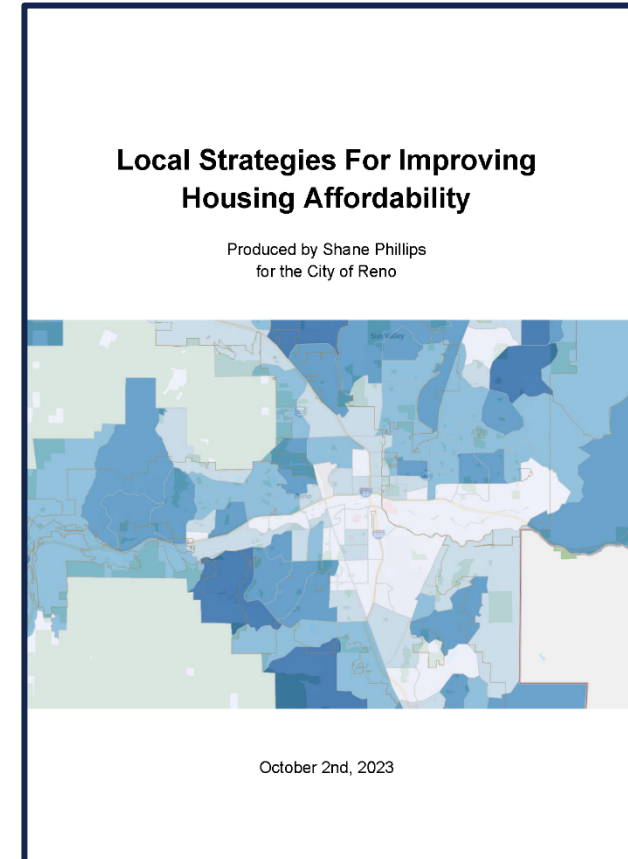




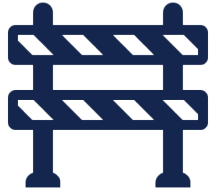
Report on Strategies for Improving Housing Affordability in the City of Reno Presented by Shane Phillips November 1, 2023

Full Report

1. Executive Summary
2. About the Project
3. About the Consultant
4. Definitions, Goals, Constraints, & Assumptions
5. Reno's Housing Strengths
6. Challenges and Barriers to Affordability in Reno
7. Recommendations
8. Summary of Recommendations
9. References



Approach



Identify high-level barriers



Provide recommendations that may require further research



Consider, but not determine, political feasibility

Emphasis on Infill Housing Supply

1. Housing is not affordable when supply is limited
2. City of Reno has authority over supply
3. Infill housing is more affordable
4. Infill is important for goals outlined in the Reimagine Reno Master Plan



