



BRIEFING DOCUMENT: PLANNING REFORMS 2027

MODERNIZING THE METROPOLIS

A Blueprint for Complete Neighbourhoods

Analysis of Proposed Planning Reforms, Standardized Zoning, and Transit-Oriented Development.

Context: Transition from Resource Management Act (RMA) to Planning Act.

Core Philosophy: Shifting from auto-centric planning to a humane, productive urban model.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: THE SHIFT TO PERMISSIVE URBANISM

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01. THE REGULATORY ENGINE

Transitioning from "bespoke," restrictive zoning to Standardized Inclusive Zoning modeled on Japanese land use law.

02. THE SPATIAL MANDATE

Enforcing Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) with minimum 6-storey mandates within walkable catchments (800m-1200m).



03. THE PHYSICAL FORM

Filling the gap between high-rises and single homes with "Missing Middle" gentle density.

04. THE OUTCOME

Reversing "negative productivity" (congestion) and fostering social cohesion through "As-of-Right" mixed-use permissions.

THE JAPANESE INFLUENCE: STANDARDIZED INCLUSIVE ZONING

THE OLD MODEL: EXCLUSION

- Rigid 'Centres Hierarchies'
- Commercial banned in residential areas
- "Spot Zoning" required for exceptions
- Focus: Banning activities



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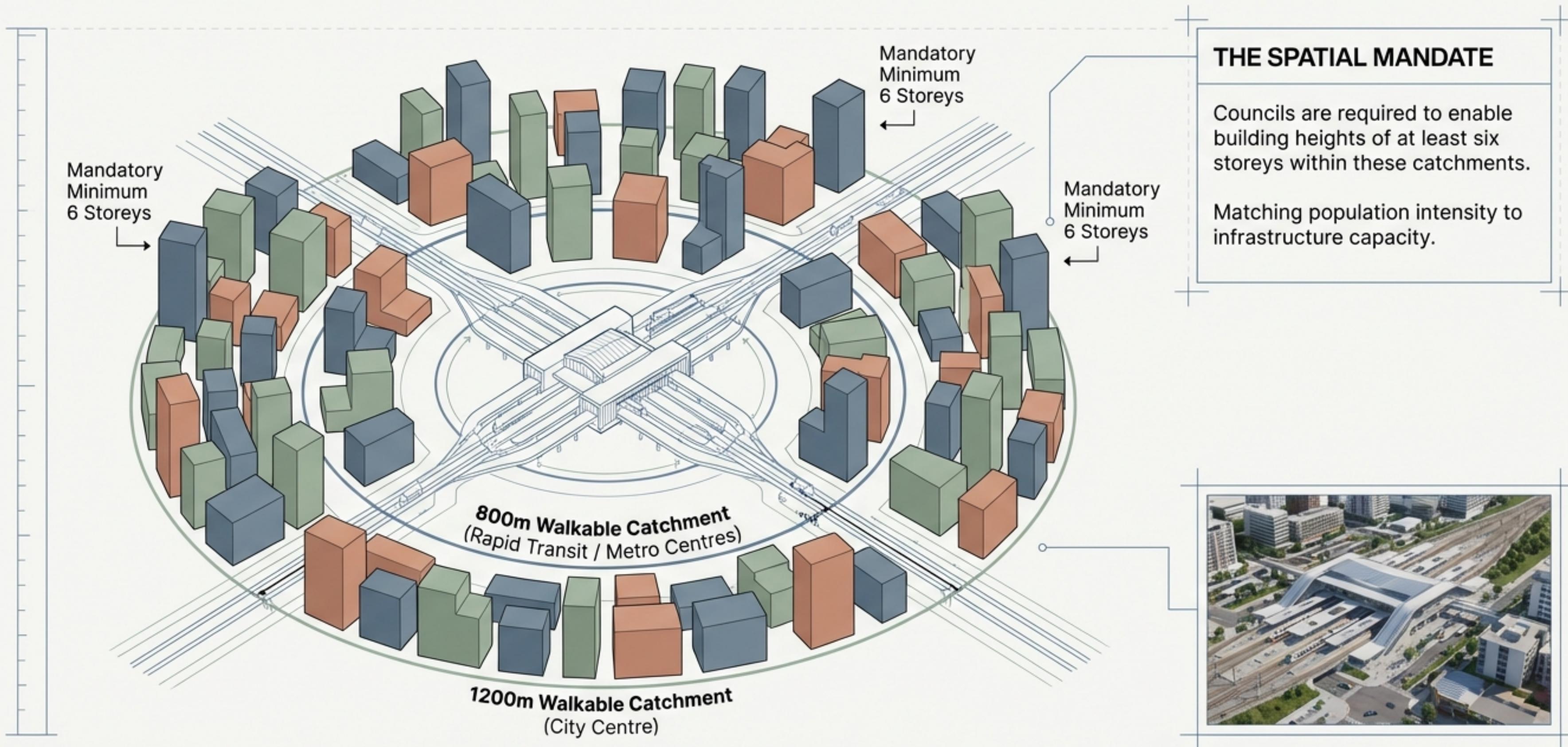
THE NEW MODEL: INCLUSION



