

What is Pro Housing Tabling?

Tabling is an organizing and educational tool where pro housing groups set up a physical presence at a community event or public space to engage local residents in pro housing conversations.

Why Table?



Reach many people face to face



Attendees are open to conversation



Educate about local housing issues



Identify new potential pro-housing advocates



Gives your group a visible presence



Your advocates practice starting housing conversations



Where To Table

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Check your local town or city's cultural calendar for a list of festivals, fairs and other public events. Spring and fall are often busy times for events.

EXAMPLES INCLUDE

- Earth Day
- Juneteenth
- Farmers Markets
- Harvest Fairs
- Village Days and more.

IN BUSY PUBLIC PLACES

Check with the local town/city hall the feasibility of setting up a tabling presence.

EXAMPLES INCLUDE

- At local parks and playgrounds to reach parents of young children.
- Outside on sidewalks at busy supermarkets.



What do you need for tabling?

BOOTH BASICS

Easels* to hold posters

A table* and tablecloth

A 6-foot rectangular folding table or two square card tables. A tablecloth with your Pro Housing Organization Logo makes the table aesthetically pleasing.



A tent* with weights

A tent over the tabling site is important to protect against hot sun or pouring rain. Don't forget the weights to stabilize the tent against winds.

AHMA owns a tent that groups can borrow if needed for a day event.

Chairs

It's helpful to have at least two travel chairs for table hosts to sit.

MATERIALS FOR THE BOOTH

*AHMA can provide these

Fliers & Posters

Table visitors can engage with posters and take educational fliers to learn more about housing and zoning at home.

AHMA's tool kit contains

- MBTA Communities Law one pager
- "Frequently Asked Questions" document on MBTA Communities Law
- Glossary document of housing and zoning terms.
- **Poster 1:** Which is more eco-friendly?
- **Poster 2:** Guess the density
- **Poster 3:** Benefits of Multi-family housing near public transit
- **Poster 4:** 15 minute neighborhood

Your group can supplement with fliers that have more detailed information and statistics about your particular town or city.

Sign-up sheet

The most important outcome of tabling is to identify pro housing supporters or those interested in learning more.

AHMA's tool kit contains

- A template of an effective sign-up sheet

Tips for sign-up sheets

- **Have room for your own notes** to remind you of your conversations in order to know how to follow up.
- **Follow up with those who sign up** by adding new people to your group's database. Those who are most interested in pro housing can be invited to future meetings or for deeper one on one conversations and be added to your base of volunteers.

Activity for kids (and candy!)

AHMA's tool kit contains

- **Small bowl of candy**
Will become a kid magnet!
- **Activity for kids**
Such as a wooden block set or a magnetic block set, that they can use to build an ideal home or neighborhood.

Tips for kid activity:

Offer a teaching prompt, "build your ideal house" or "build a structure that can house 3 families".

Discuss the benefits of multi-family housing or reflect on home types in the child's neighborhood.

Identifying different types of visitors

Your goal is to **identify the pro housing supporters to join your network** and to **educate those who are on the fence and open to learning about housing/zoning**.

You will most likely encounter three types of visitors



No opinion yet

Those who don't have an opinion and need more information

Focus on these visitors!



It's helpful to engage in meaningful and mutual conversations as well as use the fliers and materials on the table to teach about housing and zoning issues (MBTA Communities Law and what it means for the town/city, benefits of multi family housing near transit, multi family zoning as a sustainability and climate friendly solution, etc)



The naysayers



Be kind and respectful. It is not productive to get into an argument with a naysayer. It is important to end conversations quickly to focus time on others who are more open to pro housing stances.



The yay sayers



Get their contact information on the sign up sheet and identify follow up with specific actions.

"Can we put you on our mailing list?" "Would you be open to coming to one of our meetings?" "Can we set up a time to have a longer conversation with you?"
Tabling is a key strategy to build up a larger base of pro housing supporters.

Tips for having pro-housing conversations

Ask open ended questions

"We're sharing housing stories today. Some people are having a hard time finding housing here in _____. What is a housing story that you might have?"

