

# Urban density



# Pros and cons of higher densities

## Pros

- Reduces sprawl and preserves greenspace
- More available amenities and services
- More walkable
- Often more affordable (for the individual and larger community)
- Increased tax revenue
- Improves sustainability of local businesses and services
- More vibrant and diverse
- Safer
- Addresses the needs of shrinking households

## Cons

- Less private leisure space
- Often higher resident turnover and weaker community
- Less vegetation

## Perceived cons

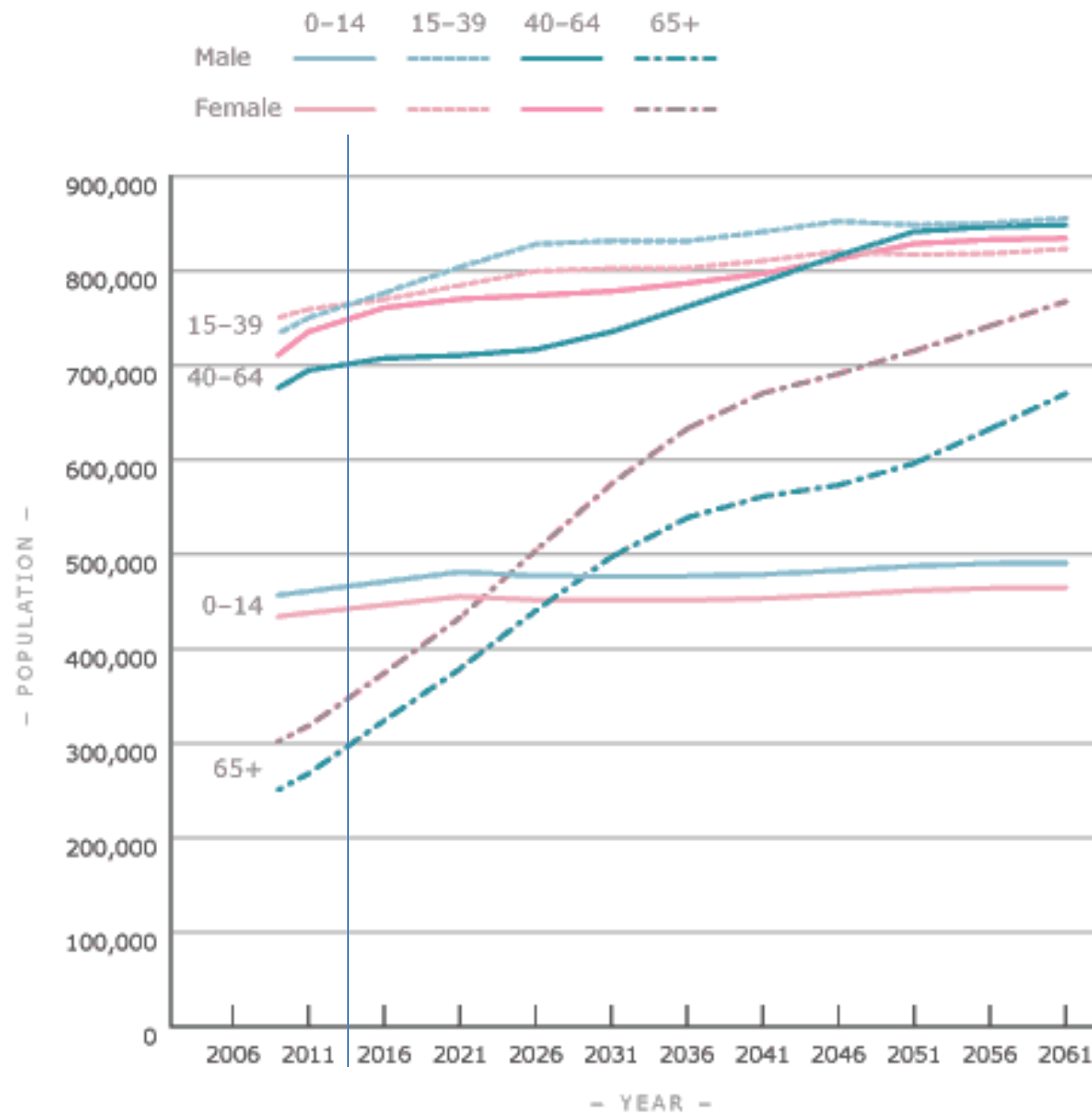
- Noise
- Reduced privacy
- Increased parking and traffic issues
- Forced interaction with others
- Higher crime
- Ugly architecture
- Ghettoization

# Reasons for poor uptake

- Cultural preference for detached single family home on ¼ acre lot
- Memory of leaky building issues
- Failure of investment projects
- Generally ugly and cheaply built architecture
- Concern about long term maintenance and value
- Small, dark, noisy units
- Lack of security, poor community
- Insufficient parking and storage
- Poorly functioning body corporates



