engaging Planning Commission in **October 2024** following Comprehensive Plan adoption



# State Law Requirements

## HB 1110 (Middle Housing)




- 4 units citywide (by right)
- 6 units when:
  - Within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of major transit stop; OR
  - When two are affordable
- Parking reductions
- Cannot apply more restrictive regs than for single family

## HB 1337 (ADUs)

- 2 ADUs on all lots (attached and detached)
- Sets minimum size and height
- Reduced impact fees
- No frontage improvements
- Parking exemptions and reductions



# Role of Documents

| Document  | Description  |
|---|--|
|  <p><b>State Law</b><br/>(HBs 1110 &amp; 1337)</p>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishes baseline density requirements</li> <li>Parking restrictions &amp; ADU height/FAR mins.</li> <li>Flexibility on middle housing types &amp; counting ADUs</li> </ul>  |
|  <p><b>Model Ordinance</b><br/>(WA Dept. Commerce)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Takes effect if no local ordinance is adopted</li> <li>Regulatory design and dimensional details (e.g., FAR, height, setbacks, lot coverage, etc.)</li> <li>Based on lots between 4,000 and 7,500 sf</li> </ul>                           |
|  <p><b>Land Use Code Amendment</b></p>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bellevue-specific regulations tailored to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement state law</li> <li>Align with recently updated comp plan</li> <li>Address Bellevue lot size context &amp; housing need</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |

# May 13 Study Session Recap

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- Questions on:
  - Outreach and engagement
  - Infrastructure impacts
  - Attached Accessory Dwelling Units
  - Density near “Centers”
  - Fee in-lieu amount
  - Parking
- Concerns and feedback on:
  - Density near transit
  - Selecting six of the nine middle housing types
  - Dimensional standards (building height)
  - Scale of cottage housing