"Today we are talking to people about housing in _____. What's your thought about housing here?"

"What is your ideal neighborhood?"

Share your own housing story or concerns about housing availability

"I want to live in a walkable community but there are not enough affordable places in walkable neighborhoods for me to live."

"My daughter wants to move back to _____ but there is no place where she can live that she can afford. I'm concerned that our kids can't move back here."

Talk about the MBTA Community Law and the new rezoning in your town/city.

Depending on the community, many people will not have heard of the MBTA Communities Law. Be prepared to answer questions and concerns about housing and zoning changes.

"The MBTA Community Law is an opportunity to bring more types of homes to our community."

"Will create a more affordable, climate resilient town."

Do your research

From AHMA's toolkit

- MBTA FAQ document
- Myth busting document
- Messaging document

From your town/city's website

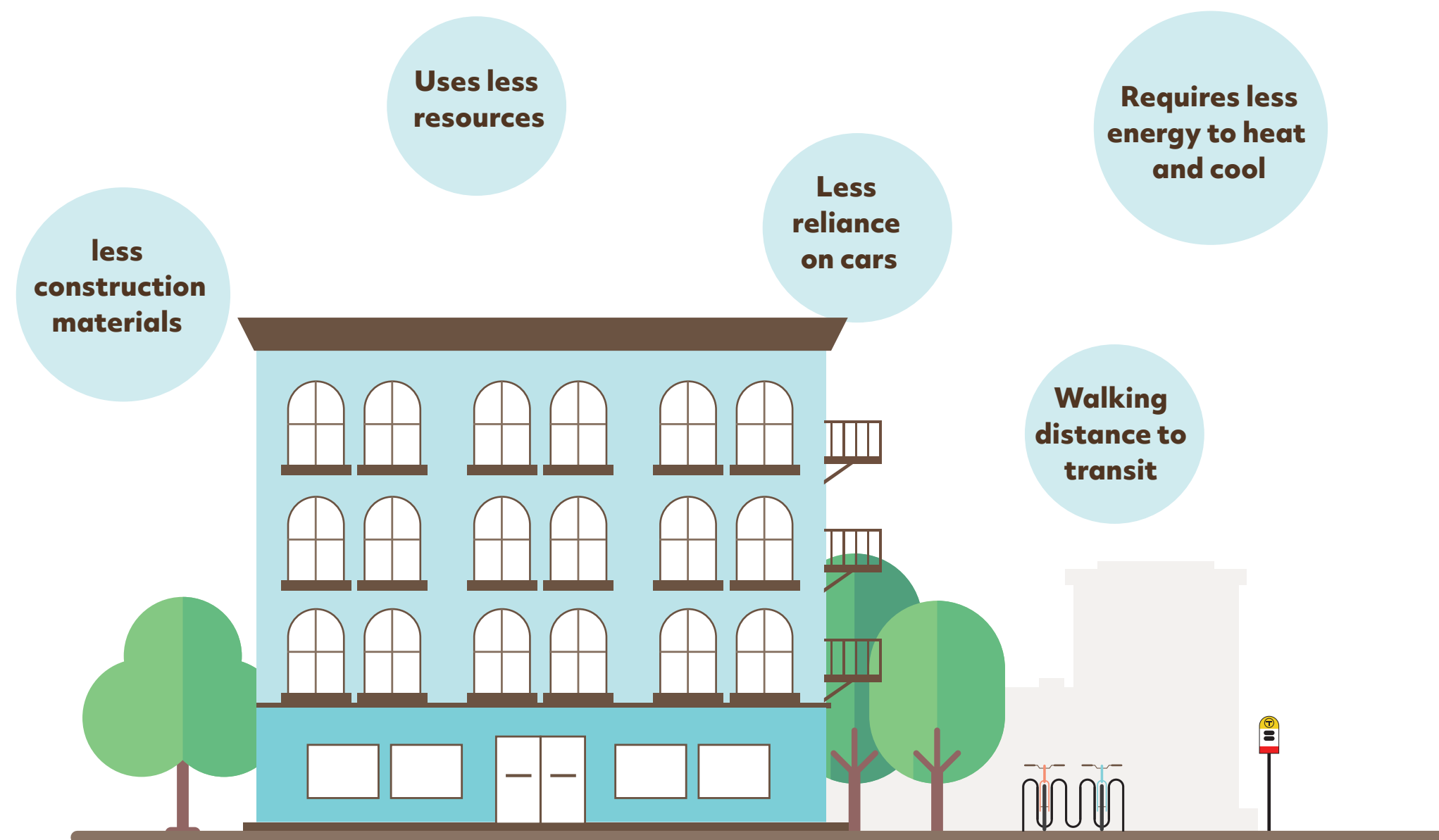
Look up what your town and city is planning for compliance with the MBTA CA rezoning (where will the zone be, what is the timeline for compliance, etc)

