



MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL

Statement on Missing Middle Housing Zoning Petition

The Graduate Student Council (GSC) represents the 6,900 graduate students of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in all matters concerning their quality of life during their studies at MIT. We fully support all measures that ensure access to affordable, quality housing for all MIT graduate student households. As such, we strongly support adoption of the Missing Middle Housing Zoning Petition which will enact important steps towards increasing available and affordable housing in Cambridge.

The [Missing Middle Housing Zoning Petition](#) aims to create missing middle housing, described as up to three story multi-family residences. It would update Cambridge zoning laws to remove prohibitions on new apartments in certain areas, opening more of Cambridge to new residential development, and increase maximum allowable floor to lot ratios. Parking minimums incentivize car ownership and congestion, significantly influencing transportation behavior¹. We also support the removal of off-street parking requirements proposed in this petition, which will encourage use of alternative and more sustainable modes of transport.

With increasing numbers of MIT graduate students and jobs in the area over the past few years, housing availability has not increased correspondingly. Currently, only 40% of graduate students can be housed in on-campus housing, and thousands of students seek housing in Cambridge and the surrounding areas. The development of more housing units in Cambridge is thus of critical importance to our community. While the Missing Middle Housing petition does not guarantee that more housing will be built in Cambridge, we believe it is an essential step in allowing construction of more housing and decreasing rent prices.

Like many cities, Cambridge has a long history of exclusionary housing policies that legalized housing discrimination. Amending zoning laws to eliminate such exclusionary policies is a step towards beginning to right housing inequity and promoting diversity throughout the city. As such, the MIT GSC urges the Cambridge City Council to adopt the Missing Middle Housing Petition to ensure Cambridge can be affordable for everyone, including students.

Prepared by the External Affairs Board on behalf of the MIT Graduate Student Council. January 2021

¹ https://people.ucsc.edu/~jwest1/articles/MillardBall_West_Rezaei_Desai_SFBMR_UrbanStudies.pdf