

NEW HOUSING ON THE **BLOCK.**

A Design Contest to create Affordable, Age-Friendly and Attainable Housing in Fargo, ND

Competition Guide

AARP[®]
North Dakota

Program Sponsor:



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BACKGROUND

Fargo, like many cities, faces a growing population of aging adults burdened by their current homes, with few options for more suitable housing. Many of Fargo's older adults remain in homes that are too large, too demanding to maintain, or are simply unsafe for aging. By addressing the housing gap with innovative and usable designs, we can empower older adults to live safely and independently for years longer.

Missing Middle Homes: A Better Option for Older Adults

Missing Middle Housing (MMH) is a range of small multi-unit housing types that are similar in scale to a single-family house and are often found in walkable areas. This competition focuses on duplexes, triplexes and cottage courts.

MMH types are "middle" in form and scale between that of small single-family houses and larger apartment buildings, enabling them to blend into existing residential neighborhoods. With smaller units, MMH can provide housing at price points attainable to many middle-income households.¹

Missing Middle Homes (MMH) offer a more affordable and manageable solution for older adults. Designed with universal and age-friendly features, MMH promotes independent living and delays the need for moves to expensive care settings.

¹Opticos Design

The 2024 North Dakota AARP Missing Middle Housing Competition: A Catalyst for Change

This project has long term goals:

- Improve the housing options for older adults.
- Increase the supply of housing suitable for aging-in-place.
- Create a more affordable and convenient living option for seniors, one that promotes health and independence compared to large, high-maintenance homes or senior housing facilities.
- Allow older adults to remain in their communities as they age.

Empowering Seniors to Age in Place

By addressing the housing gap with innovative and usable designs, we can empower older adults to live safely and independently for longer.

This competition has three key objectives:

1. **Generate Designs:** Create a handful of attractive, buildable MMH plans with essential universal and age-friendly design elements.
2. **Raise Awareness:** Public outreach and competition promotion will highlight how universal and age-friendly MMH address housing challenges faced by older adults, particularly those with modest finances or past housing inequities. Concurrent educational efforts will teach key stakeholders the specifics of this competition's universal and age-friendly design criteria.
3. **Policy Change:** Add to efforts to modify Fargo's development ordinances, making it easier to create middle housing.

Sponsorship

The North Dakota Department of Commerce is proud to sponsor the 2024 Housing Design Competition: New Housing on the Block!

This design competition aims to generate designs for affordable, age-friendly, and attainable housing options in Fargo, ND. Presented by AARP North Dakota, with assistance from the RL Mace Universal Design Institute, the competition seeks not

only to inspire designs that serve older adults but also to educate the community about age-friendly and universal design principles and the importance of incorporating these concepts into their communities.

ELIGIBILITY

All are invited to submit designs suitable for aging-in-place that meet the criteria described here. Those who wish to participate should be prepared to attend or view both webinars (to be posted on the website). These will provide specific instruction unique to this competition which expands on the information in this guide.

COMPETITION OVERVIEW

1. Choose to design a duplex, triplex, or cluster community. If choosing to submit multiple designs, each project needs to be submitted separately.
2. Two sites have been chosen to serve as hypothetical locations for the proposed projects.
 - a. Site A offers the opportunity for duplex or triplex
 - b. Site B offers the opportunity for a cluster development.
3. Once the submissions are received, a jury/panel of judges will review submissions and select the winners.
4. The selected designs will be displayed on the Better Living Design website with links to the designer's web page. AARP North Dakota will be hosting an event for the winners.
5. We will offer two webinars that will be recorded and posted to the website for later viewing if needed. The webinars will contain important information about the competition and age-friendly design. These webinars will be required for all those who wish to register for the competition. A survey at the end of the recording will log attendance.

TIMELINE

- Registration opens: July 25
- Virtual Information Session for Applicants (**REQUIRED**): Aug 14 noon-1 CT (will be recorded and made available on the website)

- Webinar: A Deep Dive into Age-Friendly Design **(REQUIRED)**: Aug 29 noon-1 CT (will be recorded and made available on the website)
- Registration closes: Aug 31
- Submission portal opens: Sept 1
- Submission Deadline: Oct 4
- Winners Announced: Oct 31

COMPETITION REGISTRATION

Step 1: [Register online](#) to participate in the competition.

Step 2: Attend both competition information sessions. If you are unable to attend either of the live events, a link to the recorded event will be provided on the competition website. Be sure to stay on after to complete the after-webinar survey. **Both webinars are required for all competition participants.**

Step 3: Submit your design by midnight on October 4, 2024. Participants may submit multiple designs, but each design needs to be submitted separately. Participants are welcome to submit up to three variations on a single design. Please submit multiple variations as a single PDF document.