Remember...

You don't have to be an expert in housing to have a good housing conversation with someone at a table. It's acceptable not to have all the answers to questions. A humble, "That's a good question. I don't have the answer but if you want to leave your information, I can do some research and get back to you on that."

Great conversations take both listening and sharing. Lived experience is just as important as technical expertise.

Which type of housing is more eco-friendly?



**One nine-unit building
near public transit**



Nine single-family houses

Guess which photos depict ~15 homes per acre density*?

**The density requirement of the new MBTA Communities Law*

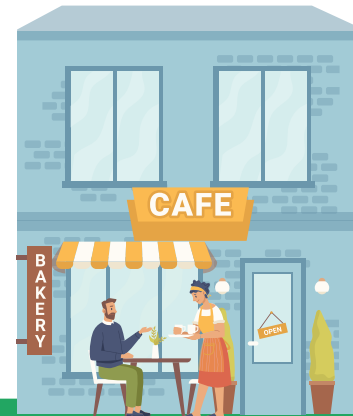


Hint – there are 5

Benefits of multi-family housing near public transit



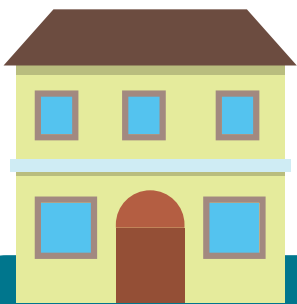
More housing options for all



Small businesses can retain employees



More walkable neighborhoods



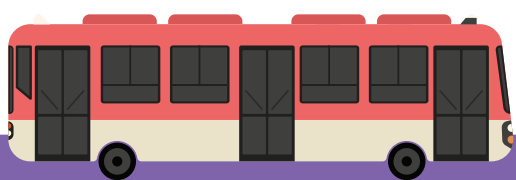
Empty nesters can downsize



Low-income families can find housing stability



Greater housing affordability



People who don't or can't drive are still connected to their towns



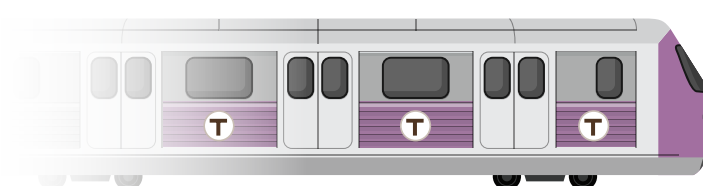
College kids can come home and rent their first apartment



