



Zoning and General Plan Design Standards Review and Update to Promote Residential Infill Development

Study Session:

Tuesday, May 27, 2025
Board of Supervisors

Wednesday, May 28, 2025
Planning Commission



1. Project Overview

Project Background

- The County's 6th Cycle Housing Element Update identified several factors that pose constraints to housing development, including outdated zoning and General Plan requirements.
- The County received a grant from the California Department of Housing & Community Development (REAP 2.0) to review zoning and General Plan requirements and identify changes that can help create more housing options.

Project Components

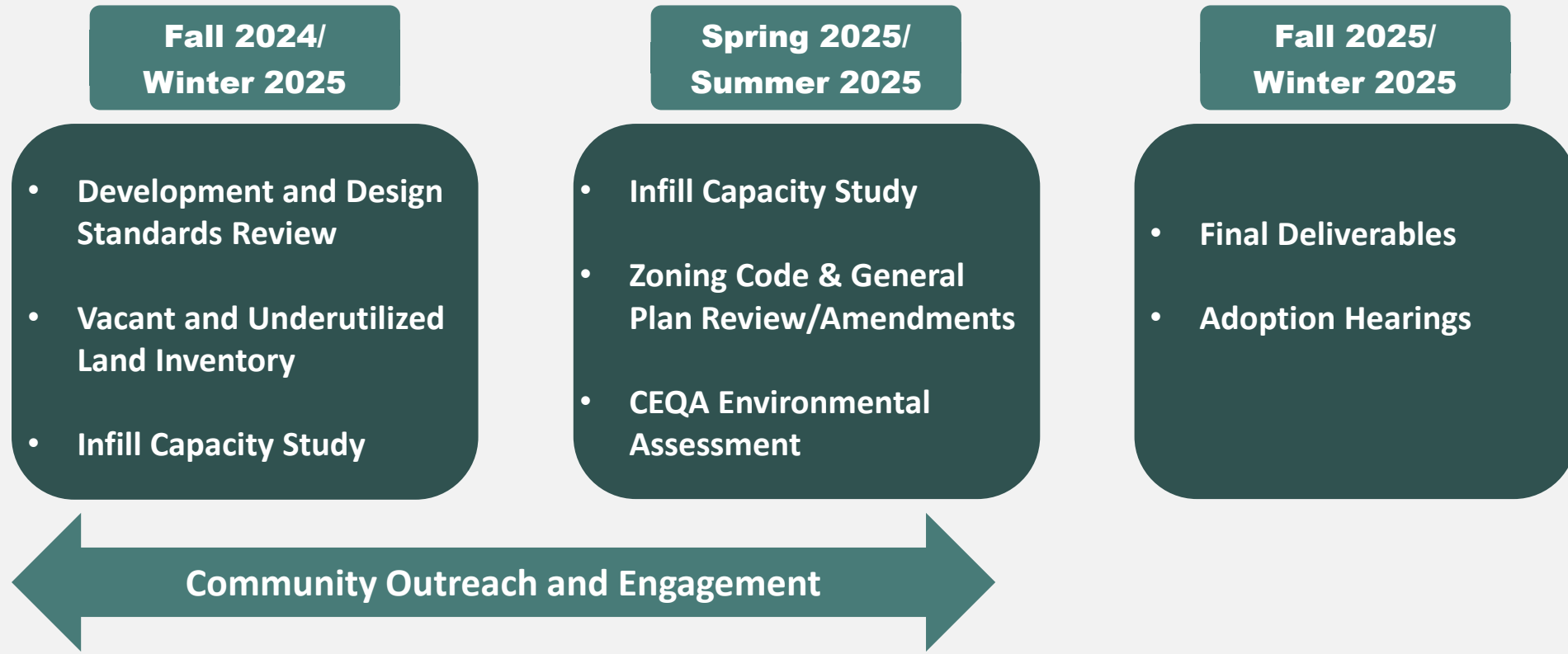
- Vacant and Underutilized Lands Inventory
- Development and Design Standards Review
- Infill Residential Capacity Study
- Development and Design Standards Modifications

Project Outcome

The outcome will be a set of recommendations for changes to the County's Zoning Ordinance and General Plan (if any) that are specifically designed to encourage housing on eligible infill parcels in Big Pine, Independence, and Lone Pine, taking into account findings on service capacity and environmental impacts.

