

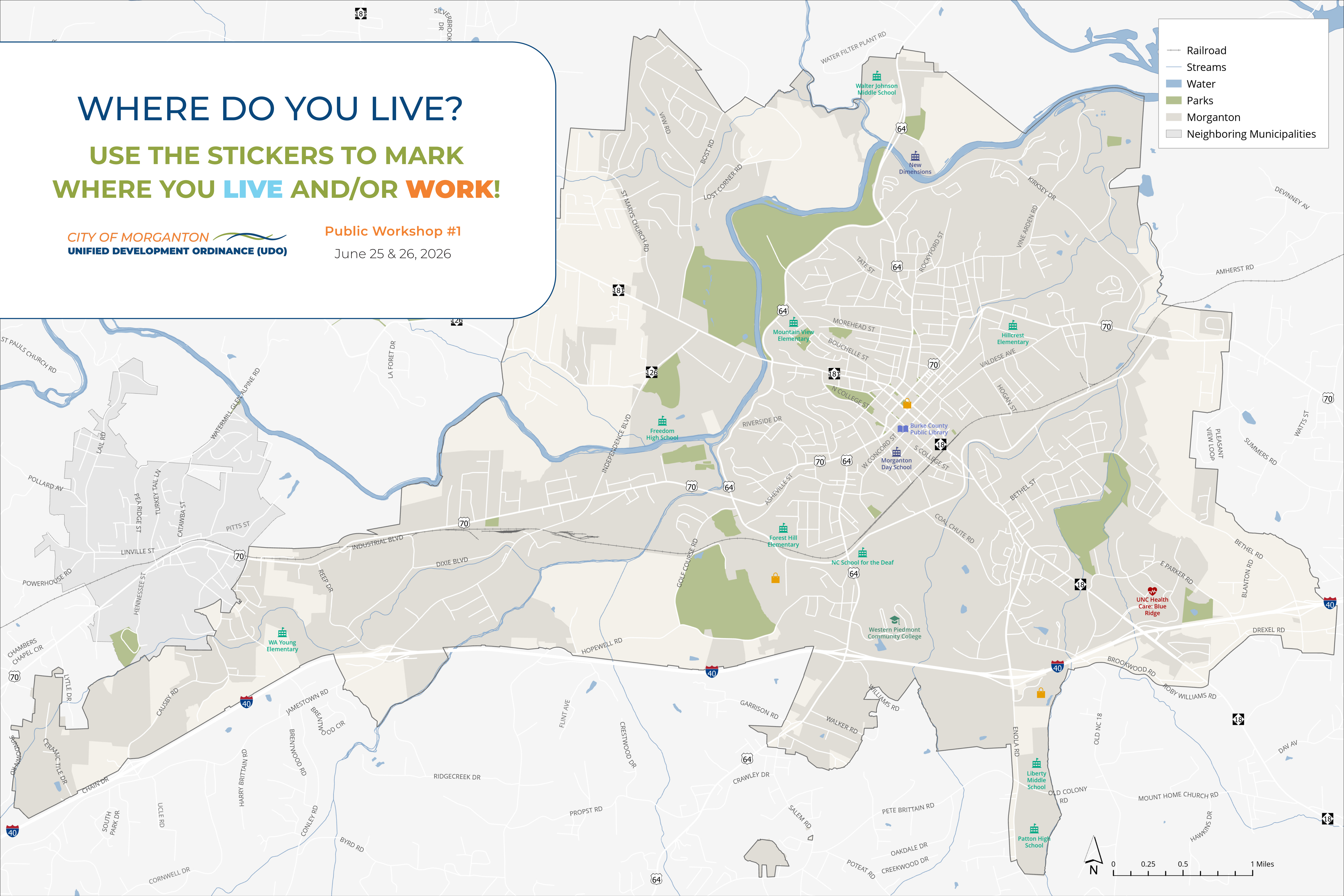
WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

USE THE STICKERS TO MARK WHERE YOU **LIVE** AND/OR **WORK**!

CITY OF MORGANTON
UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE (UDO)

Public Workshop #1
June 25 & 26, 2026

- Railroad
- Streams
- Water
- Parks
- Morganton
- Neighboring Municipalities



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

WHAT IS ZONING?

Zoning is a land use control that regulates the development standards of a property. Development standards typically include: uses allowed on the property, architectural design, site design, lot sizes, setbacks, building/structure heights, and density – density is typically represented at dwelling unit per acre (DU/A).

WHAT LAND AREA DOES THE ZONING ORDINANCE APPLY TO?

The Zoning Ordinance applicable to properties within the corporate limits and extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) of the City of Morganton, as reflected on the official Zoning Map.

DOES MY ZONING DISTRICT AFFECT MY TAXES?

The zoning of your property does not affect or impact property taxes. Zoning determines the development standards such as the allowable uses of the property, but zoning itself does not factor into the property value assessment that determines property taxes

WHY IS THE CITY CREATING A UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE/UPDATING THE ZONING ORDINANCE?

The City's current development ordinances were adopted nearly a decade ago, and are ready for a comprehensive review and update. The new ordinance will provide an opportunity to build upon the vision, goals, and themes established in **Imagine Morganton 2040**, the City's Comprehensive Plan, while modernizing development standards and procedures to align with the vision of the Morganton community. The update also allows the City to simplify regulations, improve usability, and align standards with current planning and development practices.

WHAT IS THE RELATION BETWEEN *IMAGINE MORGANTON 2040* AND THE NEW ORDINANCE?