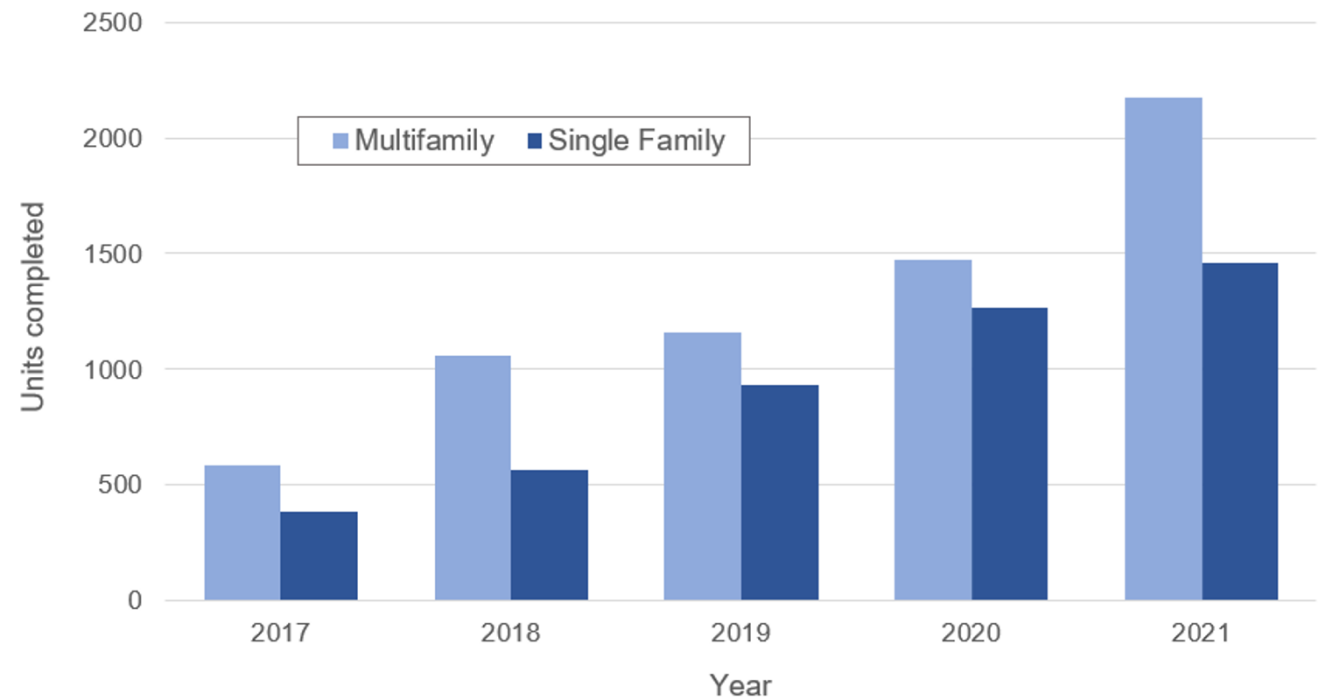
Past Successes and Future Challenges

Reno has made great progress on housing

However, job growth has outpaced housing

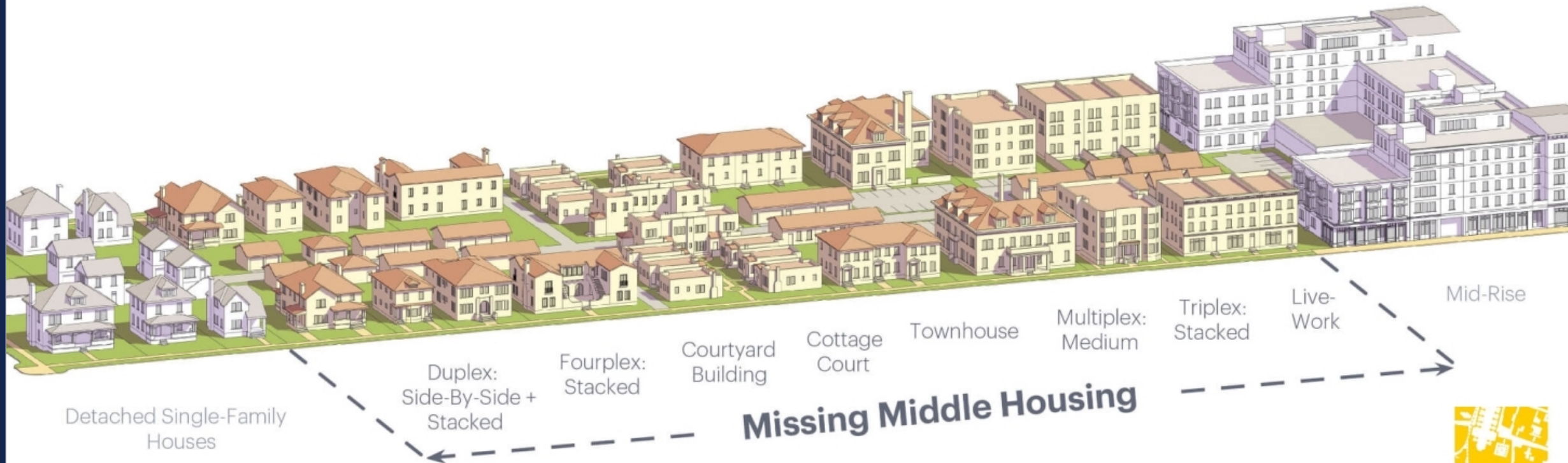
Directing growth inward can increase housing choice, production, and affordability, and support other goals

Figure 1. Units issued certificates of occupancy by the City of Reno, 2017-2021.