Project Timeline

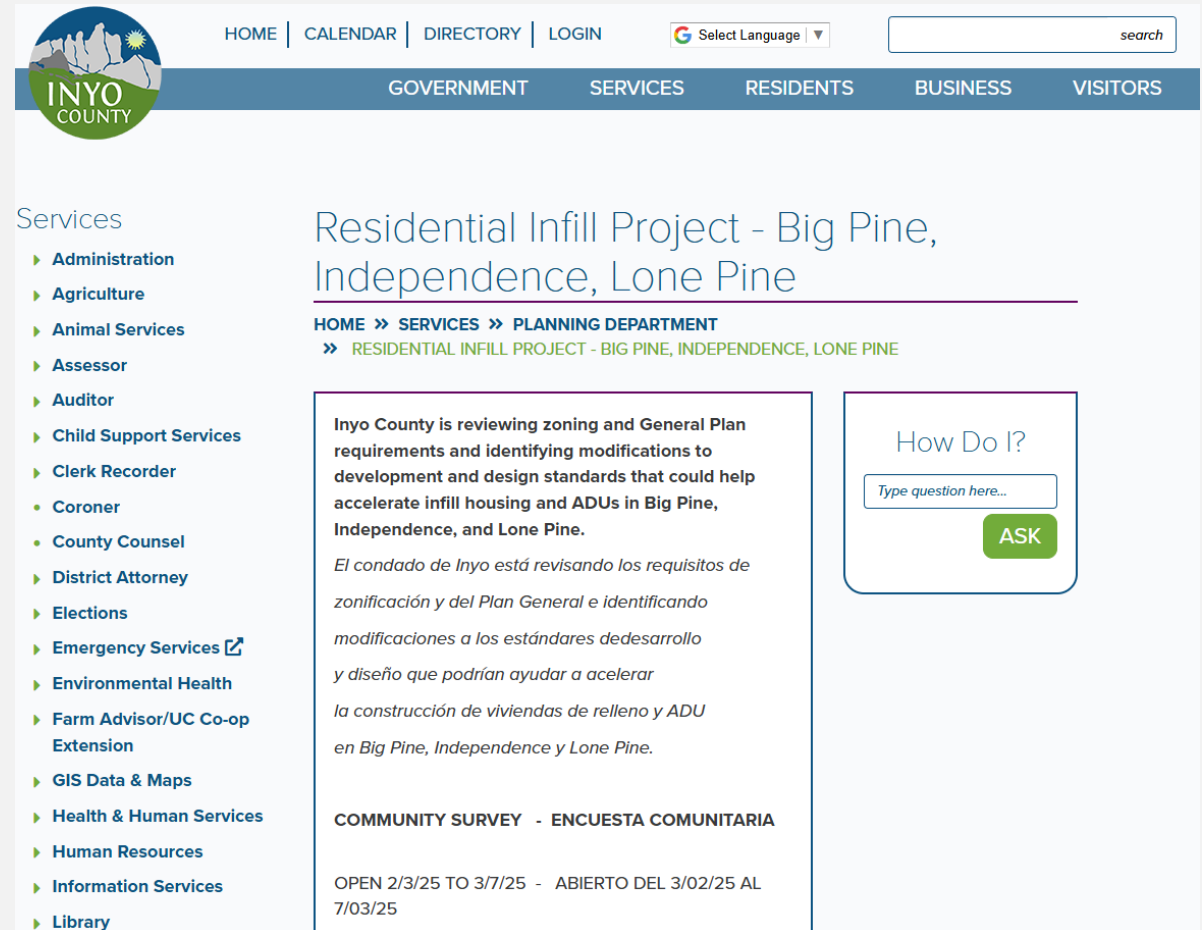
Kicked off in January 2025 with an estimated completion in December 2025.



Project Information

- Project information and updates will be shared through:
 - Project Website
 - Email Distribution Lists
- Visit the project webpage:
<https://www.inyocounty.us/services/planning-department/residential-infill-project-big-pine-independence-lone-pine>

Project Webpage



The screenshot shows the Inyo County website's 'Project Webpage' for the Residential Infill Project. The header includes the Inyo County logo, navigation links (HOME, CALENDAR, DIRECTORY, LOGIN), a language selector, and a search bar. A secondary navigation bar lists categories: GOVERNMENT, SERVICES, RESIDENTS, BUSINESS, and VISITORS. On the left, a 'Services' sidebar lists various county departments. The main content area features the project title 'Residential Infill Project - Big Pine, Independence, Lone Pine' with a breadcrumb trail: HOME >> SERVICES >> PLANNING DEPARTMENT >> RESIDENTIAL INFILL PROJECT - BIG PINE, INDEPENDENCE, LONE PINE. The text states that Inyo County is reviewing zoning and General Plan requirements to help accelerate infill housing and ADUs in Big Pine, Independence, and Lone Pine. It also includes a Spanish translation of this information. A 'COMMUNITY SURVEY - ENCUESTA COMUNITARIA' section indicates the survey is open from 2/3/25 to 3/7/25. On the right, a 'How Do I?' section contains a question input field and an 'ASK' button.

Services

- Administration
- Agriculture
- Animal Services
- Assessor
- Auditor
- Child Support Services
- Clerk Recorder
- Coroner
- County Counsel
- District Attorney
- Elections
- Emergency Services
- Environmental Health
- Farm Advisor/UC Co-op Extension
- GIS Data & Maps
- Health & Human Services
- Human Resources
- Information Services
- Library

Residential Infill Project - Big Pine, Independence, Lone Pine

HOME >> SERVICES >> PLANNING DEPARTMENT
>> RESIDENTIAL INFILL PROJECT - BIG PINE, INDEPENDENCE, LONE PINE

Inyo County is reviewing zoning and General Plan requirements and identifying modifications to development and design standards that could help accelerate infill housing and ADUs in Big Pine, Independence, and Lone Pine.

El condado de Inyo está revisando los requisitos de zonificación y del Plan General e identificando modificaciones a los estándares de desarrollo y diseño que podrían ayudar a acelerar la construcción de viviendas de relleno y ADU en Big Pine, Independence y Lone Pine.