Imagine Morganton 2040 is the City's Comprehensive Plan and serves as a long-range vision for the community's future. The development ordinance is one of the primary tools used to implement that vision. While the Comprehensive Plan establishes goals and policies related to growth, land use, housing, transportation, economic development, and community character, the ordinance provides the regulations and standards that help guide day-to-day development decisions in a manner consistent with those goals.

Visit the Website to learn more!

<https://engagekh.mysocialpinpoint.com/morgantonudo>



IMPLEMENTING *IMAGINE MORGANTON 2040*

BUILDING ON *IMAGINE MORGANTON 2040*



Adopted in 2023, Imagine Morganton 2040 established a community vision and identified goals and priorities for the City’s future. As the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) update process moves forward, the plan will serve as an important guide for evaluating existing regulations and considering potential changes. The actions listed below highlight key recommendations from Imagine Morganton 2040 that relate to land use, development, housing, transportation, community character, and other topics that may be addressed through the UDO.

Update, modernize, and consolidate the City’s zoning ordinance to codify the Future Land Use Map.

Consistently review the zoning ordinance to ensure flexibility in allowable uses in the industrial and flex classifications, as well as the mixed-use nodes.

Analyze development standards for single-family, multifamily, and mixed-use zoning districts to ensure the standards are not prohibitive to new development (examining lot size requirements, setbacks, and height restrictions).

Consider a range of creative tools that can help address affordability (e.g., density bonuses, land banking, rehabilitation grants, etc.)

Evaluate changes to the density table to encourage more housing (e.g., townhomes and duplexes) within single-family residential zoning districts.

Review the zoning ordinance to ensure that both residential and non-residential uses are appropriate for the Downtown fabric and are financially viable to attract private investment.

Review the zoning ordinance to protect the existing fabric in the Downtown Core while allowing housing to be added.

Review the City’s zoning ordinance to ensure that future gateway development projects fit into the community aesthetics and play a meaningful role in their gateway location.

Evaluate options for zoning changes that protect and enhance historic sites and places of cultural significance.

Update the zoning and subdivision ordinances to conserve, protect, and promote the natural environment through requirements for landscaping and recreation spaces.

Note: Imagine Morganton 2040 contains numerous goals, strategies, and actions. To keep this display board manageable, the topics shown above represent broad themes drawn from the Comprehensive Plan.

Encourage the use of low-impact development (LID) and green building practices in public and private projects and include interpretive signs to increase community awareness.

Require the use of native plants, non-invasive species, and xeriscaping (irrigation-free methods) for landscaping, where possible.



PROJECT & PROCESS OVERVIEW

WHAT IS A UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE (UDO)?

The Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) is the City’s zoning ordinance and development rules, all combined into one document.

It brings together the regulations that guide how land is used and developed, including things like zoning, subdivision of land, and other development standards, into a single, easy to understand set of rules. Instead of having multiple separate ordinances, the UDO puts everything in one place to make the process clearer, more consistent, and easier for residents, property owners, and developers to understand.

Why does this matter?

Updating the UDO was a priority recommendation from the **Imagine Morganton 2040 Comprehensive Plan**, reflecting the community’s vision for future growth.

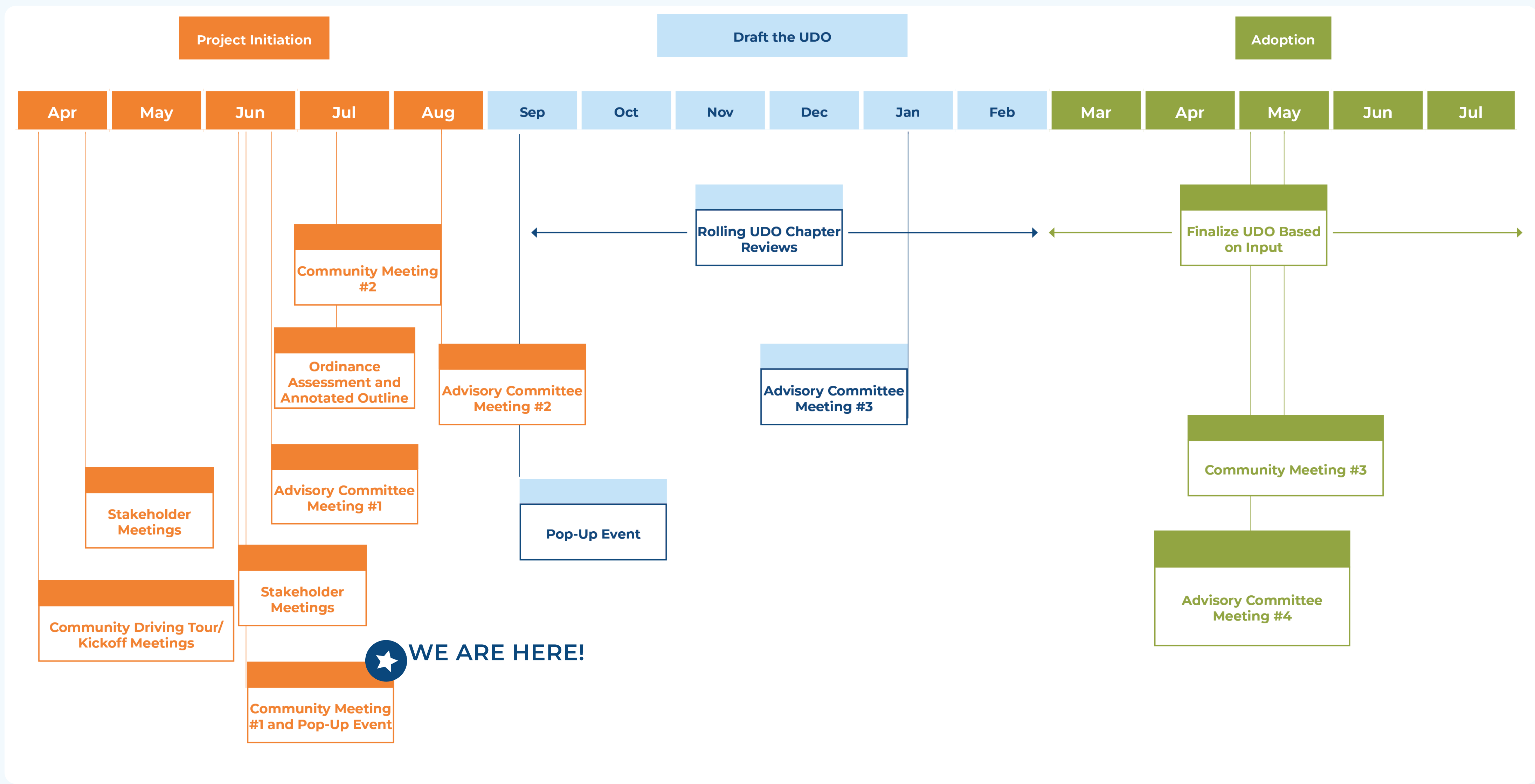
This process will:

- Update **zoning, subdivision, and environmental** regulations
- Establish standards for **landscaping, signs, and parking**
- Define expectations for **building design** and lot sizes
- Clarify **permitted land uses** across the community

These rules shape how our community grows, what development looks like, how it functions, and how it fits into existing neighborhoods.

PROCESS SCHEDULE

This project schedule provides a overview of the different phases of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) process. The schedule below focuses on key milestones in the process, including meetings, and the community engagement opportunities. Digital engagement via the dedicated project website will be ongoing throughout the process. The process is scheduled to conclude in Summer 2027.



Your input matters!

We need your input on these topics to help guide the standards and regulations moving forward.

This is your ordinance. Help shape the future of Morganton!

Visit the Website:

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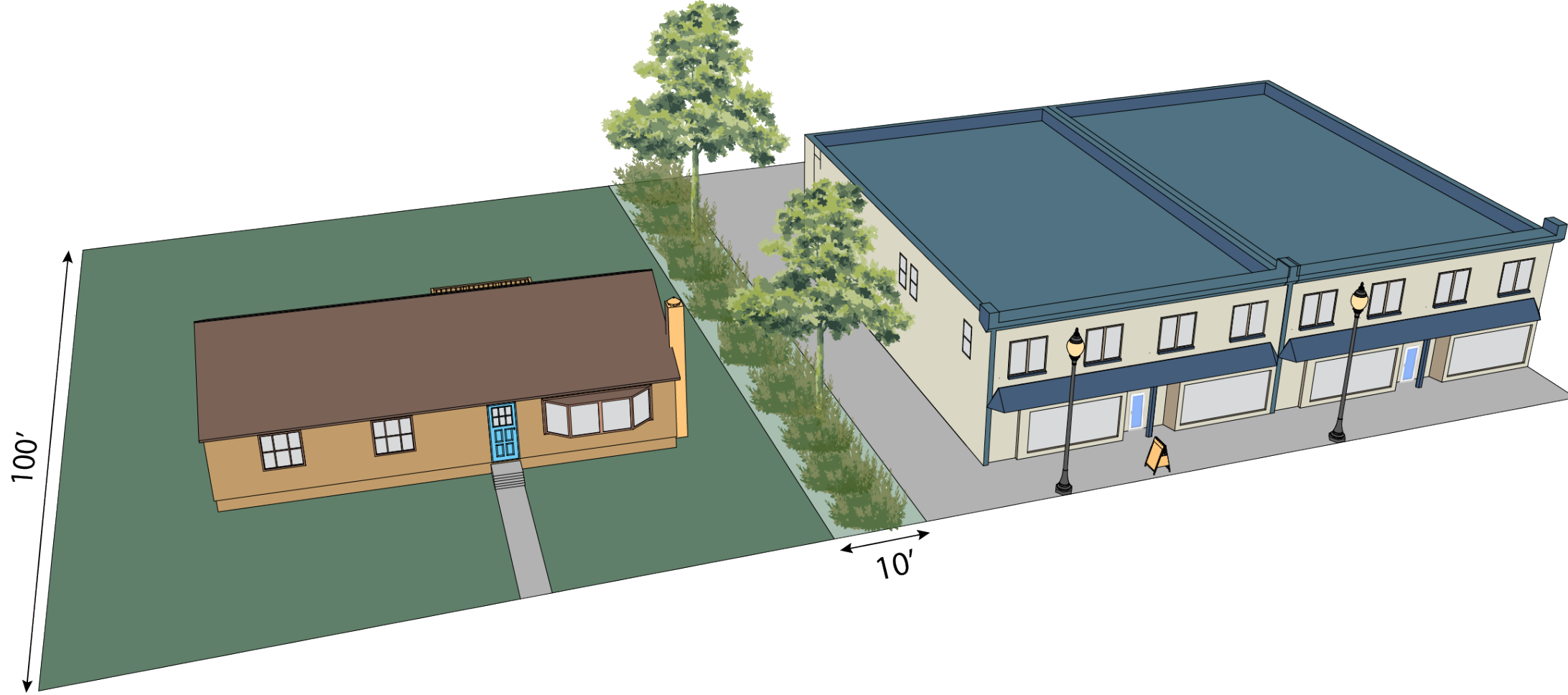
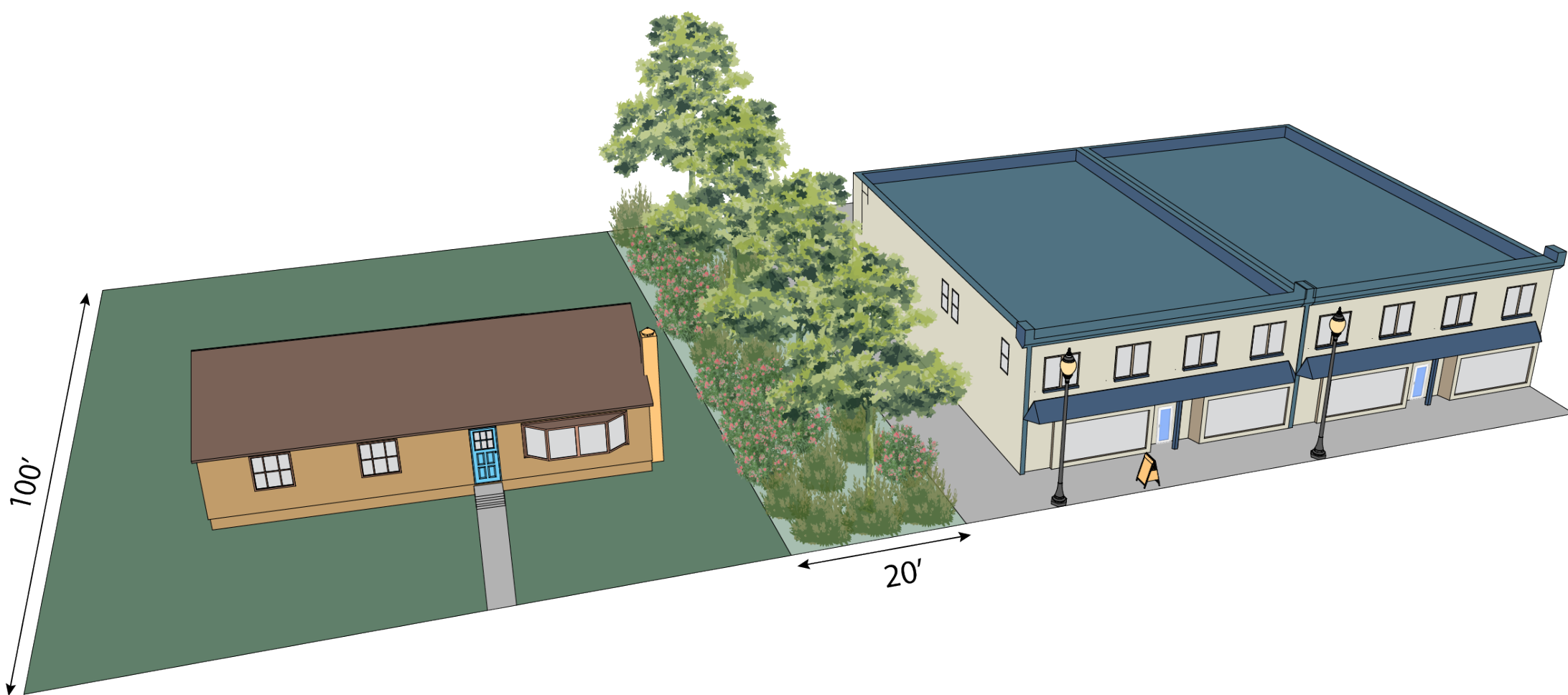
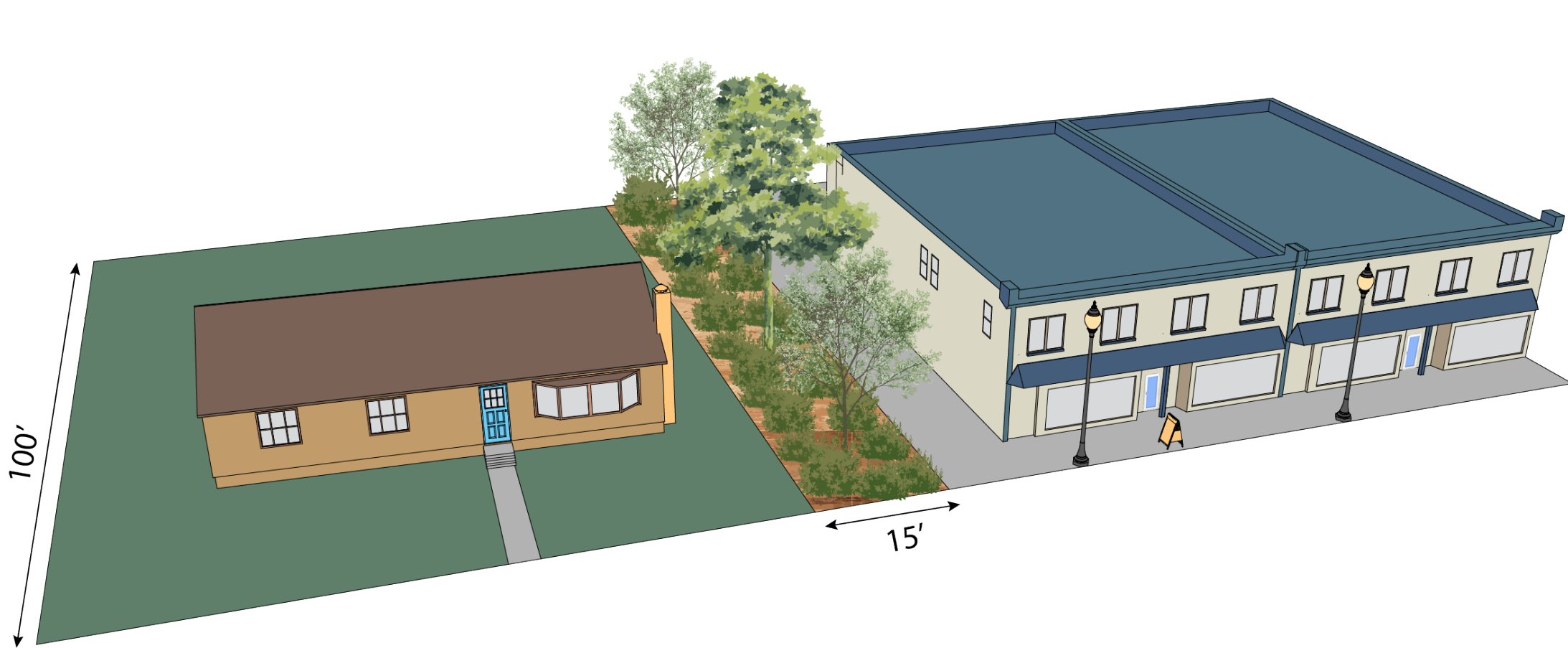
WHAT SHOULD THE UDO REQUIRE FOR LANDSCAPING?