Source: Author's chart produced from City of Reno certificate of occupancy data.

What Could Infill Look Like?



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What Could Infill Look Like?



What Could Infill Look Like?



What Could Infill Look Like?



Five Areas for Potential Reform

- 1 Approval streamlining and interagency coordination
- 2 Incremental and “missing middle” infill housing production
- 3 Infrastructure planning and development fees
- 4 Displacement protections and housing preservation
- 5 Zoning, development, and code standards

Key Recommendations



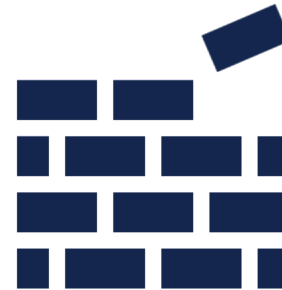
Project review
and regional
coordination

Process



Incremental
and missing
middle housing

Production



Infrastructure
planning and
fee reform

Planning



Protecting
existing
housing stock

Preservation

Regional/Interagency Coordination

Challenge

The City of Reno reviews project proposals quickly, but non-City agencies often lack urgency and can create bottlenecks.

Impact

Projects are delayed and face unpredictable costs; housing is delivered slower, at higher cost, and sometimes not at all.

Solution

Organize roundtable of agencies involved in approvals, seeking common ground on prioritizing housing.

Objective Standards & By-right Approvals

Challenge

Subjective standards confuse applicants and reviewers, and discretion creates uncertainty.

Impact

Confusion leads to delay and costly revisions, and uncertainty heightens risk, so potentially successful projects never leave the drawing board.

Solution

Adopt objective design and development standards and allow “by-right” approvals for smaller and medium-sized projects.



Legalize Accessory Dwelling Units

Challenge

Many neighborhoods prohibit all buildings except single-family detached houses, which are the most expensive housing type in most cases.

Impact

More affordable housing choices are unavailable throughout much of the city, and homeowners' cannot adapt their properties to their needs (accommodating multigenerational households, adding more space, etc.).

Solution

Legalize ADUs on residential land citywide, permitting projects via a fast, inexpensive, and predictable process.