COMMUNITY SURVEY - ENCUESTA COMUNITARIA

OPEN 2/3/25 TO 3/7/25 - ABIERTO DEL 3/02/25 AL 7/03/25

How Do I?

Type question here...

ASK

Community Outreach and Engagement

Workshops

- Community Workshops:
 - Workshop #1: 2/24 – 2/27
 - Workshop #2: 5/20 – 5/22
- Planning Commission Workshops:
 - Workshop #1: 2/25
 - Workshop #2: 5/28
- Board of Supervisors Workshop:
 - Workshop: 5/27

Community Survey

- Survey #1: 2/3 – 3/7
- Survey #2: 5/1 – 6/6

Project Feedback So Far

Opportunities

- General support for more diverse housing options.
- General interest in revitalizing existing areas.
- General support for single-family homes, ADUs, and low-density housing options.
- General recognition of the need for lower cost housing options.

Challenges and Concerns

- Strain on existing infrastructure (water, sewer, emergency services).
- Potential loss of small-town character.
- Increased density impacts (parking, traffic, noise).
- Short-term rental concerns.
- Desire for LADWP land release.



2. Identifying Infill Lots in the County

Infill Focus Areas

Big Pine

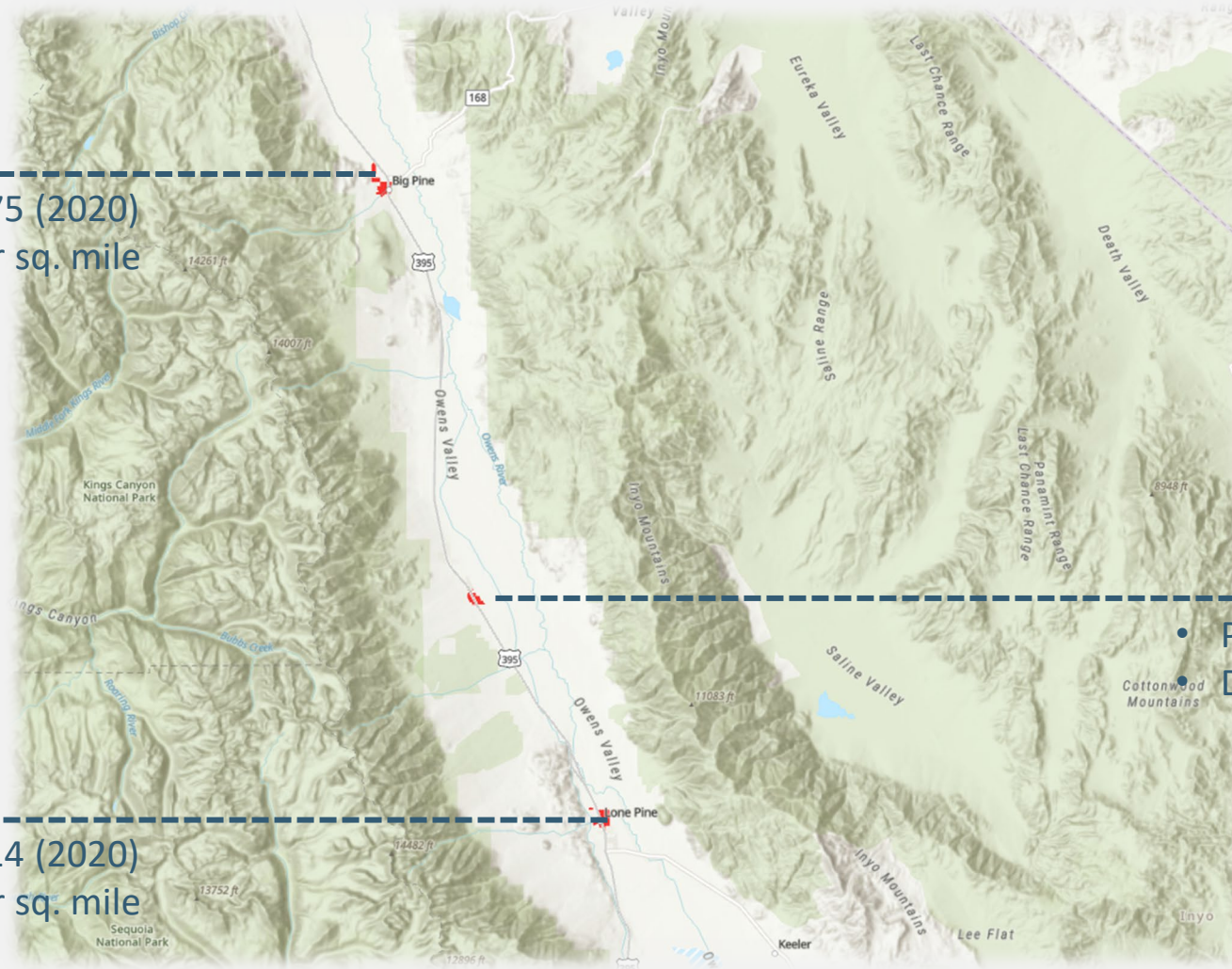
- Population: 1,875 (2020)
- Density: 636 per sq. mile