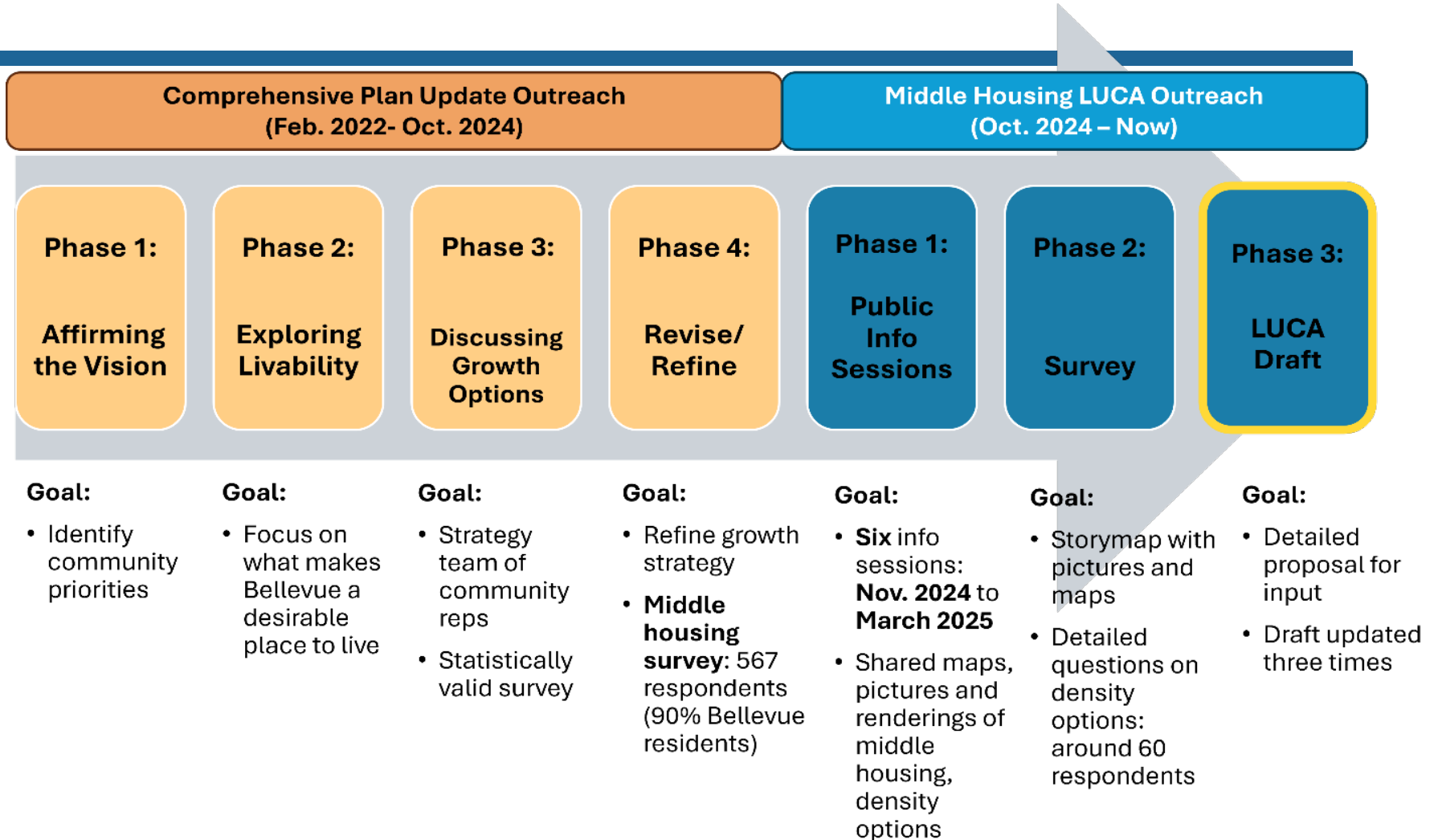
# Council Questions

- Note: FAQs updated and included in packet.





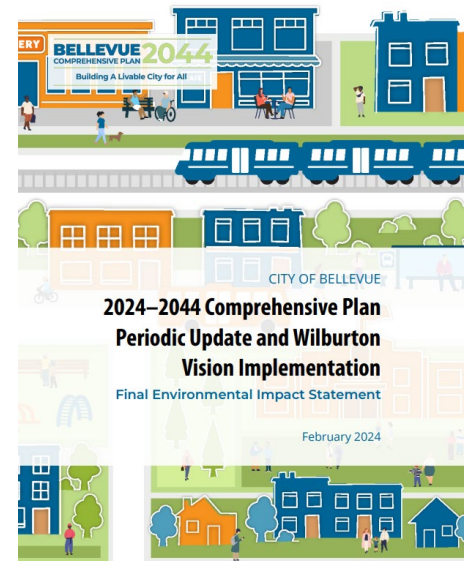
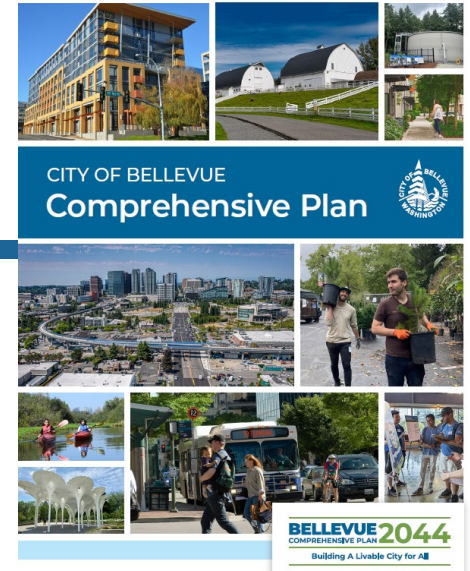
# Outreach Process



# Infrastructure Impacts

- Middle housing included in Comprehensive Plan update
  - Transportation, Utilities, Capital Facilities elements updated
- Functional plans to guide specific projects and funding
- Environmental analysis (FEIS) analyzed impacts of 152,000 housing units (goal: 35,000 by 2044)
- No significant impacts to utilities, schools, police, or fire
- Some transportation impacts, consistent across all growth scenarios

Conclusion: Middle housing LUCA is strategically planned to grow responsibly with supporting infrastructure.



# Infrastructure Impacts

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- Developers must show infrastructure can support their project or fund upgrades.
- If systems (water, sewer, roads) are insufficient, developers pay for improvements.
- Typical upgrades: utility mains, sidewalks, street trees.
- City-led upgrades are long-term and may not align with individual project needs.