ADU examples



ADU examples



Upzone Lower-Density Multifamily Zones

Challenge

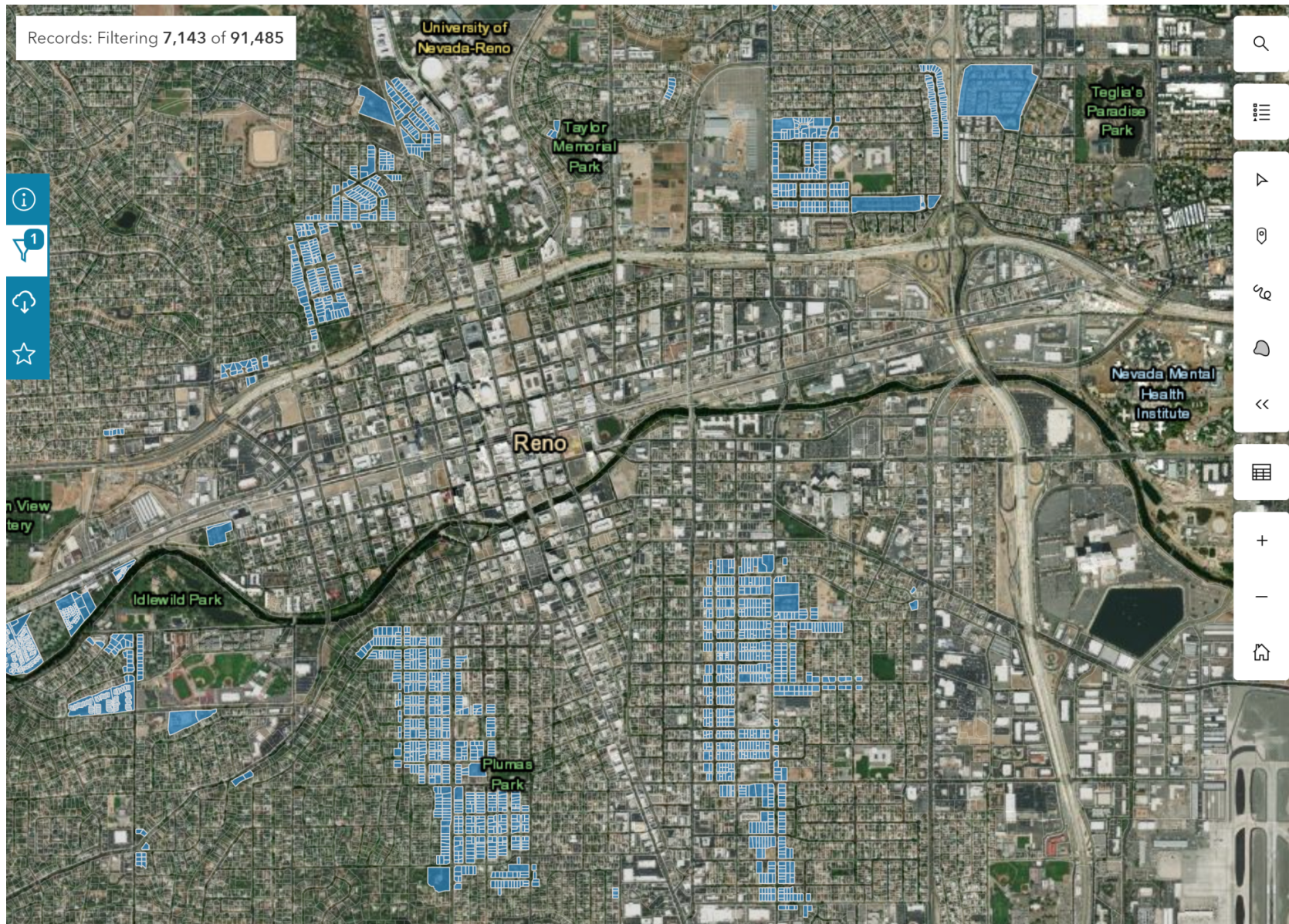
MF-14, MF-21, and MF-30 zones have very low maximum densities, especially for core neighborhoods.