Lone Pine

- Population: 2,014 (2020)
- Density: 100 per sq. mile

Independence

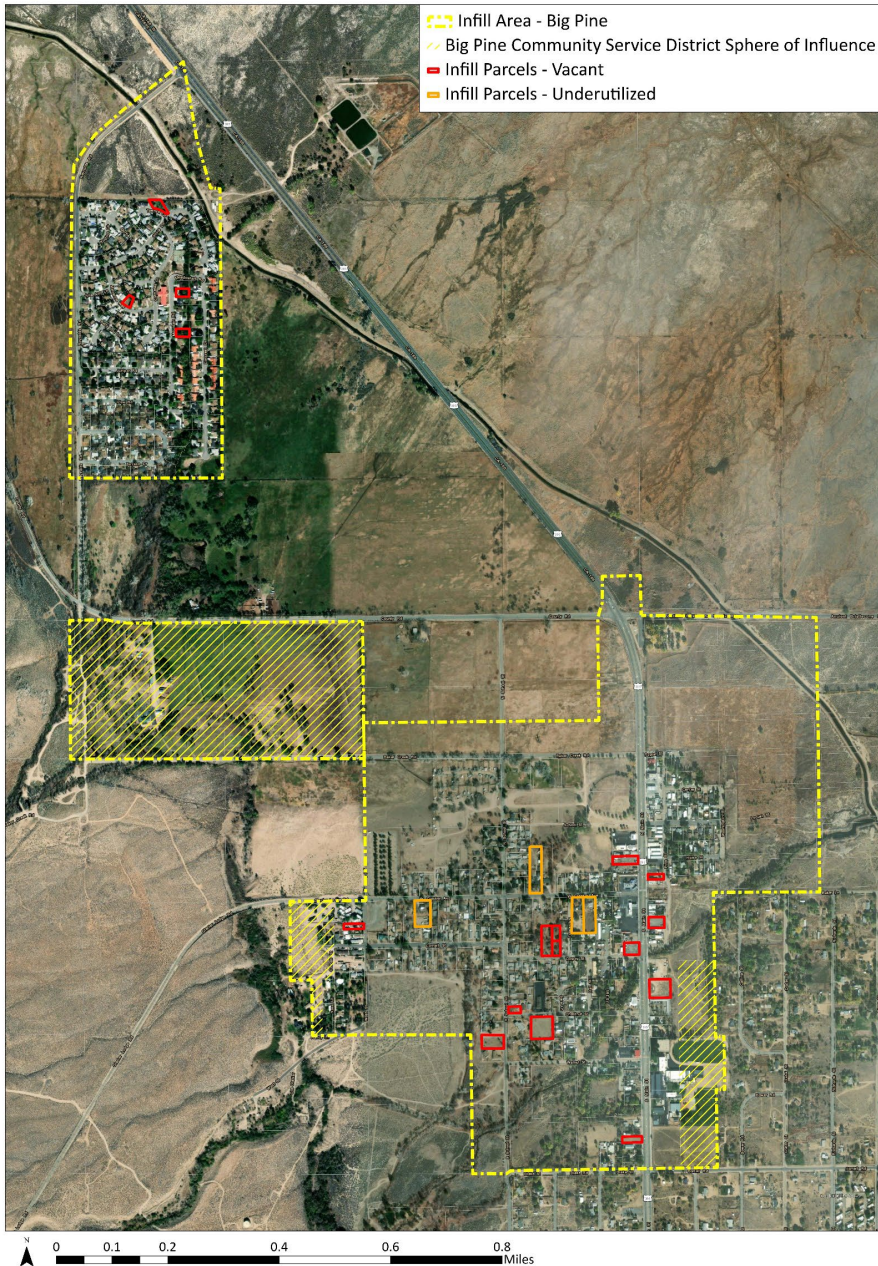
- Population: 593 (2020)
- Density: 120 per sq. mile



 See our printed posters!

Infill Parcels in the County

- Parcels that are located within a Water and Sewer Services District.
- Parcels that are located with a Local Fire District Boundary.
- Parcels that are zoned to allow for residential uses in the Zoning Ordinance.
- Parcels that are not owned by public entities (except some County sites).
- Parcels that are classified as “Vacant” in the County Assessor Data (2025) and verified through aerial imagery, site visits, and permit records.
- Parcels that have an existing residence but could build more units based on the zoning district (e.g., a parcel in the R-3 zone district with a single-family unit).