- Modeled on Japanese Land Use Law
- Inclusive Zones: Mix is the default
- Focus: Managing externalities (noise/nuisance)
- Result: 'As-of-Right' evolution

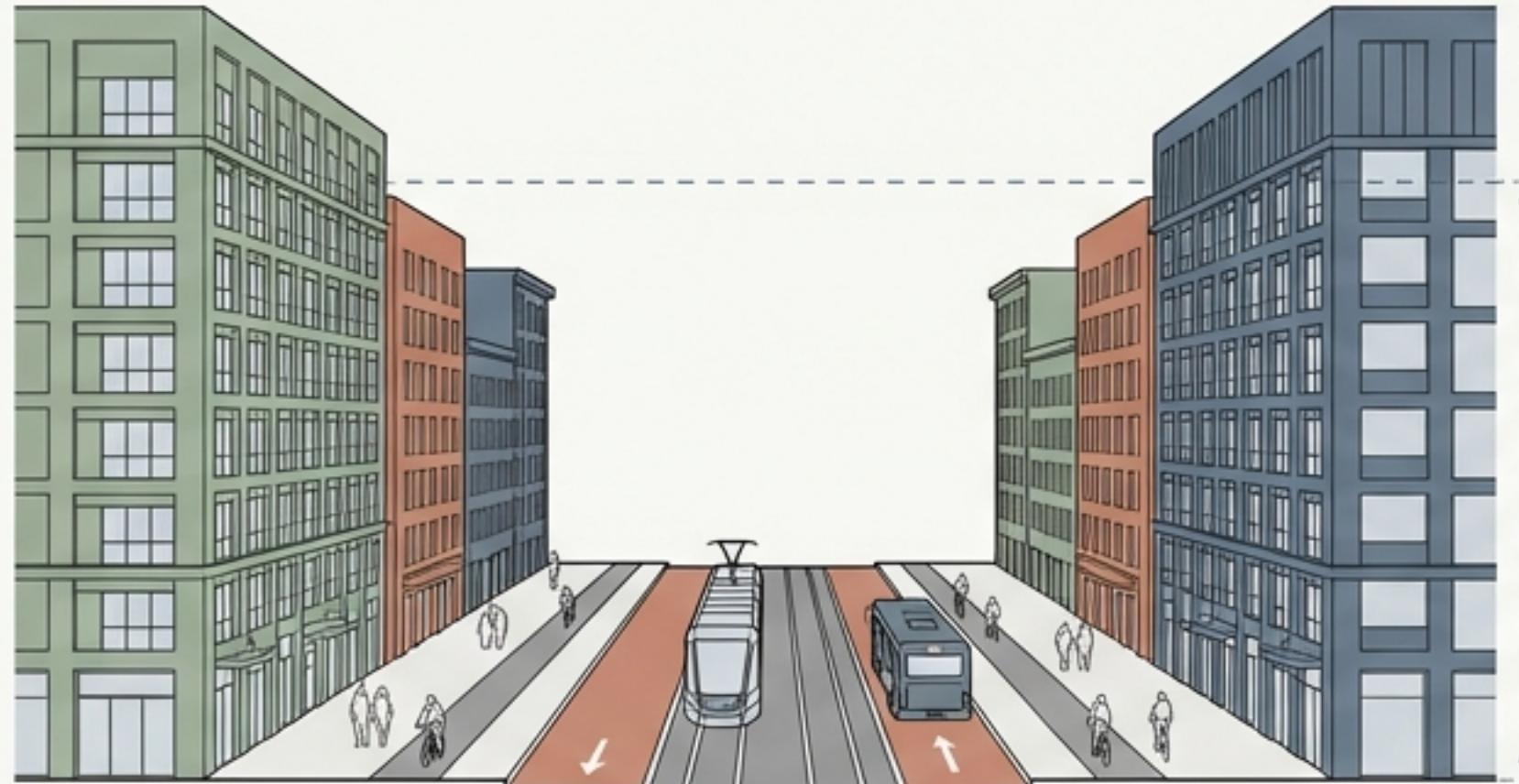
TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD) FRAMEWORK