Young couples can become homeowners



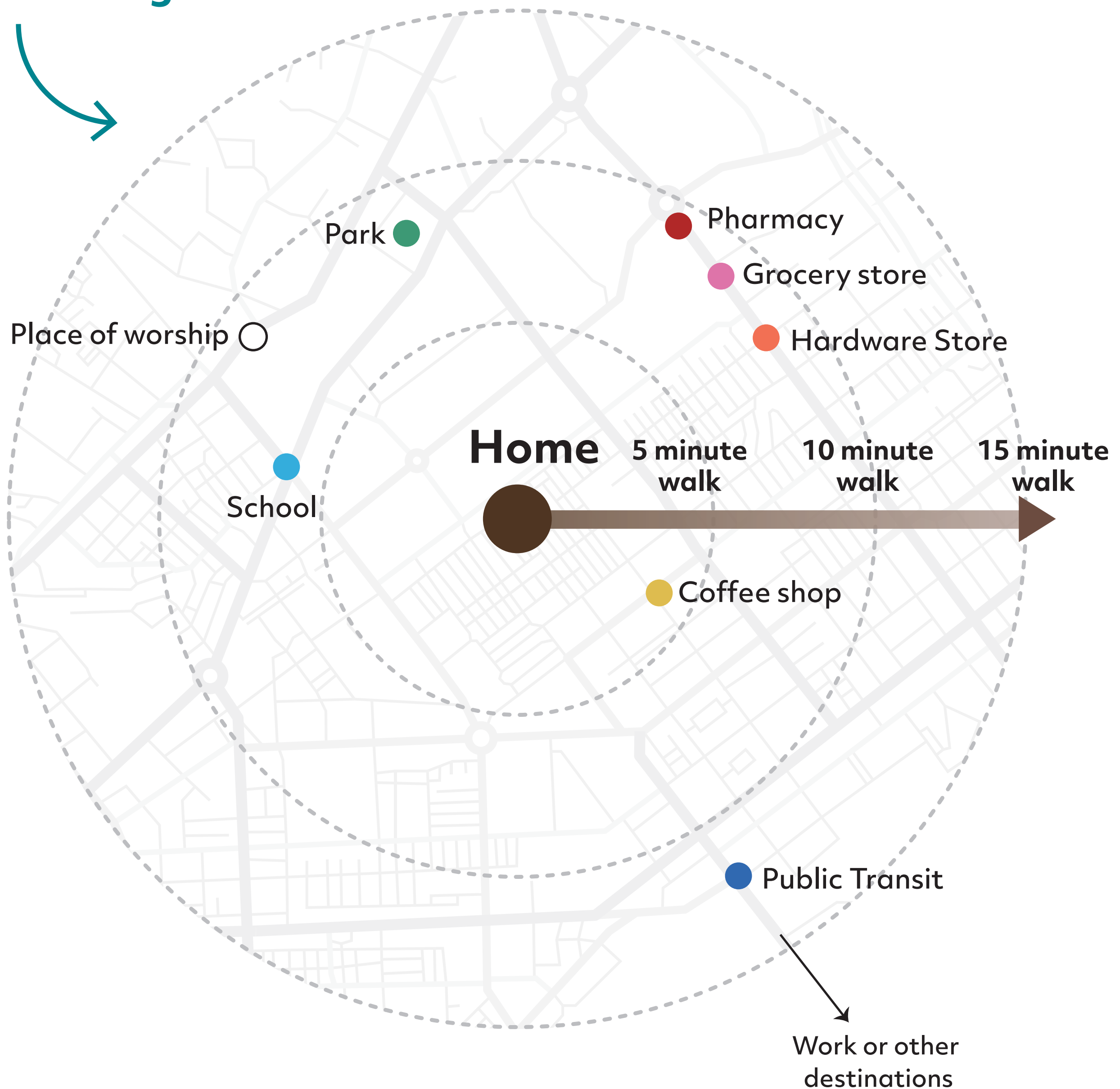
Grandparents can stay close to their grandchildren



Lower carbon footprint

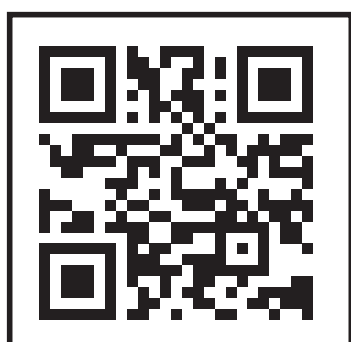
We are trying to create more “15 minute” neighborhoods

Example of a very walkable neighborhood



How walkable is *your* neighborhood?