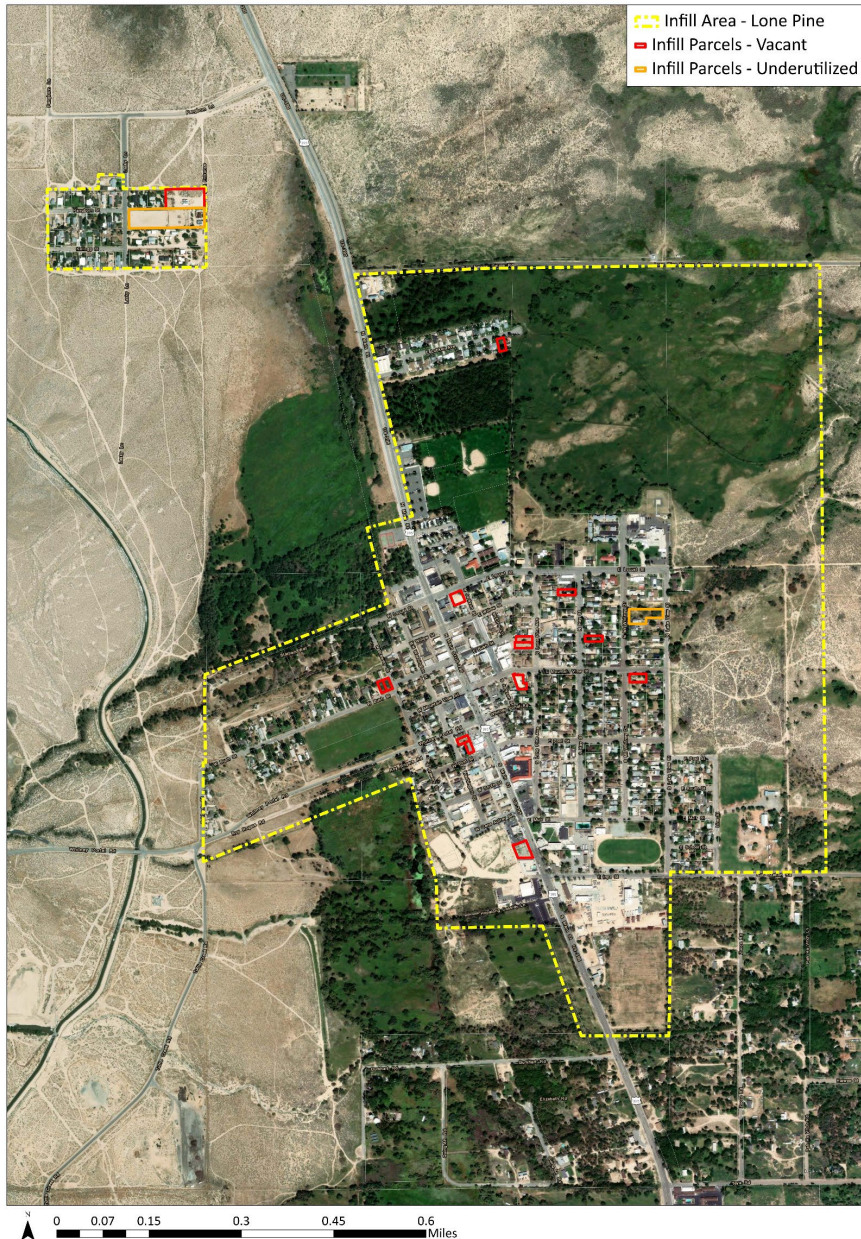
Big Pine

- 21 infill parcels identified
- Parcel sizes range from 0.16 acres to 1.13 acres
- 15 parcels are zoned residential
- 6 parcels are zoned commercial



Independence

- 15 infill parcels identified
- Parcel sizes range from 0.15 acres to 0.34 acres
- 7 parcels are zoned residential
- 8 parcels are zoned commercial



Lone Pine

- 16 infill parcels identified
- Parcel sizes range from 0.11 acres to 2.5 acres
- 12 parcels are zoned residential
- 4 parcels are zoned commercial



3. Identifying Infill Strategies

Density & Zoning

What We're Noticing

The General Plan designates certain zones (like R-1 and R-2) for higher housing density than what current zoning permits.

Example Lot

- **APN:** 004-031-17 (Big Pine)
- **Acreage:** 0.25 acres (10,904 sf.)
- **Land Use:** RM (4.6 – 7.5 dwelling units/acre)
- **Zoning:** R1-5,800 (1 unit per lot)
- Maximum Units Possible:
 - 2 under General Plan
 - 1 under Zoning

How this Constrains Housing

There is a mismatch between the General Plan's intended density and the zoning use restrictions, which limits a property owner's ability to develop the site to the intended density and make efficient use of their property.

Potential Strategy

- Allow units based on General Plan density

Large Lots

What We're Noticing

Some larger lots can't be split into smaller lots and built for housing because the new lots would be too small under current lot size requirements.

Example Lot

- **APN:** 004-031-17 (Big Pine)
- **Acreage:** 0.25 acres (10,904 sf.)
- **Zoning:** R1-5,800 (min. 5,800 sf. lot)
- **Lot Split:** 5,452 sf. (does not meet minimum)

