

# Property Size Preferences & Value of Outdoor Space Under Intensification



How can high-density living be made more attractive for those living in low-density places? - Emma DeFields, 2013

## Introduction

In 2012, DeFields surveyed 206 residents of the Kitchener-Waterloo area, living in homes with private yards, on their landscaping and property size preferences and their future residential housing plans and preferences. Her work analyzed who might be attracted to high-density living and trade offs between private and public open space. Similar surveys were conducted in 1995 and 2004 under the supervision of Dr. Roger Suffling.

## Key Terms



**Low Density** - single detached houses on medium to large properties



**High Density** - small detached dwellings, townhouses, condominiums, and apartments

## What density do people prefer?



Couples with children  
25-45 year olds  
Household Income \$75K to \$99K



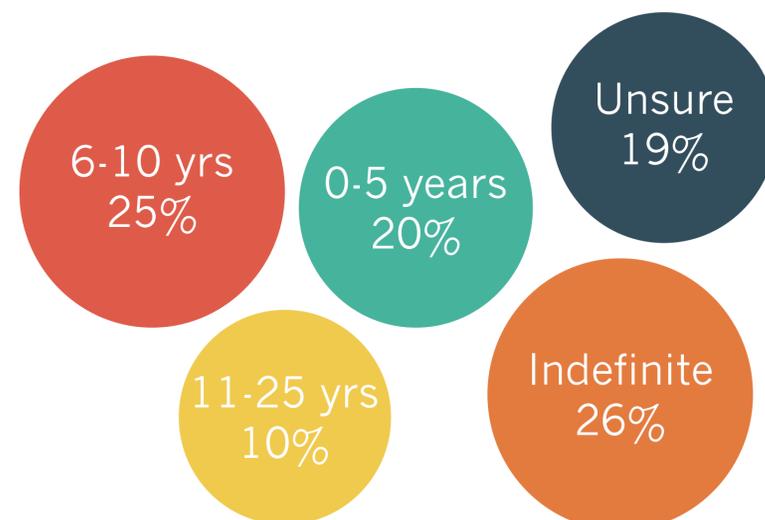
Couples without children  
46-55 & 56-65 year olds  
Household Income \$54K to \$75K, \$100K to \$250K



66+ year olds  
Retired

These groups are interested in higher density homes!

## When do people want to move to a new home?



## What is the most desirable home size given current home size?



Small  
<1000 ft<sup>2</sup>

Of those in **small** homes:

- Most would prefer to upsize to a medium sized home
- Others would like to remain in a small home
- The majority plan to move in the next 10 years



Medium  
<2500 ft<sup>2</sup>

Of those in **medium** homes:

- Most would prefer to stay in the same size home
- About a quarter plan to stay indefinitely, while the majority will move in next 10 years
- Desire private greenspace if they were to downsize



Large  
>2500 ft<sup>2</sup>

Of those in **large** homes:

- Most prefer an equally sized or medium sized home
- Most plan to stay much longer in their current homes
- Older (66+) express a desire to downsize to a small home with private greenspace



# What are the most attractive landscape styles?



Lawn & Foundation Plantings



Flower Garden



Natural Garden



Xeriscape



Stone & Ground Cover



Leafy Perennials

## How do people use their front & back yards?

### Back Yard

Relaxing  
Dining  
Reading  
Parties  
Good View  
Play Area  
Wildlife



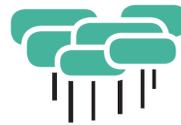
### Front Yard

Gardens  
Car Parking  
Good View  
Watch Street  
Lawn Care  
Talk with neighbours

## What factors are important when you have no yard?



Having a nice view



Close to a park or forest



Having a porch or balcony



Walking distance to urban centre



Sense of privacy

## How do we make higher density living more attractive?

1. Market high density living to aging populations (55 & older)
2. Incorporate private greenspace into higher density living
3. Design open spaces to accommodate private yard uses
4. Preserve urban area forests, parkland, and open spaces
5. Use attractive landscaping styles around buildings