CONTEXT

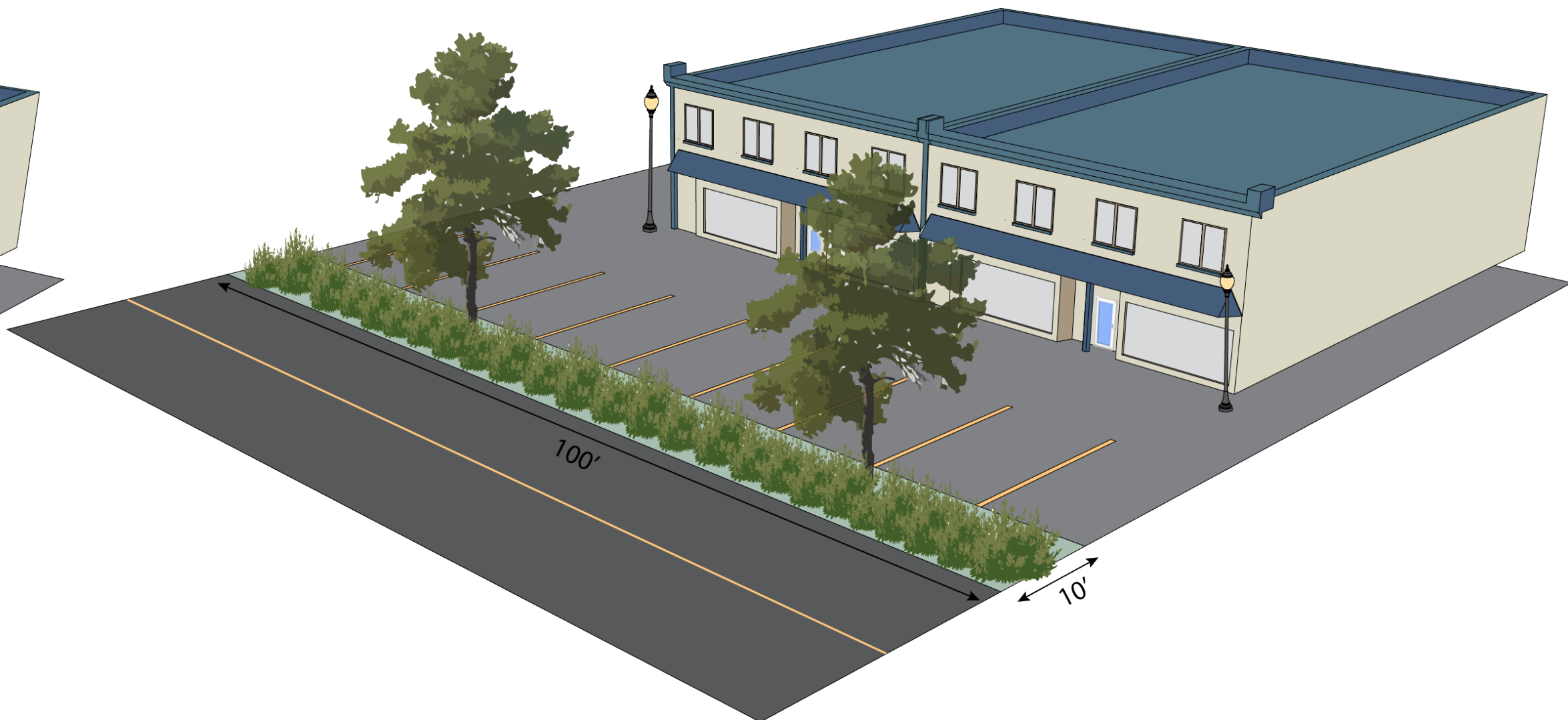
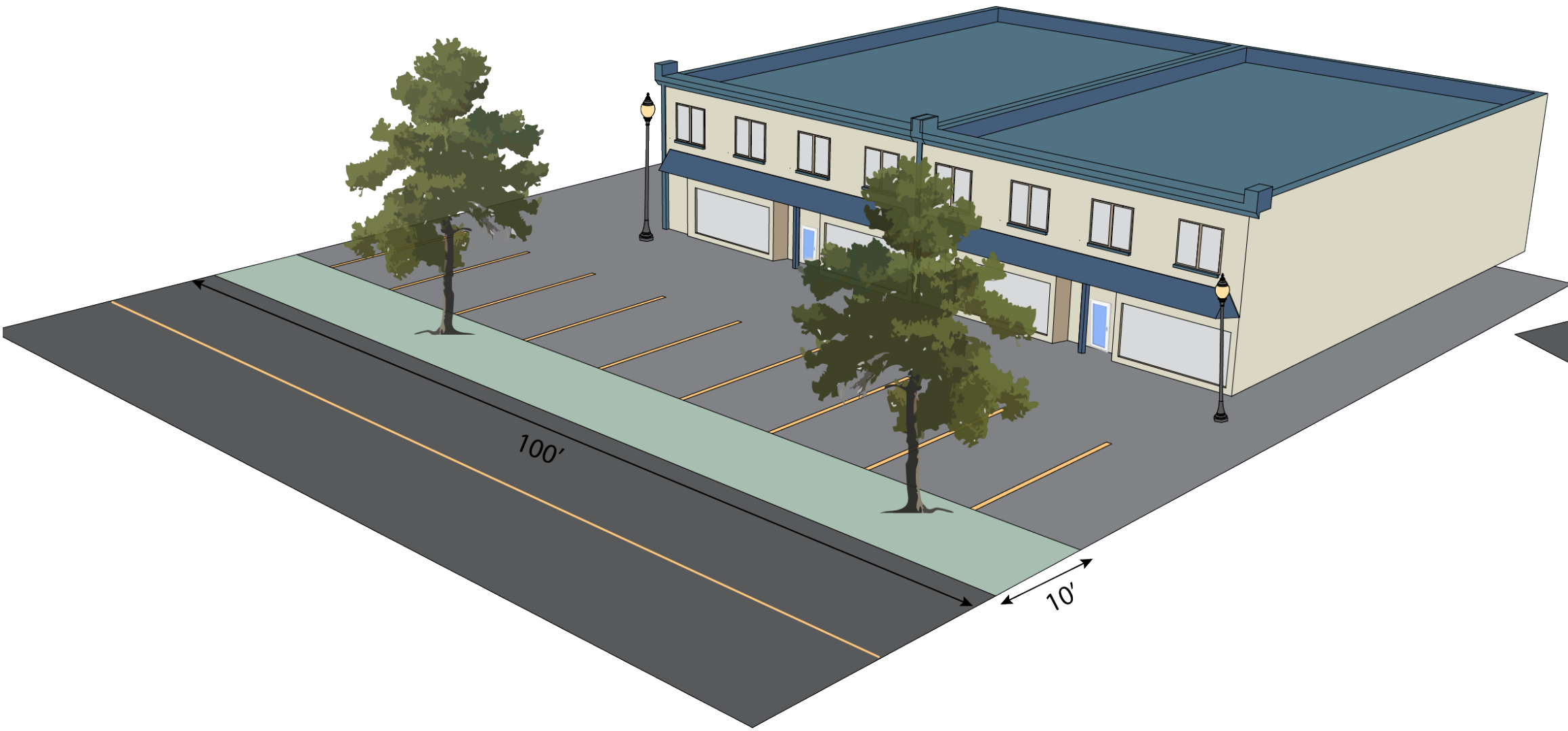
Morganton’s current ordinance (ARTICLE 4.4) includes landscaping and screening standards as part of development regulations (trees, buffers, etc.). Place a dot next to your preferred landscaping/buffer style.