How this Constrains Housing

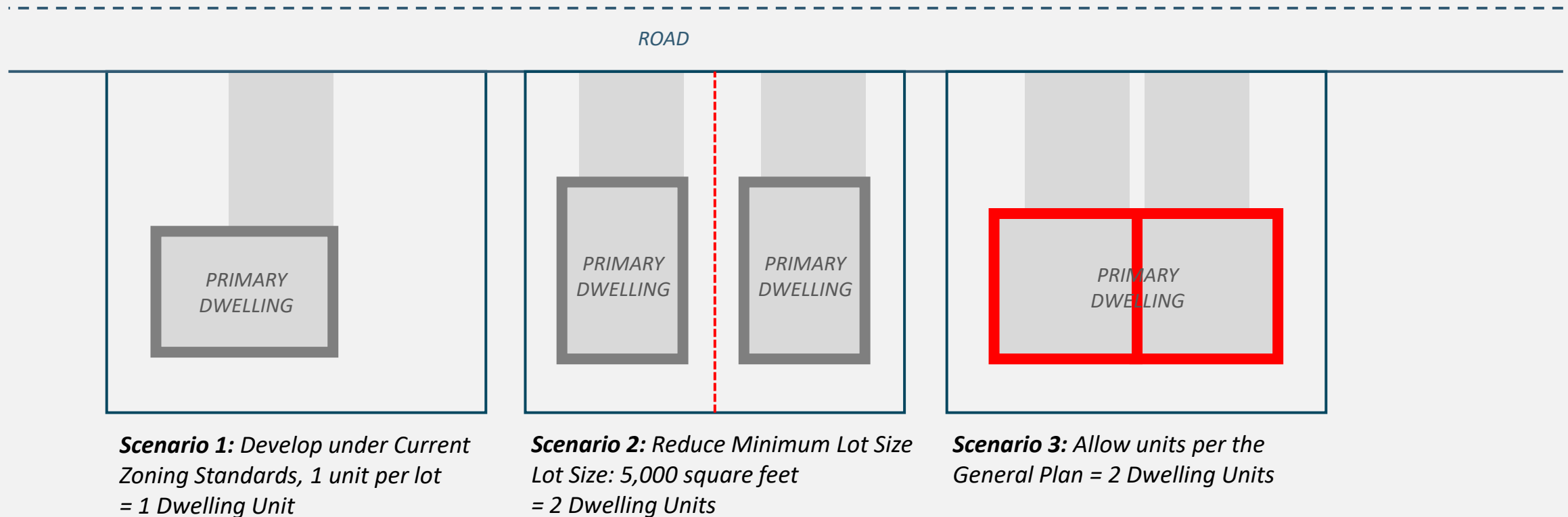
- Prevents creation of new, smaller parcels that could accommodate additional housing
- Restricts density on existing parcels even when the physical lot size could accommodate them

Potential Strategy

- Flexible Lot Size Regulations

Example Scenarios

Lot Size: 10,904 square feet (0.25 acres)
Land Use: RM (4.6 – 7.5 dwelling units/acre)
Zoning District: R1-5,800 (min. 5,800 sf.)
Max. Units: 2 units per General Plan or 1 unit per Zoning



Buildable Area

What We're Noticing

Current setback requirements in the R-1 and R-2 zone districts can limit the amount of land available for building, even on relatively standard lot sizes. Limitations are even more pronounced on irregularly shaped lots.

Example Lots

Lot Size	Zone District	Buildable Area
6,500 sf.	R1-5,800	3,400 sf. (52%)
6,690 sf.	R1-7,200	3,300 sf. (49%)
7,000 sf.	R1-5,800	3,800 sf. (54%)
7,500 sf.	R2-6,500	4,180 sf. (56%)
7,680 sf.	R2-6,500	3,350 sf. (44%)

How this Constrains Housing

- Limits housing size, potentially making it difficult to accommodate larger families or varied layouts
- Renders a significant portion of land unusable for building, making land use less efficient
- Accommodating an ADU in addition to a primary dwelling becomes difficult