# Middle Housing LUCA: Treatment of ADUs

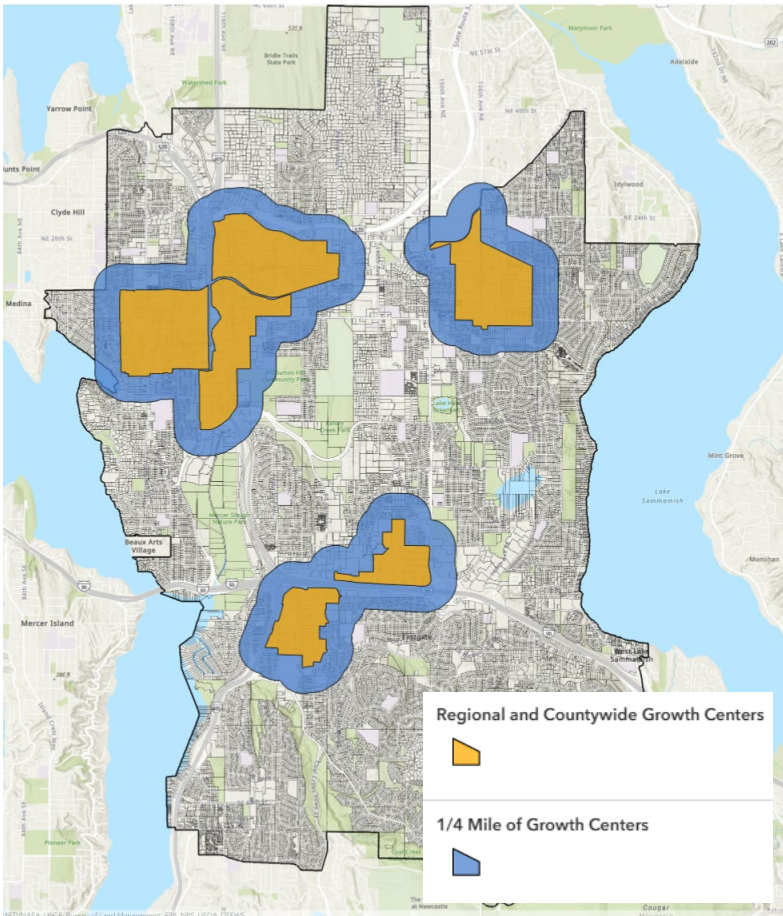
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- Detached ADUs count toward density
  - Standalone structures resemble other middle housing types
  - Visibly function as additional units
- Attached ADUs *do not* count toward density
  - Integrated into primary home
  - less visible and smaller in scale
  - Consistent with Bellevue policy since the 1990s
  - Proven effective without impacting neighborhood appearance





# Density Near Centers



## HB 1110 Density Requirement

## LUCA Density Recommendation

### Centers

**Six** units/lot when 2 affordable

**Six** units/lot (by right) within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile walking distance of:

- Regional & Candidate Countywide Growth Centers

- Supports nearby businesses
- Supports vibrant, mixed-use neighborhoods
- Residents near centers can walk, bike, or take transit more for daily trips, reducing traffic & emissions.



# Fee In-Lieu Options

| High (LUCA Proposal)  | Medium  | Low   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>\$150,000/unit</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appropriate fee level to buy-down unit, but fewer developers are likely to opt in at this rate.</li></ul> | <b>\$100,000/unit</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Balances revenue generation with participation—more likely to result in both units and funds.</li></ul> | <b>\$75,000/unit</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maximizes developer participation and unit production, though revenue per unit is lower.</li></ul> |



# Parking

|                            | HB 1110 Requirement  | Recommended LUCA                        |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Citywide                   | 1 space/unit,<br>lots $\leq$ 6,000 sf<br>2 spaces/unit,<br>lots $>$ 6,000 sf | 1 space/unit, regardless<br>of lot size |
| Near Major Transit<br>Stop | No parking required<br>within half mile                                      | No parking required<br>within half mile |

- Lot Size  $\neq$  Parking Demand
- Parking demand tied to number of units and transportation preferences, not the size of lot
- One stall per unit is reasonable and appropriate
- Developers can build more if market demand calls for it

