



LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION



Implemented on Cape Cod

## OVERVIEW

Design guidelines offer a visual blueprint for the design and form of desired development outcomes in communities. They can serve as a valuable tool for both local decision-makers and developers in shaping developments that align with the community's vision and aesthetic. Pattern books offer design recommendations tailored to specific building types that integrate with the unique character of different neighborhoods. In some cases, pattern books are joined with pre-approved plans for specific building types. Both design guidelines and pattern books can be useful tools for residential developments to ensure those projects meet the community's vision and goals, potentially making the review and approval process more streamlined and predictable for both developers and the community.

### CHALLENGES ADDRESSED

- Not Allowed to Build Multi-family Housing
- Too Expensive to Build New Housing
- Too Expensive to Secure or Maintain Housing
- Hard to Find Year-round Housing

## POTENTIAL BENEFITS & CONSIDERATIONS

- Can make developments more predictable by providing detailed guidance on the form and style of buildings at the outset
- Can incorporate sustainability and environmental considerations
- Overly strict guidelines may prevent smaller developers from participating, especially if the guidelines require expensive materials
- Developing design guidelines takes time and resources and staff will need to be comfortable administering them
- Design guidelines and pattern books must be clearly written to minimize the need for clarifications, which could elongate the permitting process

## RESOURCES

***Design Guidelines for Multi-family Housing for Cape Cod*** - Design guidelines to ensure multi-family housing development or redevelopment blends into the Cape Cod landscape.

***Pattern Books: A Planning Tool*** - This article from the Planning Commissioners Journal describes the development of pattern books, what they are, and why they can be important to the planning process.

### CASE STUDY: MISSING MIDDLE PATTERN BOOK, NORFOLK, VIRGINIA (2021)

This Pattern Book was developed by the City of Norfolk Department of Planning, along with the Planning Commission and Architectural Review Board. The book is intended to be "a way to generate ideas to support new (old) ways of incrementally developing neighborhoods to respond to shifting demographics and economic changes by creating housing that is affordable and sustainable by design." The book identifies different neighborhoods or character districts and based on the character

district and lot size, provides guidance on the type of missing middle housing buildings that would be appropriate. It provides example plans for different building types, styles, and material palettes, and example site layouts and also contains resilient and sustainable construction principles.

See the City of Norfolk's Missing Middle Pattern Book [here](#).