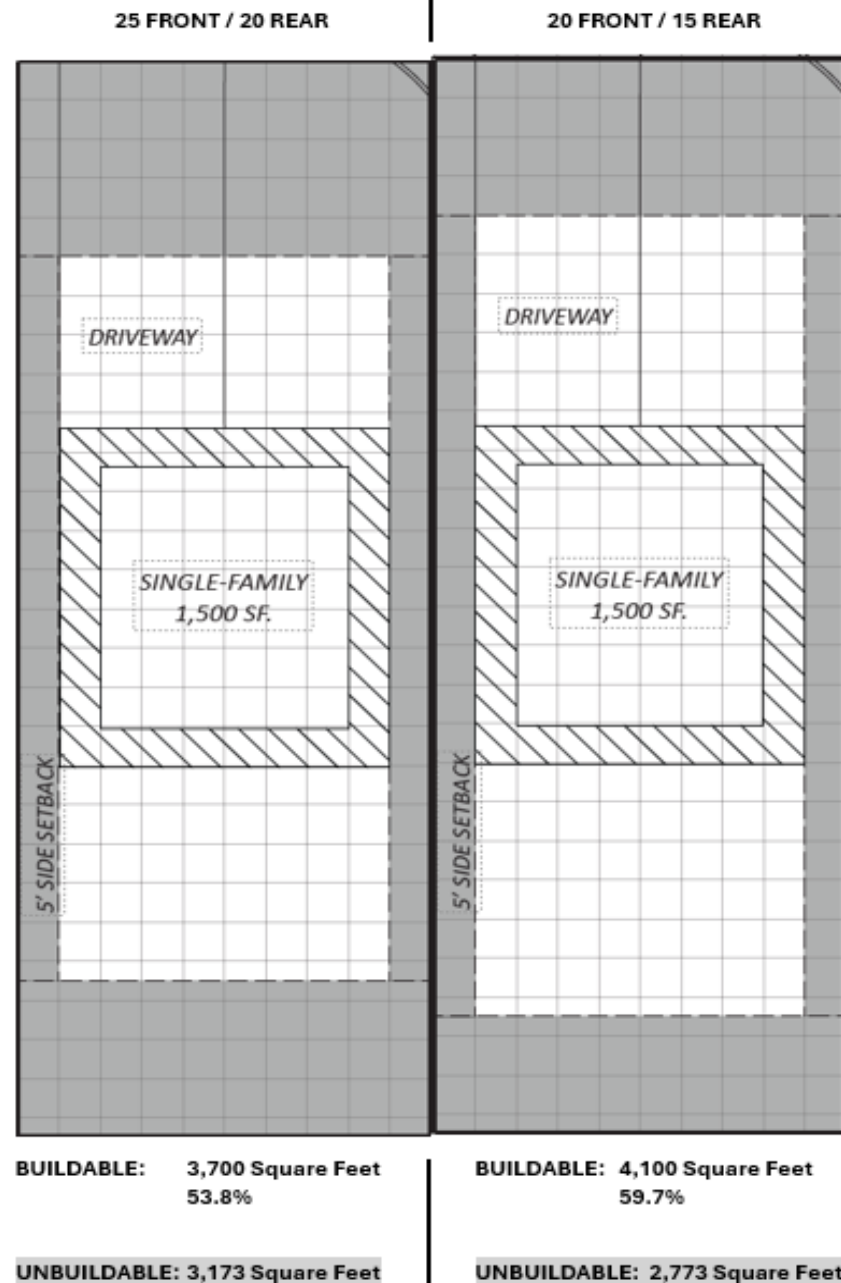
Potential Strategy

- Reduce front and rear yard setbacks

Setback Scenarios

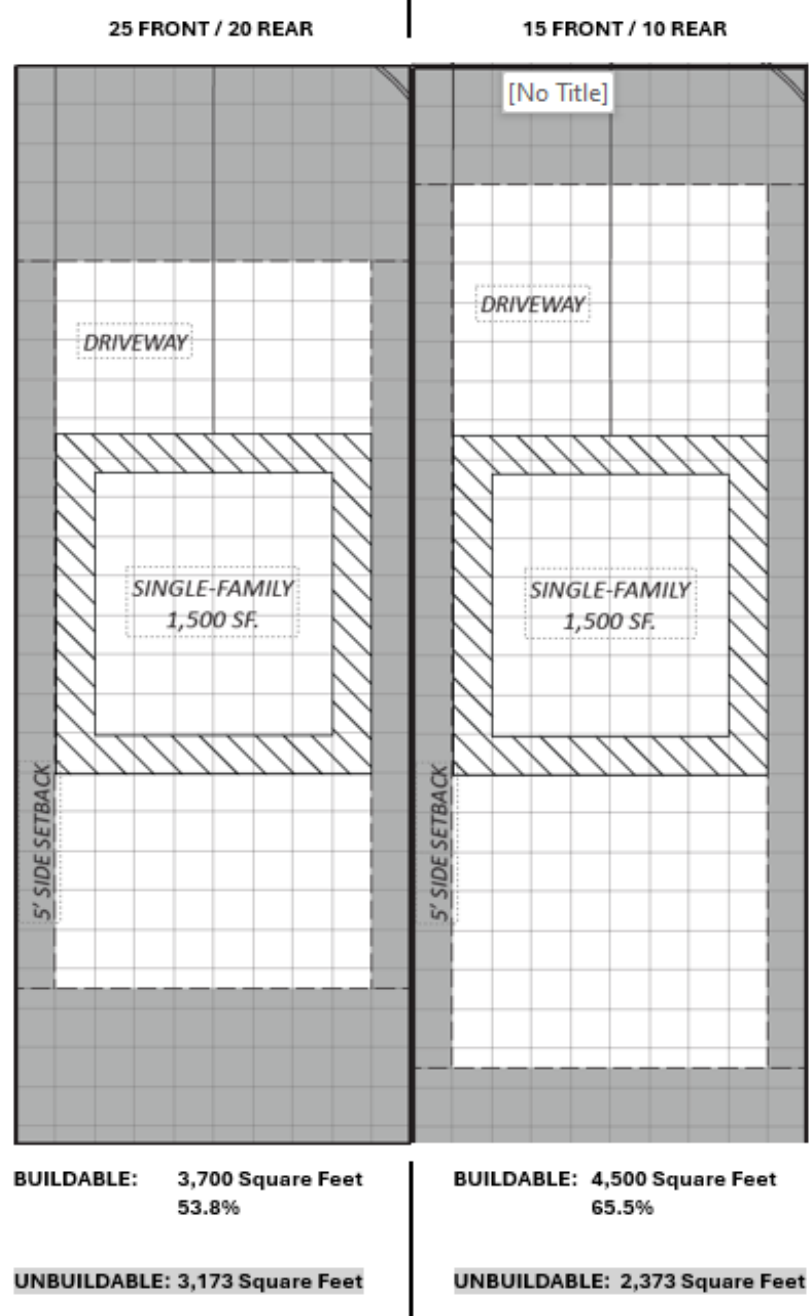
Scenario	Min. Setbacks	Lot Size	Buildable Area		Unbuildable Area	
			Square feet	% of Lot	Square feet	% of lot
Scenario 1: Current standards	25 ft. front / 20 ft. rear	6,875 sf.	3,700 sf.	54%	3,175 sf.	46%
Scenario 2: 5 ft. reduction	20 ft. front / 15 ft. rear	6,875 sf.	4,100 sf.	60%	2,775 sf.	40%
Scenario 3: 10 ft. reduction	15 ft. front / 10 ft. rear	6,875 sf.	4,500 sf.	65%	2,375 sf.	35%
Scenario 4: 15 ft. reduction	10 ft. front / 5 ft. rear	6,875 sf.	4,900 sf.	71%	1,975 sf.	29%