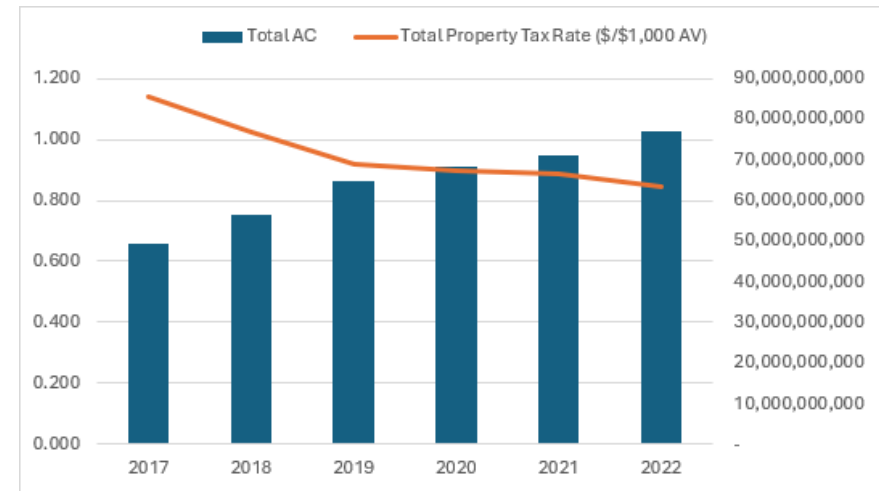


# Tax Implications

- Property tax increases are limited to 1% annually without voter approval.
- Property tax calculation:

$$\text{Tax} = (\text{Assessed Value} \div 1,000) \times \text{Tax Rate}$$

- Jurisdictions set a total dollar amount to levy.
- Tax rate based on total assessed value in area of that levy.
- Impact of allowing four or more units per lot:
  - May increase assessed values due to redevelopment potential.
  - Does not automatically raise taxes for current homeowners.
  - As neighborhood values rise, tax rate per \$1,000 often drops.





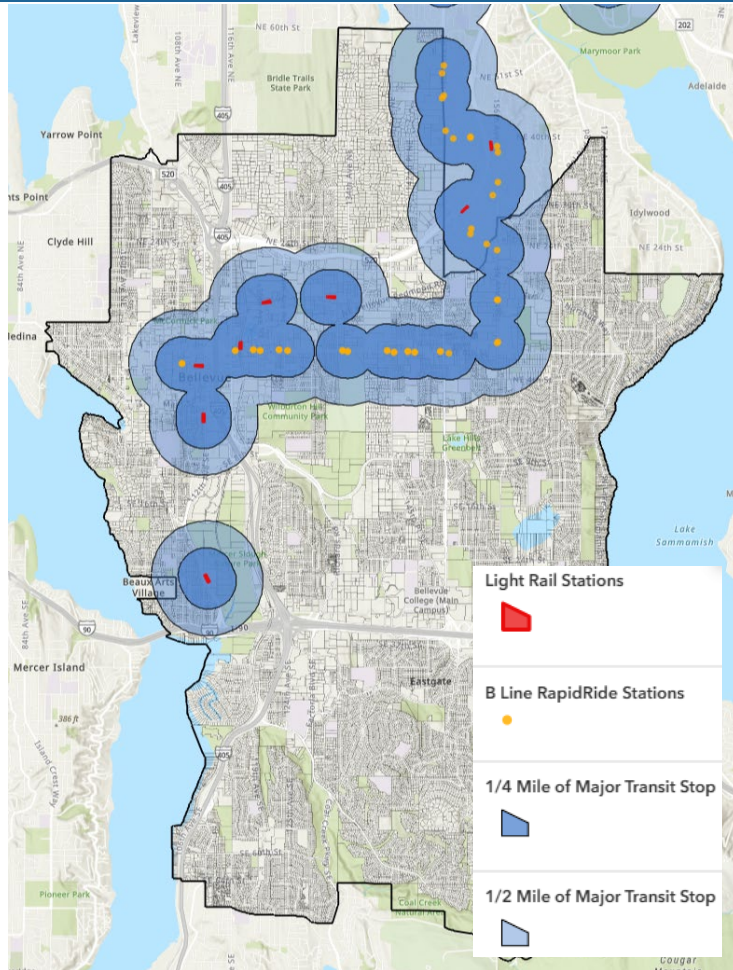


# Policy Options

- Density near transit
- Selecting six of the nine middle housing types
- Dimensional standards
- Scale of cottage housing



# Density Near Major Transit Stops



## HB 1110 Density Requirement

**Six units by right within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile walking distance**

## LUCA Density Recommendation

**Six units within by right  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile walking distance**

## Option:

- Reduce to  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile walking distance





# Types of Middle Housing

**Duplex**



**Triplex**



**Fourplex**



**Fiveplex**



**Sixplex**



**Stacked Flats**



**Courtyard Apartments**



**Cottage Housing**



**Townhouses**



# Types of Middle Housing

- number of units {
1. Duplex
  2. Triplex
  3. Fourplex
  4. Fiveplex
  5. Sixplex
- form of structure {
6. Stacked Flats
  7. Townhouse
  8. Cottage
  9. Courtyard

| HB 1110 Requirement                                   | LUCA Recommendation              |
|---|----------------------------------|
| At least <b>six</b> out of <b>nine</b> middle housing | <b>Nine</b> middle housing types |