The Logic: Density Follows Frequency



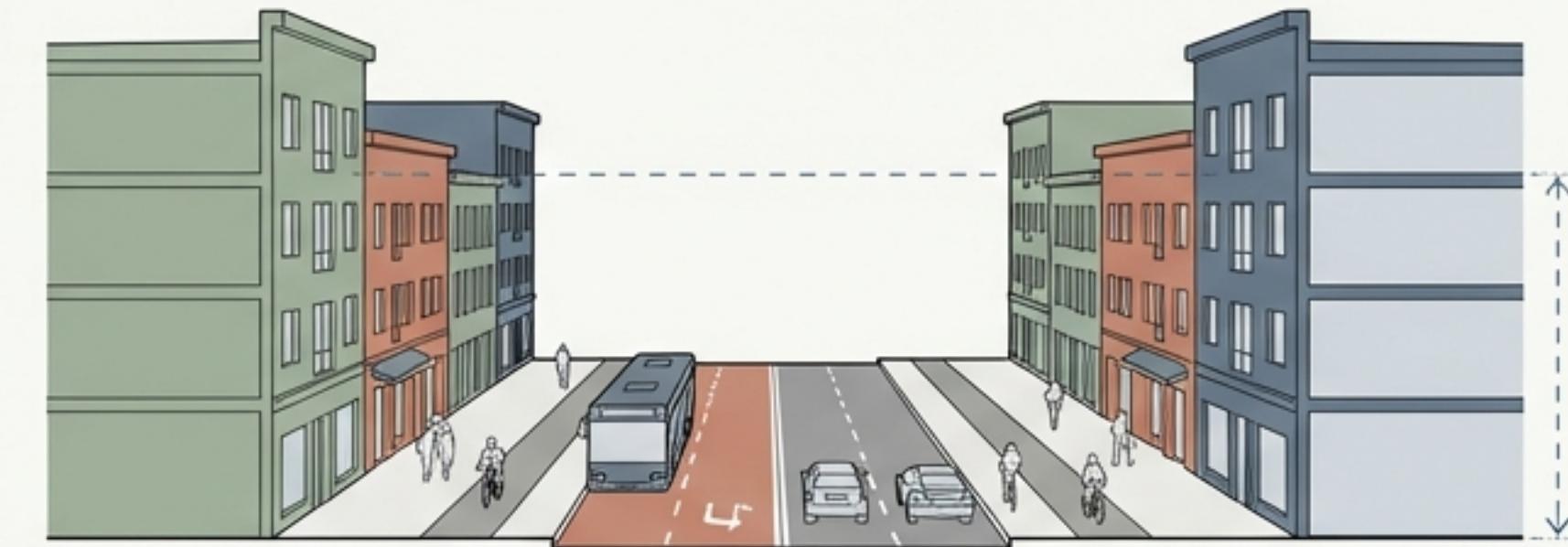
THE CORRIDOR HIERARCHY

CATEGORY 1: SPINE CORRIDORS

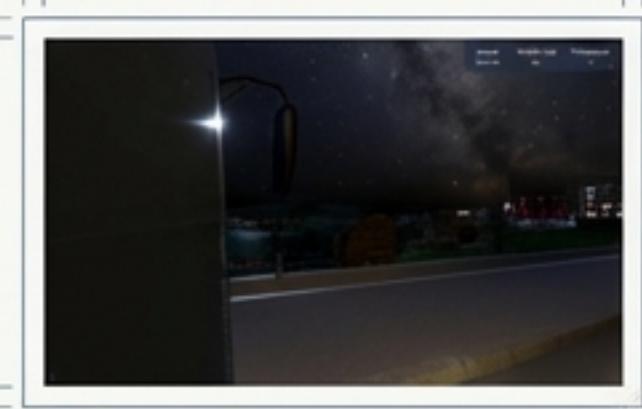


- **Definition:** Strategic routes, high frequency.
- **Typology:** 'Hard shell / Soft core' perimeter blocks.
- **Mandate:** Minimum 6 Storeys.
- **Use:** Rapid Transit.