Scenario 1 Current Standard



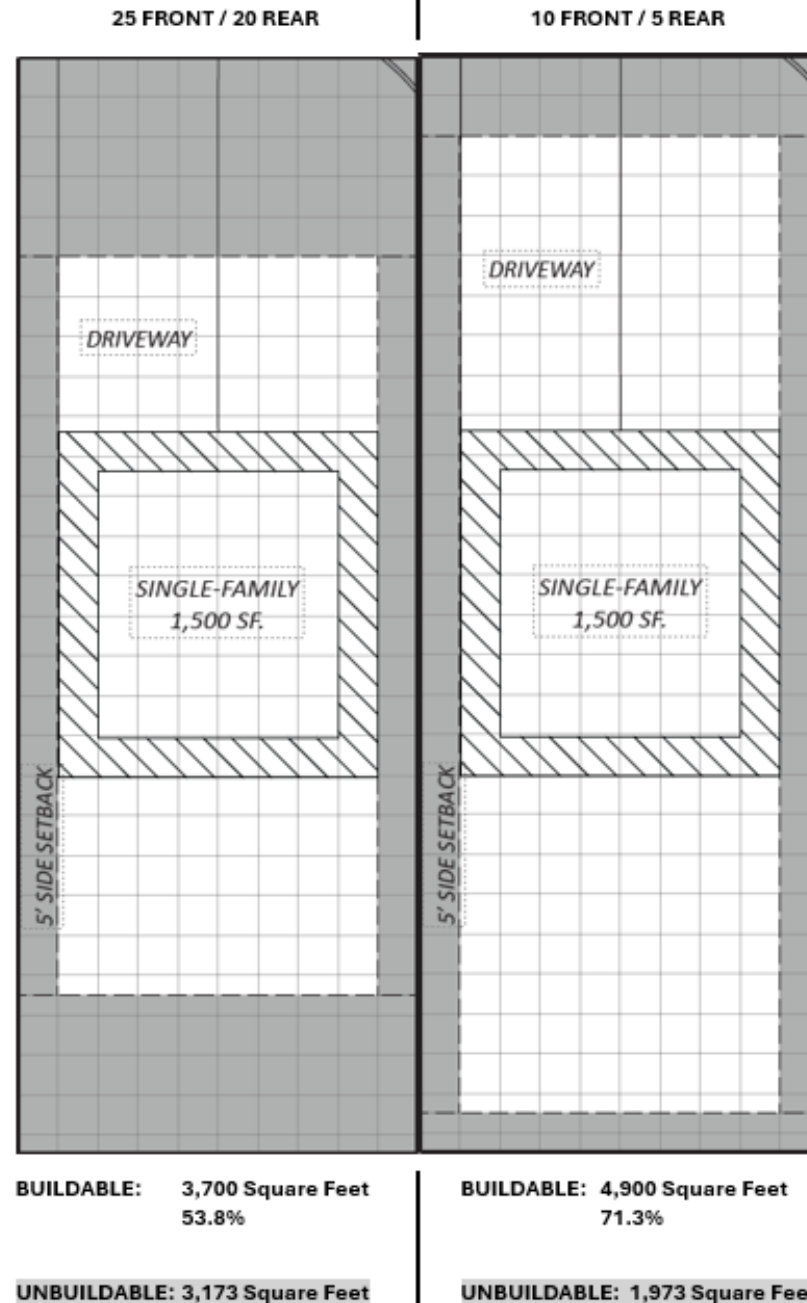
Scenario 2

Scenario 1 Current Standard



Scenario 3

Scenario 1 Current Standard



Scenario 4

Setbacks & ADUs

What We're Noticing

While ADUs could be built in the front yard per ADU State Law, they are subject to the front yard setback standards of the underlying zone district. The existing primary structure's placement, plus the remaining buildable area and setback requirements, often restricts the buildable ADU area to the rear yard.

How this Constrains Housing

- Limits ADU size and configuration
- Reduces accessibility and visibility, and potentially complicates utility connections
- Missed opportunities for different types of ADUs, such as detached units with a different orientation

Potential Strategy

- Reduce front yard setbacks

Additional Infill Strategies for Inyo County

- **Accessory Dwelling Units Bonus Program:** Allow more detached ADUs on eligible infill parcels in Big Pine, Independence, and Lone Pine.
- **Reuse of Existing Buildings:** Encourage the reuse of existing underutilized buildings – like vacant residential and non-residential buildings in areas where housing is permitted – for new housing opportunities.



4. Next Steps

Next Steps

Staff will proceed with further exploration, analysis, and refinement of the infill strategies and preparation of General Plan and Zoning Ordinance amendments (as required).

In addition, environmental analysis in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act will be conducted.

Staff anticipates public hearings to occur in October/November 2025.



THANK YOU!

Contact:

County of Inyo

Planning Department

(760) 878-0263