Get your
walkability
score here:



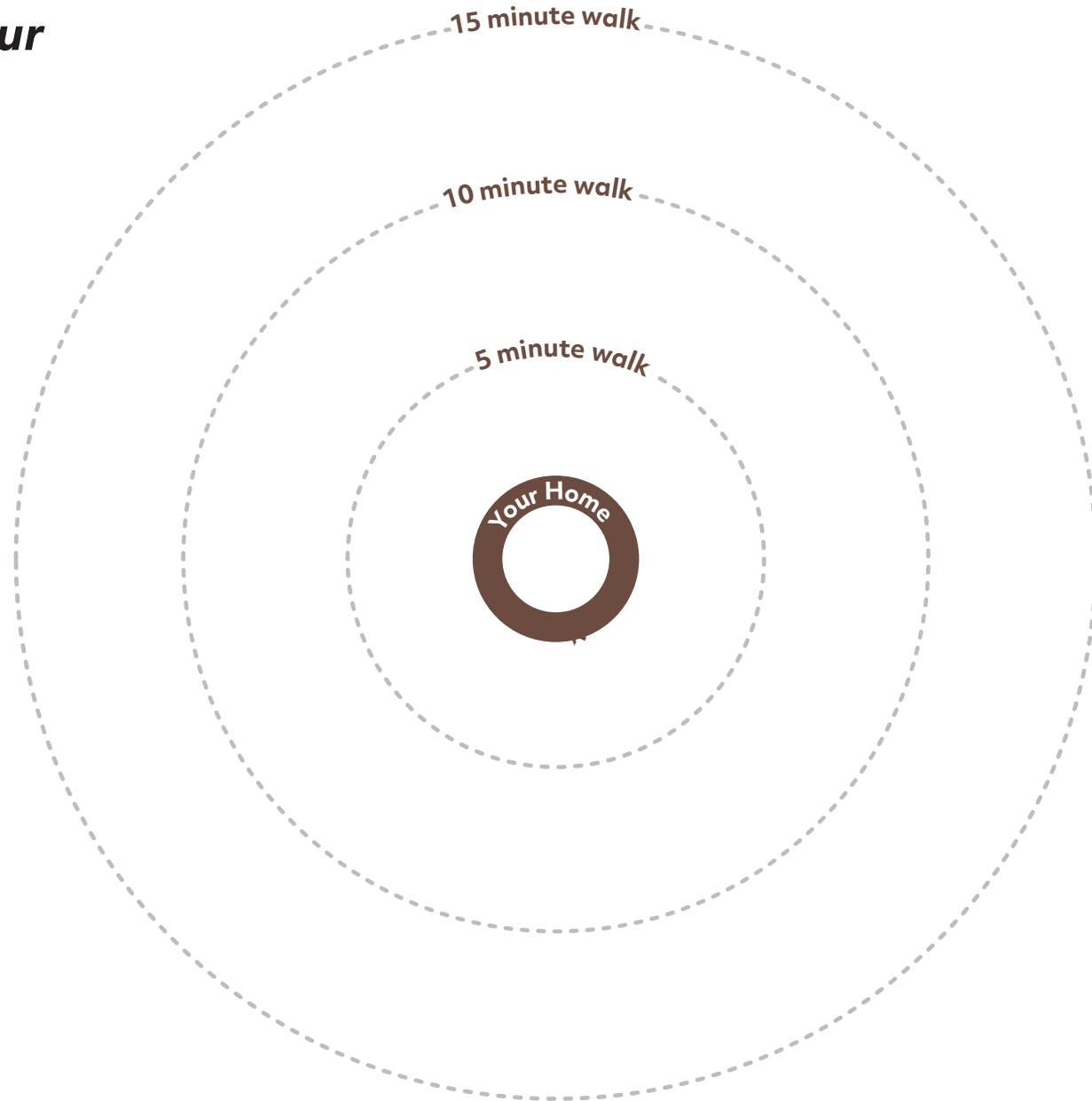
walkscore.com

How walkable is *your* neighborhood?

Draw a simple map of your neighborhood and indicate how far away these destinations are.

Create a color code by using markers to fill in the dots.

- ☐ Coffee shop
- ☐ Grocery store
- ☐ Hardware Store
- ☐ Park
- ☐ Pharmacy
- ☐ Place of worship
- ☐ Public Transit
- ☐ School
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____



Get your walkability score here:



walkscore.com

Share your findings on social and check out **#AHMAforwalkability**
#weneedmorewalkableneighborhoods