DOCUMENT REQUIREMENTS

Submissions are due by **October 4, 2024**, in PDF form. Submissions should be sufficiently detailed to reveal (also via call outs) critical age-friendly elements: passage width, maneuvering space, fixtures, appliances. Plans must be to scale and fully dimensioned. A link to the submission portal will be posted when the submittal window opens.

The PDF should be no more than 10 pages in length. See [PDF Formatting Requirements](#) for more specifics. Submissions should include the following elements:

- **Cover Page:** Name of firm(s) or individual(s) submitting a design. This will be

the **ONLY** page that includes participant names, firm name(s) or firm logo(s).

- **Every Other Page:** Include **ONLY** the project name.
- **Narrative:** describing how the plan fulfills the [goals of the competition](#).
- **Callouts:** Use callouts on the drawings to identify key design components.

SITE AND ZONING

Site A is a 50ft x 140ft parcel. This lot is zoned for a duplex or triplex. It is a corner lot with alley access to the north and sidewalks to the west and south.

Site B comprises two lots—site A and the neighboring lot to the east—to form a single lot zoned for a cluster development. This lot is 100 ft x 140 ft with alley access to the north and sidewalk along the south.

- With either site, the key is to ensure smooth movement throughout the property, from the parking, entrance and home itself to frequently used areas in the front and back. This is especially important for those who have difficulty or cannot climb stairs. Imagine an aging adult's journey: From the front curb/parking, accessing porches/entrances, navigating around the house, and reaching the backyard.
- With the cluster development, some attention should be paid to the placement of the units and their relationship to each other.

Fargo's zoning requirements can be found [here](#). For the purposes of this competition **the following guidelines should be observed.**

Setback Requirements (both Cluster and Duplex/Triplex):

- Min. 10ft between structures
- Front Setback: 15 ft
- Rear Setback: 10ft
- Interior side setbacks: 5ft
- Corner side setback: 8ft

Height limitations - Duplex/Triplex:

- The highest point of the roof of the primary dwelling structure(s) should not be taller than 35 ft.
- The highest point of the roof of any parking structure should not be taller than the height of the primary dwelling unit.

Height limitations - Cluster Development:

- The highest point of the roof of the primary dwelling structure(s) should not be taller than 26 ft.
- The highest point of the roof of any parking structure should not be taller than the height of the tallest primary dwelling unit.

Land Coverage Maximum (both Cluster and Duplex/Triplex):