## Option:

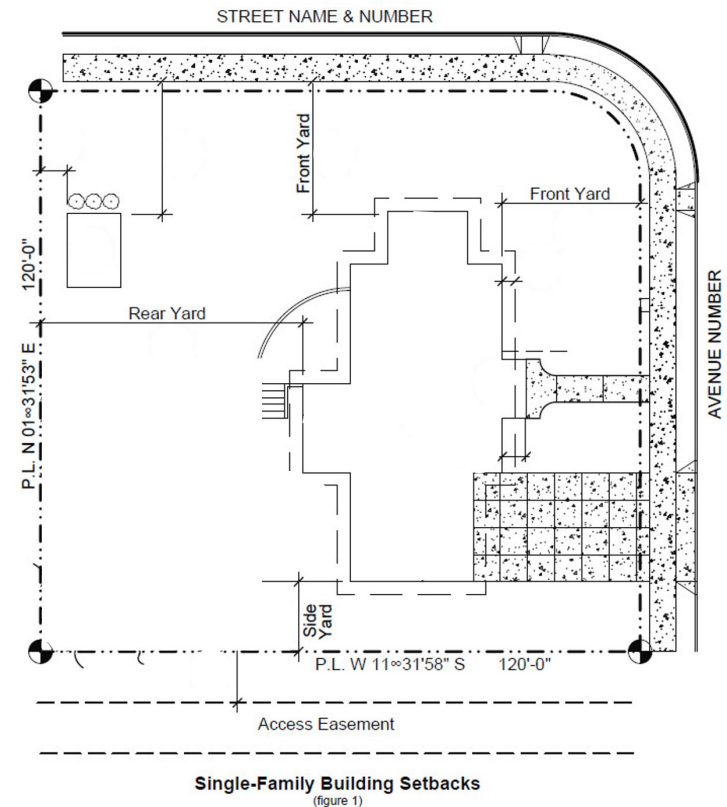
- Select at least six out of the nine middle housing types.





# Dimensional Standards

- State law prohibits Bellevue from applying more restrictive standards to middle housing than to single-family homes.
- LUCA allows slight increases in:
  - Building height
  - Lot coverage
  - Setback reductions
- Purpose: Enables feasible, functional middle housing development on a range of lot types

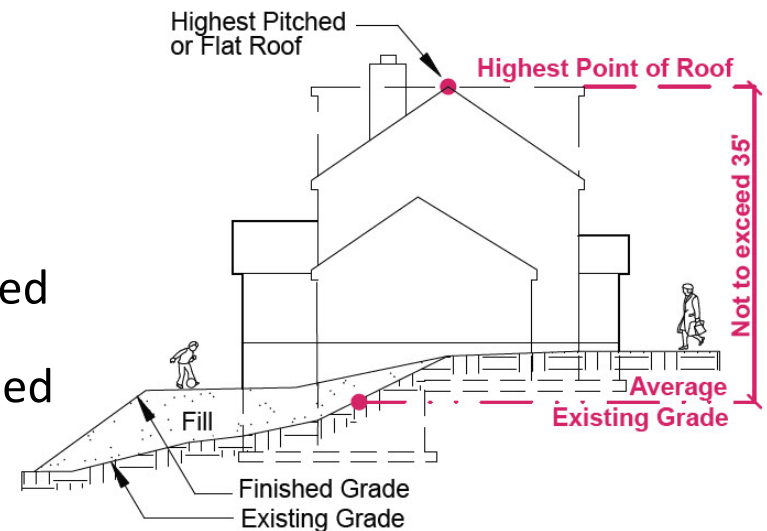


# Dimensional Standards

- Height concerns: 38-ft buildings could theoretically allow 4 stories, but:
  - Unlikely due to impractical ceiling heights
  - Below typical construction norms and market demand
- Benefits of modest increases:
  - Better floor-to-ceiling height = improved livability and aesthetics
  - Flexibility supports varied, well-designed infill housing

## Option:

- Lower building height to:
  - 32 ft (flat roofs)
  - 35 ft (pitched roofs)