The options below reflect Buffer Yards (Perimeter Buffers). Perimeter buffers are landscaped areas located along property lines where different land uses meet. They help provide visual screening, soften the appearance of development, and create a transition between neighboring properties.

What do you think? Write in additional thoughts on landscaping/buffering below:



The options below reflect Street Yards. Street yards are landscaped areas located between a development and the public street. They help enhance the appearance of corridors, provide space for trees and plantings, and create a more attractive and pedestrian-friendly streetscape.



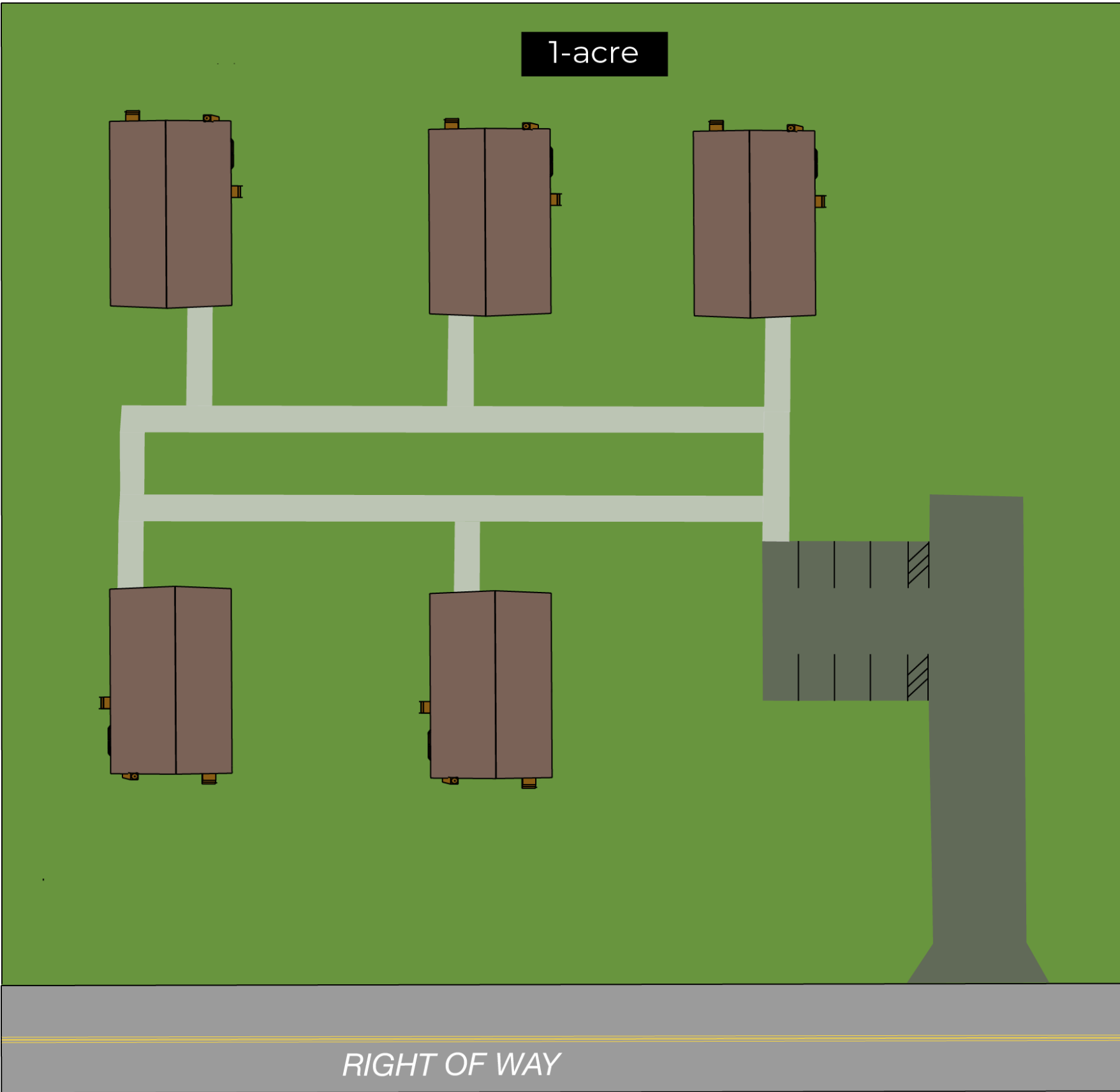
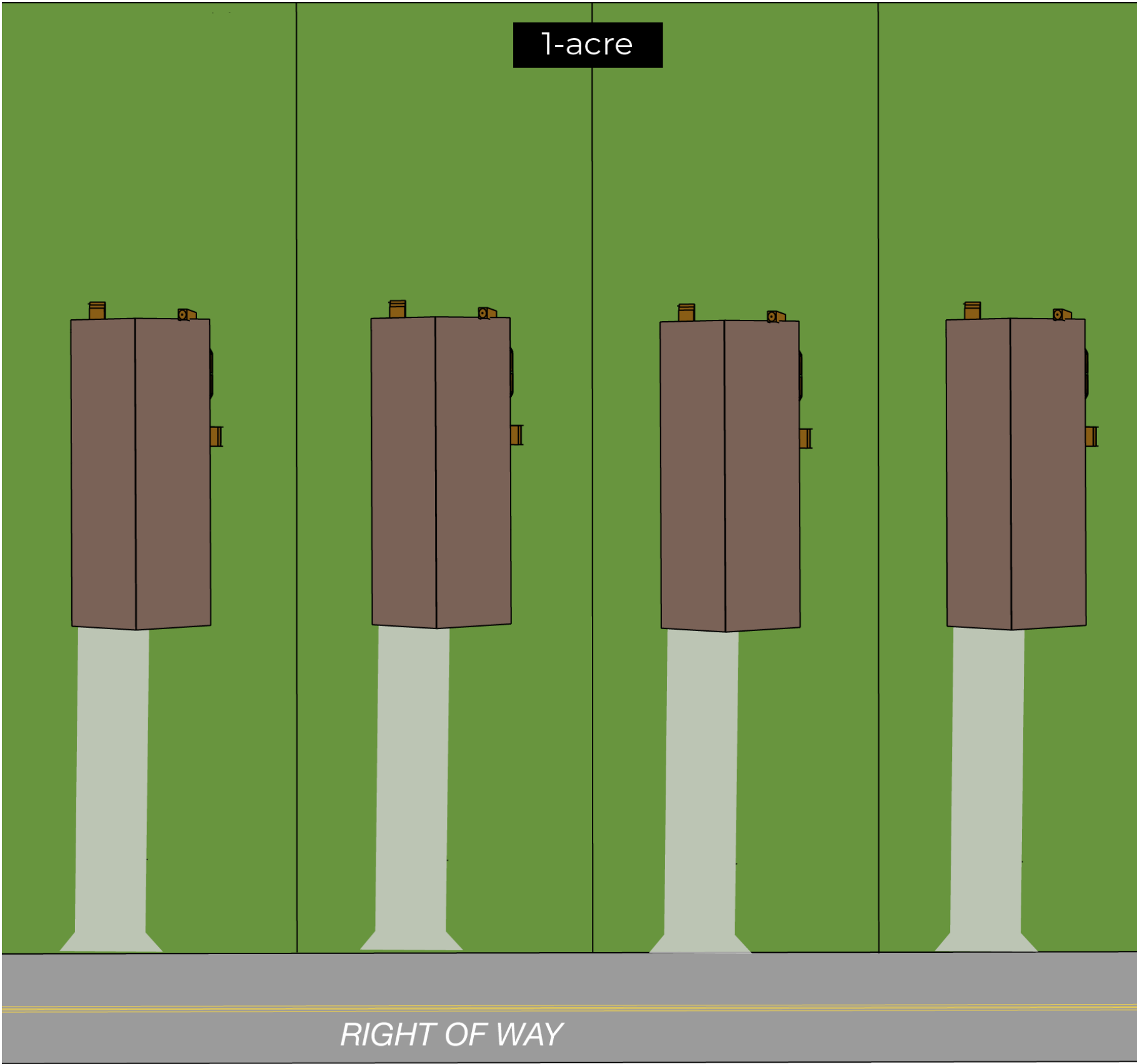
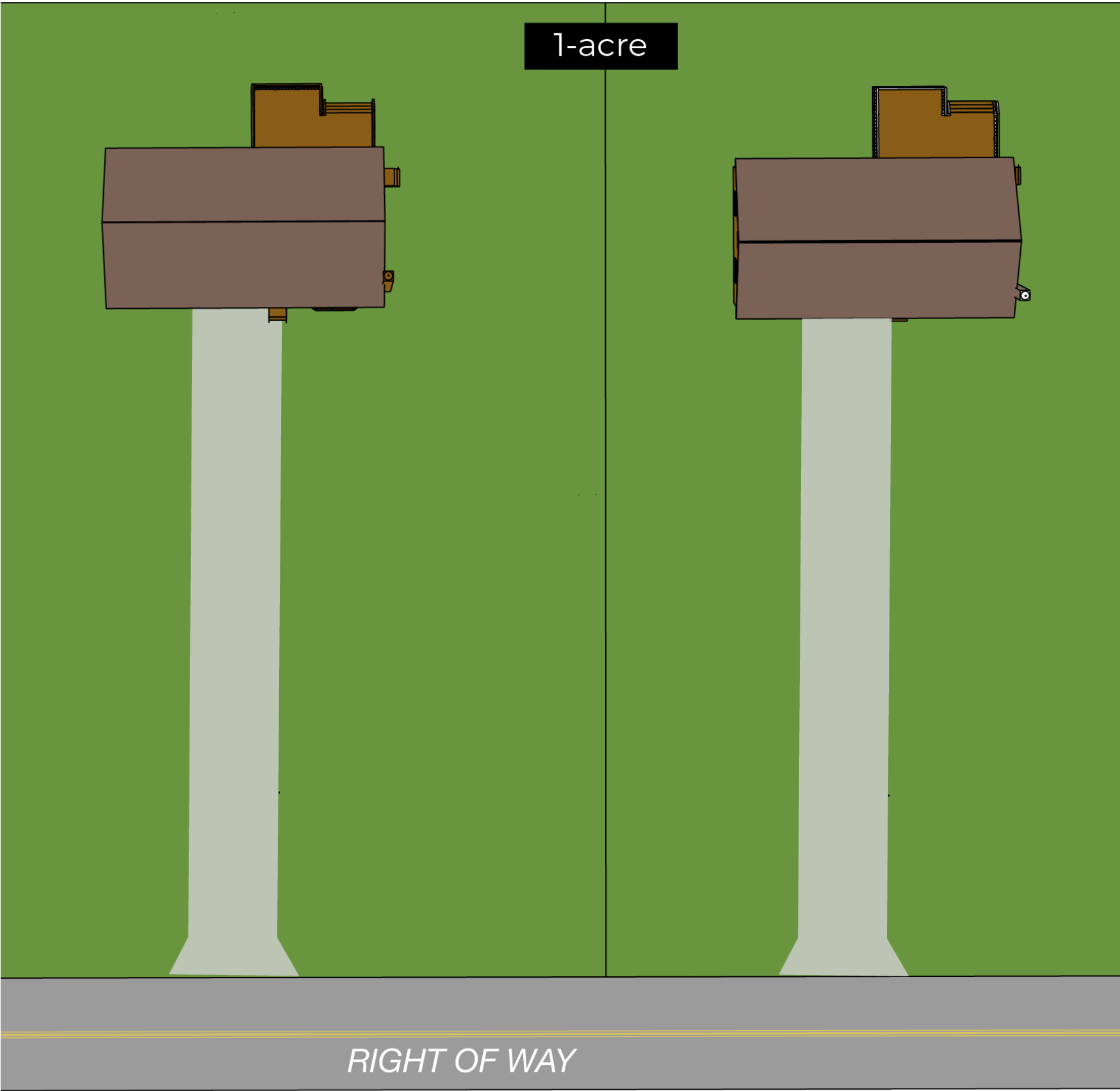
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HOUSING TYPES & LOT SIZE

PLACE A DOT NEXT TO
YOUR PREFERRED HOUSING
TYPE & LOT SIZE AS NEW
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
OCCURS IN THE CITY.



WHAT HAVE WE HEARD SO FAR?

Initial Stakeholder Input

- The current ordinance is too complex and difficult to navigate
- More flexibility is needed in development standards
- Housing options are limited, and more variety is needed
- Development costs and regulations can be barriers to investment
- Minimum lot sizes may be too large
- The ordinance should better support redevelopment and reuse of existing buildings
- Landscaping and building design requirements are a common source of frustration
- Downtown is a key asset with strong community support

What do you think the new ordinance should address?

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WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS TO DEVELOPMENT?