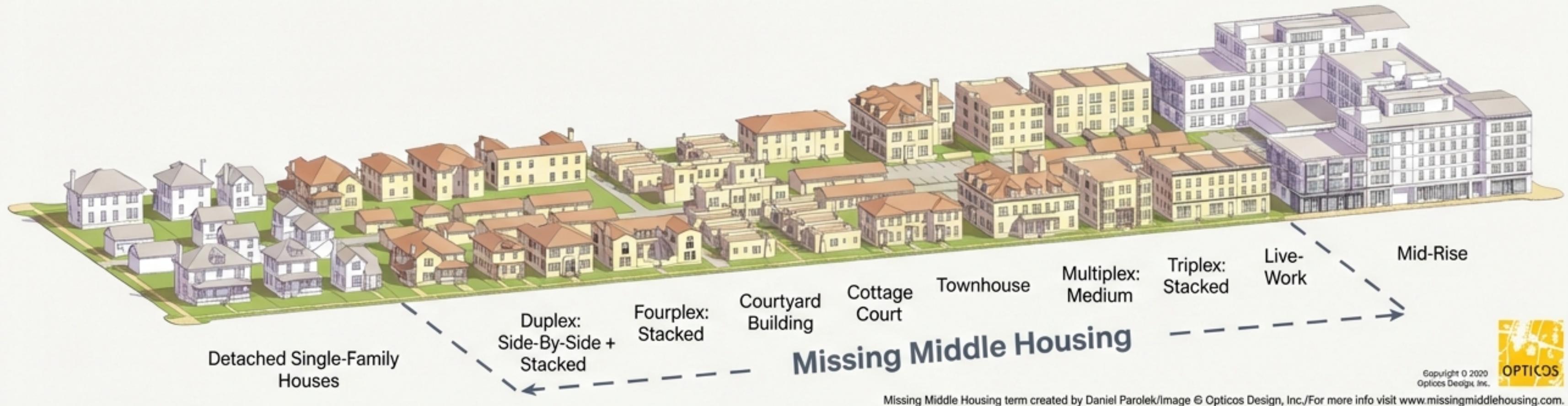
CATEGORY 2: PRIMARY CORRIDORS



- **Definition:** Frequent bus routes (7 days/week).
- **Typology:** Mixed-use, human scale.
- **Mandate:** Minimum 3 Storeys.
- **Speed Limit:** 30km/h (supports active transport).



THE 'MISSING MIDDLE': THE GOAT OF URBAN DESIGN



DEFINITION

A range of house-scale buildings with multiple units, compatible in scale with detached single-family homes.

THE FUNCTION

Delivers "Smart Density"—more people per hectare without the "overkill" or "scariness" of high-rises.

PLACEMENT

Designed to be built "anywhere in a city," not just the core.

UNIVERSAL TYPOLOGIES FOR GENTLE DENSITY

PLEXES



Inter

Stacked & Side-by-Side units within a house footprint.

COURTS



Inter

Clusters of small units around shared green space. Vital for neighborhood fabric.

ATTACHED



Inter

Space-efficient individual ownership.