**Measuring Building Height**

# Cottage Housing

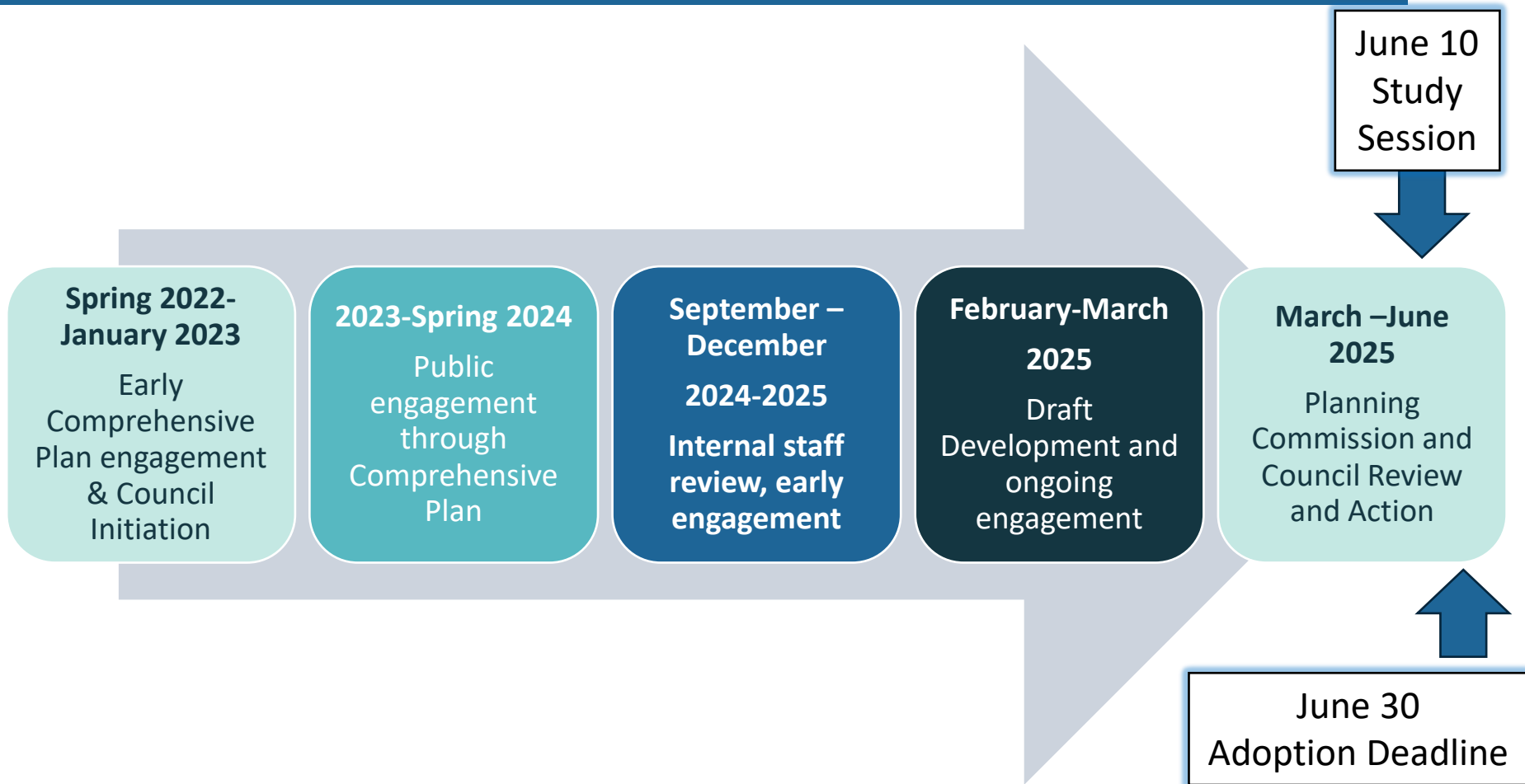
- Concern: questions about whether proposed cottage scale reflects original intent.
- LUCA allows:
  - Max height: 38 ft
  - Max size: 1,750 sq ft + 300 sq ft garage exemption

## Option:

- Lower building height to 24 ft
- Lower square footage to 1,500 sq ft + 300 sq ft garage exemption



# Schedule and Next Steps







# Direction for Council Consideration

Consider directing staff to:

- Incorporate identified alternatives for density near transit, middle housing types, dimensional standards, and cottage housing; and
- Finalize the LUCA Ordinance for action before the June 30 deadline.