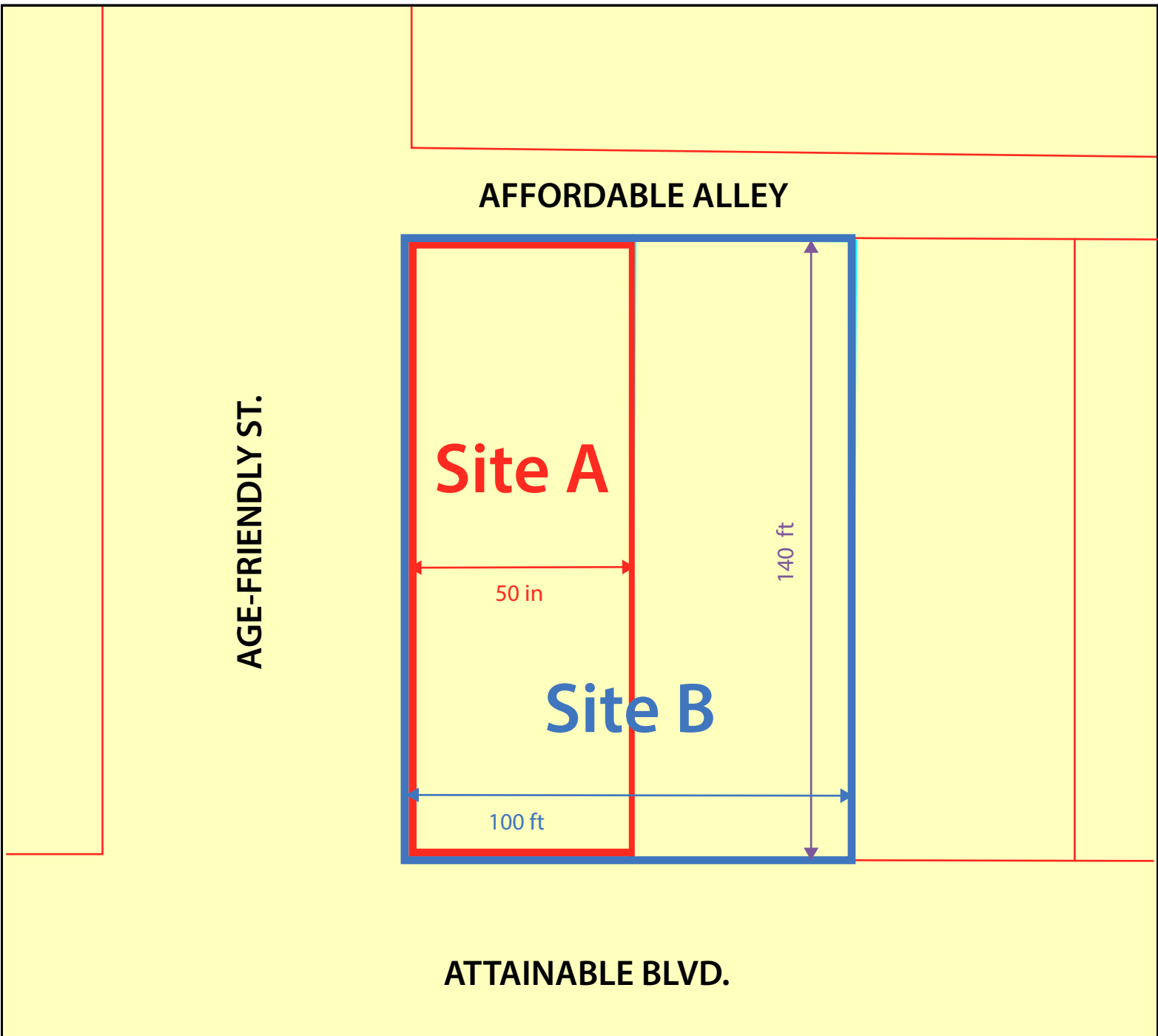
- Buildings can occupy a maximum of 60 percent of the lot

Open Space - Cluster Development:

- Minimum 20 percent of total site area, with a minimum dimension of 20 feet, and required to consist of a central open space or series of interconnected open spaces. Parking areas, driveways, wetlands, and steep slopes do not count toward this requirement.

Parking:

- Driveway may be as narrow as ten feet
- One garaged parking spot per/unit



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Site B is comprised of two lots—site A and the neighboring lot to the the east—to form a single lot zoned for a cluster development. This lot is 100ft x 140ft with alley access to the north and sidewalk along the south.

Attainable Blvd is a moderately trafficked road with mixed residential and commercial development. Age-Friendly Street is a quiet, tree-lined residential street.

PROGRAM

The minimum square footage of any single unit should be no less than 1250 square feet measured from the inside faces of the exterior walls. In general, consider how to include features that work for people who may have difficulty with dexterity, lifting, bending, reaching, balance, vision and/or hearing in a package that is entirely mainstream and that will appeal to a broad audience too.

Entry

- One covered, level, step-free entrance into each unit. This may be through the garage

Bedrooms

- 1-2 bedrooms. Primary bedroom on main level with dedicated or connected full bathroom. 1-½ story options may have a secondary bedroom on the second level.

Bath

- At least one full, dedicated or attached to the master bedroom. Consider that older people may have caregivers or mobility devices assisting them, so having enough maneuvering room is important in the primary bath.

Kitchen

- Consider ease of use, landing space, storage options, heights of work surfaces. Guidance can be found in the Age-Friendly Criteria and Guidance docs. A kitchen that is spacious enough to accommodate 2 people will also likely work with mobility devices.

Outdoor Living Area

- Unconditioned areas such as porches and patios do not count toward total square footage of the unit but can add quality living space to smaller homes such as these.
- Those designing cluster developments may consider how these outdoor living

areas relate to one another and/or, what additional community gathering spaces might be included.

- See [Zoning Guidelines](#) for more information.

Garages/Parking

- Allow for one garaged parking spot per dwelling. Street parking is allowed. The garage does not need to be attached to the unit and can be a shared structure.

ZONING GUIDELINES

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Parking:

- Driveway may be as narrow as ten feet
- One garaged parking spot per/unit

Drawing Set Requirements

Drawing sets do not need to include construction drawings. We are most concerned with the dimensions and layout of the space, and the details that can be illustrated by interior elevations. All drawings must be scalable with the scale clearly specified and graphically depicted. Additional graphics like renderings, perspectives or building walk/fly-throughs are welcome but not required.