INTEGRATED

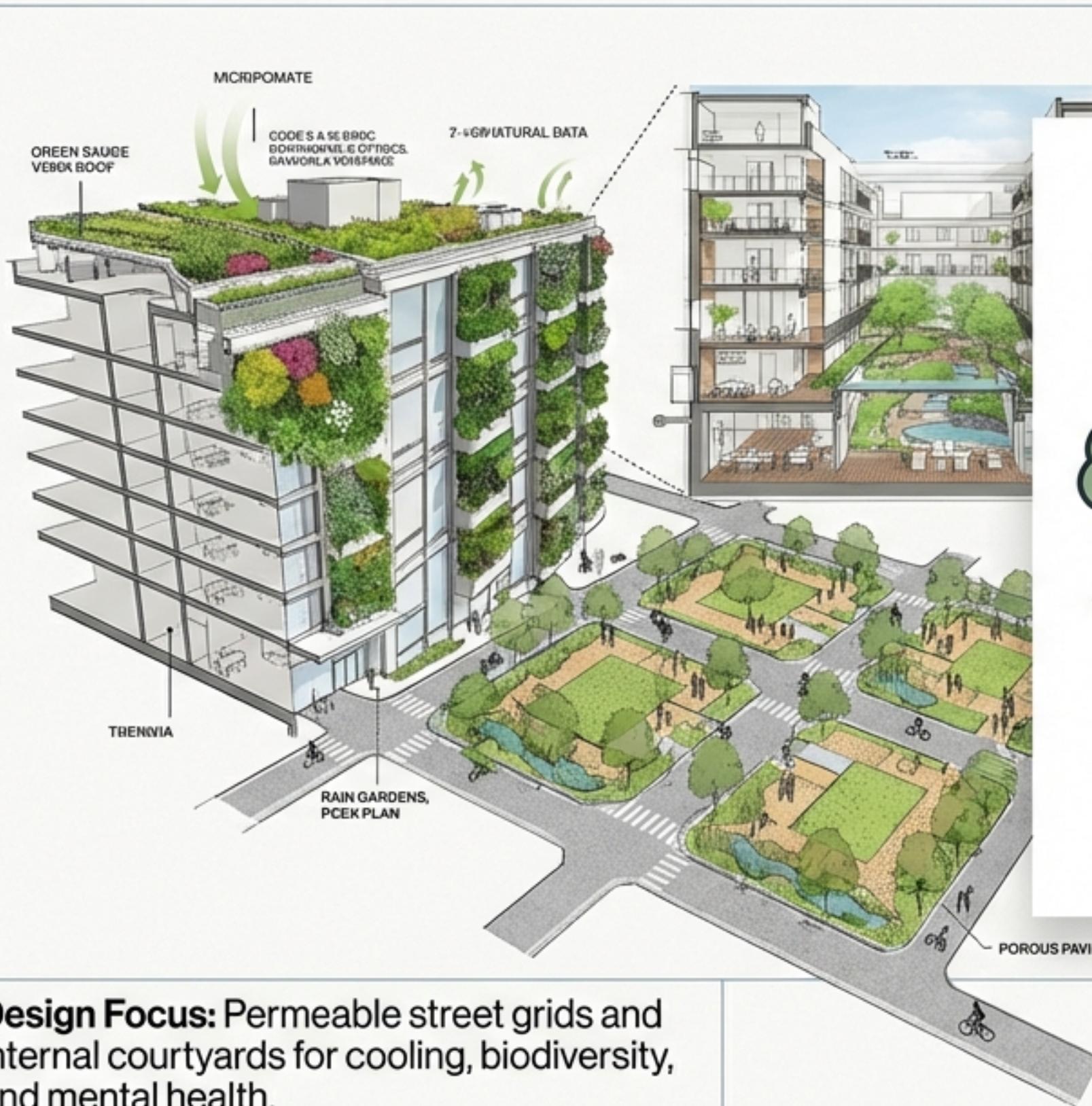


Inter

Workspace on ground floor, living above. Activates the street.

GREEN UTILITY & INTEGRATED MODIFICATION (IMM)

Nature as Infrastructure



THE 3-30-300 RULE



3 TREES
visible from
every home.



30% CANOPY
cover in the
neighborhood.



300 METERS
to the nearest
green space.

Design Focus: Permeable street grids and internal courtyards for cooling, biodiversity, and mental health.

MIXED-USE AS-OF-RIGHT: THE CORNER STORE RENAISSANCE



THE MECHANISM

- **As-of-Right:** No resource consent required.
- **Narrow Range (Neighborhoods):** Permitting Dairies, Cafes, Hair Salons, Co-share offices.
- **Location:** Specifically on Corner Sites.

“Everyday life happens just outside your door.”

Ensures amenities without displacing larger commercial centers.

SOCIAL ARCHITECTURE & COMBATING ISOLATION

THIRD PLACES

Local amenities acting as social hubs.

AGING IN PLACE

Typologies that support the elderly and multi-generational living.



SOCIAL FRICTION

Shared spaces force positive social interaction—an antidote to loneliness.

WALKABILITY

Active transport leads to increased face-to-face interaction.

URBAN PRODUCTIVITY: AGGLOMERATION & INNOVATION

NEGATIVE PRODUCTIVITY (Sprawl)



AGGLOMERATION (Density)



- **Solving Negative Productivity:** Reducing the economic cost of congestion.
- **Innovation:** Clustered mixed-use fosters competition.
- **Startup Friendly:** Low barriers for Live-Work units and home businesses.
- **Emissions:** Mixed-use cuts vehicle emissions by up to 80%.

CASE STUDY: THE 'LIVING METROPOLIS' SIMULATION



PLANNER'S REFLECTION

- **Emergent Dynamics:** The city is a complex, emergent system, not a static blueprint.
- **Observed Phenomena:** Simulation revealed trends like "White Flight" and Gentrification.
- **Policy Response:** Strategically placing low-rent housing near transit to ensure equity.
- **Conclusion:** The planner's job is never truly done.

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS: FROM SPRAWL TO SYSTEM

CURRENT STATE (The Problem)	FUTURE STATE (The Reform)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auto-centric Planning Exclusive / Bespoke Zoning Negative Productivity (Congestion) Social Isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Standardized / Inclusive Zoning (Japanese Model) Agglomeration & Innovation Complete Neighbourhoods / Social Cohesion

THE HUMANE HORIZON



The reforms represent a return to the "lost art (and science) of community building." By moving from restriction to permission, we create a framework where the city can evolve naturally to meet human needs—fostering a society that is connected, productive, and resilient.