Impact

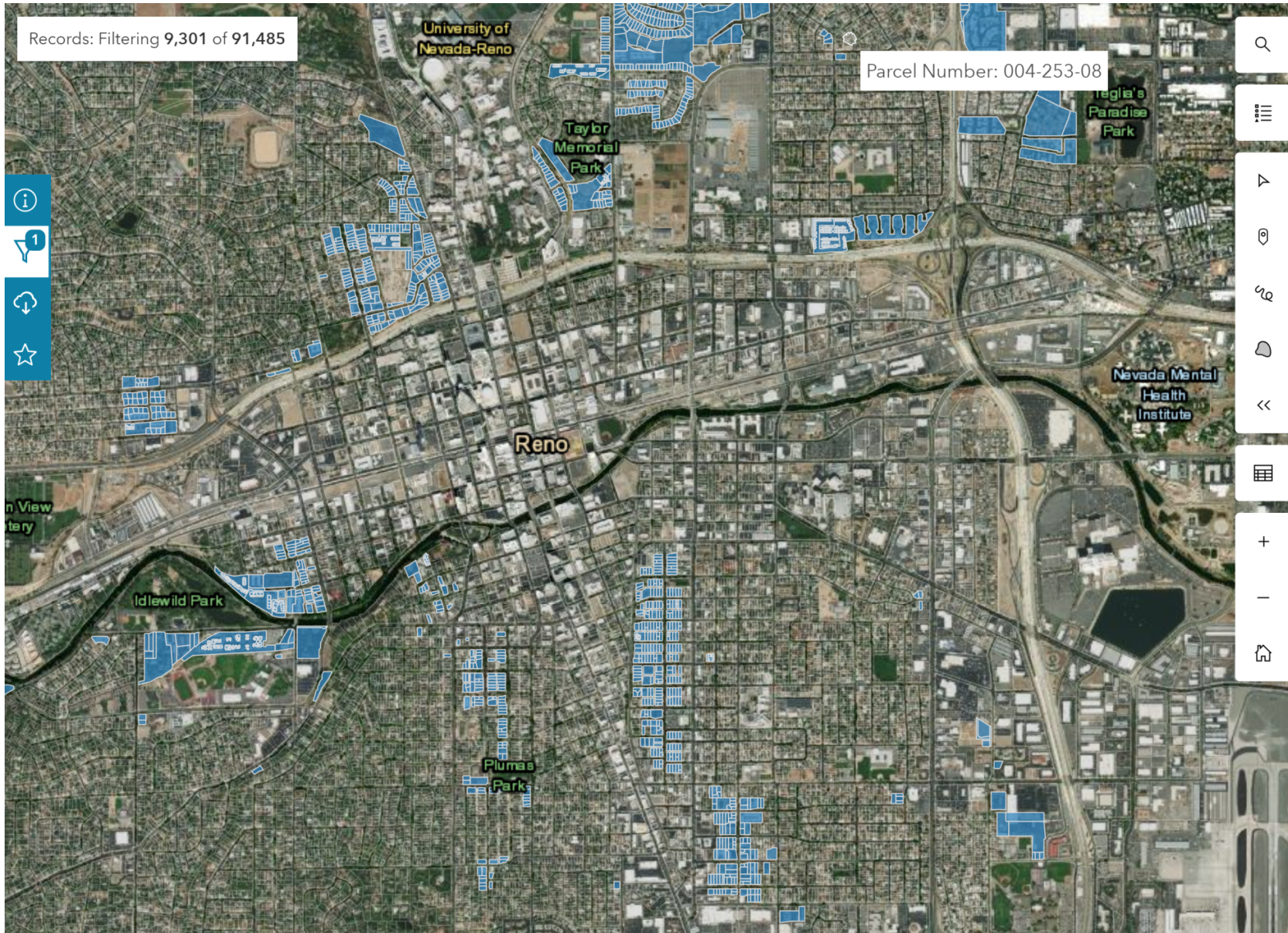
Many parcels ideal for infill housing and mixed-uses are unlikely to be redeveloped. Valuable urban land is underutilized, increasing pressure on other neighborhoods and the suburban fringe.

Solution

Rezone MF-14 and MF-21 zones to MF-30. Rezone current MF-30 parcels to MF-45 or MF-60.



- MF-14 and MF-21 zones
- 8% of parcels citywide



- MF-30 zones
- 10% of parcels citywide

Update Capital Plan & Infrastructure Fees

Challenge

Off-site infrastructure requirements for infill developments are unpredictable and can be very costly.

Impact

Some projects are rendered infeasible, and the City loses out on new homes, tax revenues, and infrastructure improvements. Some developers pay more than their fair share while others pay less.

Solution

Update capital plan to identify public infrastructure end-of-life and replacement costs. Use capital plan to determine pro rata cost-sharing, increasing consistency and better targeting investment.

Proactively Regulate Short-term Rentals

Challenge

Short-term rentals are largely unregulated in the City of Reno, and STRs can take housing otherwise used for long-term occupancy off the market.

Impact

If the number of STRs increases over time, it will reduce availability for owner- and renter-occupiers and drive up prices for residents.

Solution

Adopt restrictions on full-unit and year-round short-term rentals.

Key Recommendations



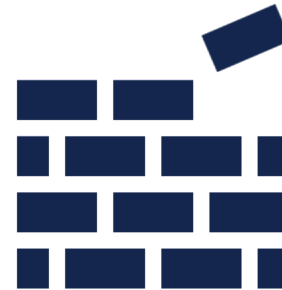
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