Dimensioned Floor Plans

(1/4" scale min.) indicating

- Room sizes
- Door widths
- Cabinets, cabinet types, and fixture locations
- Interior maneuvering space (can be shown using furniture placement)
- Slopes

Exterior Elevations (4) (1/4" scale min) w/ exterior features called out

Dimensioned Interior Elevations

(Kitchen and Bathroom)(1/2" scale)

- Switches/controls
- Shower/tub mix valve
- Cabinets
- Work surface / counter
- Window sill heights
- Appliance and fixture (general) types and locations

Interior and Exterior Finishes

This may be included in the narrative or on the drawing.

Product Information

Describe the high function characteristics and why they were chosen. We do not need to know specifics of each appliance/fixture, only what UD or AF characteristics make them a particularly good choice for the design. This may be included in the narrative or as callouts on the drawing

- Kitchen appliances and fixtures
- Bath fixtures
- Laundry appliances
- Door/Window types
- Cabinetry
- Hardware and controls

PDF Formatting Requirements

Your PDF files must be properly formatted by following the guidelines laid out here. Please read the following instructions carefully. Improperly formatted plans can delay the plan review process for your project.

- File Format: PDF (max 10 pages in length)
- Maximum File Size: 500 MB
- Format: Vector preferred
- Resolution: 300 ppi
- Grouping: Multiple sheets within a single PDF document
- Minimum Sheet Size (for plan sets): 11x17
- Minimum Font Size: 10 pt
- Color: Black on white preferred except for renderings which can be in color
- When preparing your documents for submittal:
 - All documents must be flattened and full-size. Flatten out objects and markups (especially when combining PDFs from consultants)

who may not have flattened their own work). Check that your flattened PDFs have successfully removed ACAD.SHX and other objects in Adobe Acrobat's Tools>Comments view.

- Files must be unprotected and unlocked.

SCORING CRITERIA

We encourage designs that thoughtfully balance the criteria with an overall goal of increasing the production of homes that support the [goals of this competition](#). We do not expect every submission to maximize each criterion. The age friendly MMH judging criteria is here [Age Friendly Design Criteria](#), and for additional guidance, [Guidance Document](#).

Aging-in-Place (60%)

- **Age-Friendly** Design for aging-in-place by incorporating age-friendly features. We seek submissions that exemplify age-friendly design. The size and use of these dwellings will require that they be reachable via a graded entry. We also encourage plans that include universal design features and are adaptable over time.
- **Diverse family and household types.** Accommodate the needs of a diverse group of users and, specifically support the goal of allowing aging adults to stay in their communities if they wish.

Construction (20%)

- **Green building.** Incorporate green building features, like stormwater management, passive heating and cooling, and sustainable materials. Consider short- and long-term environmental impact.
- **Innovative construction methods.** Support new construction and delivery methods, such as panelized, modular, or prefab homes.

- **Affordability.** Encourage designs that are lower cost to construct and maintain making them financially accessible to households with the widest possible range of incomes.

Context (20%)

- **Broad applicability.** Provide a design that is likely to meet development standards on most lots and appropriate for various lot conditions, including lots with and without an alley, sloping sites, corner lots, and narrow lots.
- **Architectural variety and existing context.** Consider compatibility with the existing development patterns and architectural context within Fargo’s concept location. Design proposals could be adaptable to architectural contexts through a variety of stylistic options specific to eras of development or designed explicitly for compatibility within specific neighborhoods. Home designs or configurations can also reflect the diverse needs and experiences of Fargo residents.
- **Privacy.** Consider the relationship of the main house and neighboring lots through design, configuration, profile, and window placement.

REVIEW PROCESS

- A multidisciplinary panel of judges will review the entries and weigh them as indicated in the [Scoring Criteria section](#), with those adhering most closely to the [Aging-in-Place](#) category given the most weight.
- Following the submission deadline in October, the review committee will select finalists from which the jury will then select the winning entry or entries. The finalists will be listed on the competition website.
- The decisions of the review committee will be final, and the review committee reserves the right to leave any prize vacant, or partially award prizes.

AWARDS AND PUBLICITY

- The winners of the design competition will be provided a cash award.

- Winners will be asked to prepare a presentation of their entries, which will be showcased at a community open house during the month of November. Specific requirements will be provided.
- The winning entries will be featured in a press release, in local Fargo media, on betterlivingdesign.org as well as other digital media outlets.
- Landowners, homeowners, developers and builders can reach out to the firms behind the winning entries to negotiate architectural services or perhaps for the purchase of a plan.