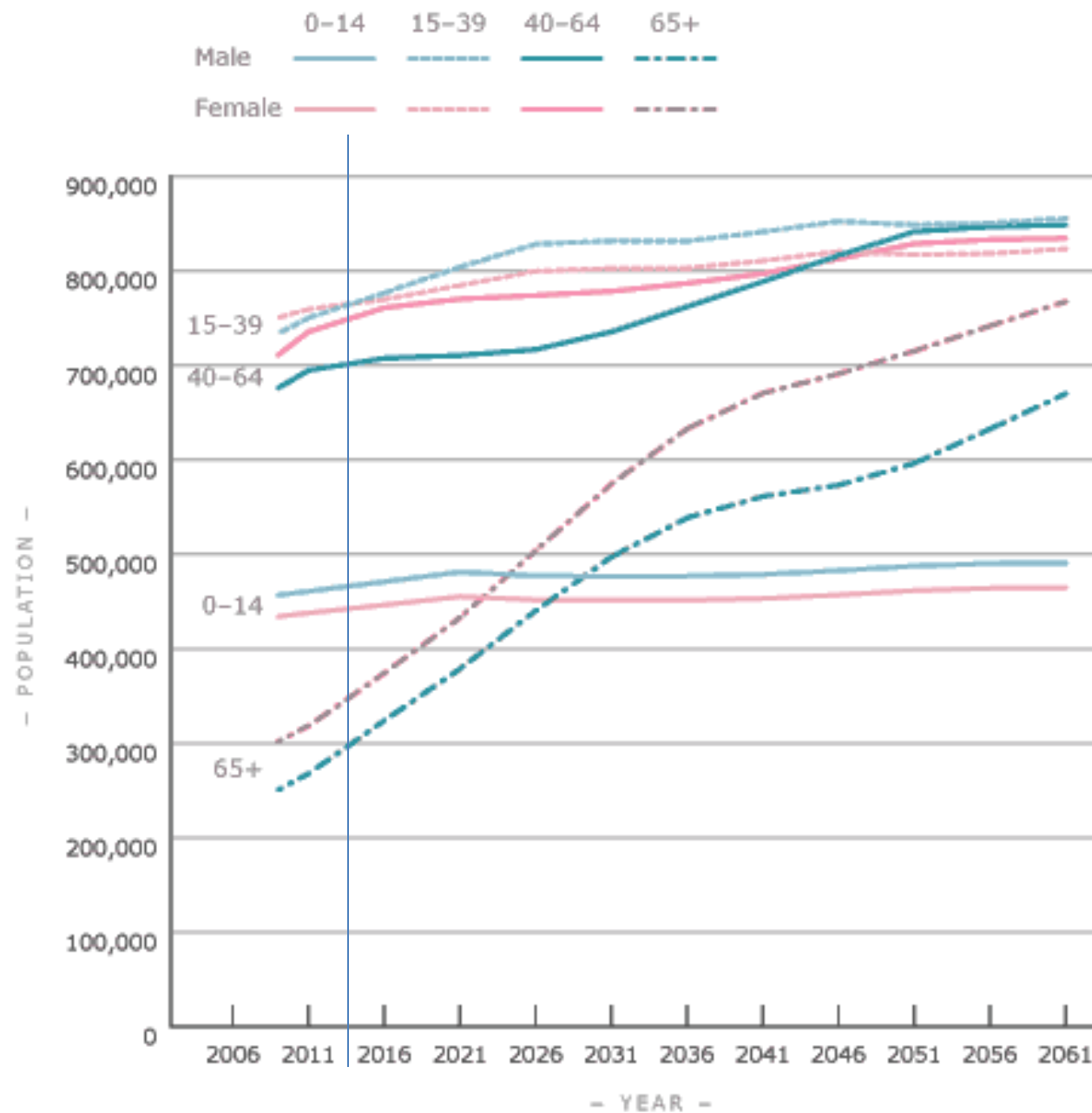
# AGE AND GENDER



# Demographic trends

- Younger adults and childless individuals and couples tend to prefer inner-city locations close to work and vibrant districts
- First home buyers prefer detached homes with a garage and low maintenance
- Families tend to prefer suburban neighbourhoods and town centres, close to family where possible.

# AGE AND GENDER



# Demographic trends

- Families with older children prefer units with access to open space, 3-4 bedrooms, and good insulation
- Older families and empty nesters prefer to remain in their neighbourhoods or suburbs, single level, and low maintenance



# Potential demand

- Projected 26, 950 new housing units /year 2007 to 2016
  - And 28,860 /year 2016 to 2026 (BRANZ 2007)
  - Multi unit to be 38% of this (66% in Auckland)
- However, nationally, only 21% of new consents from 2006 to 2010 were for multi unit construction
- Multi-unit consents fell more rapidly post-2008 than for detached housing

# Broader influences on choice

- Accessibility to the larger city: work, daily services and retail needs, recreation and cultural amenities
- Neighbourhood social and physical character, services, amenities, noise, maintenance, and safety
- Appeal of the building and individual units: light, space, parking, security, privacy, flexibility, character, quality, maintenance, etc.

# Difficulties of increasing density

- Resistance to intensification (change) by existing residents
- Cost and difficulties of assembling land for intensification
- Often a longer consenting process, partially due to design of compact neighbourhoods: setbacks, shading, traffic loads, parking, etc.
- High development levies
- Costs and construction of infrastructure upgrades
- Lack of confidence by banks and investors

# Implementing intensified densities

- Need commitment (developer and local government) to enhancing the quality of the larger neighbourhood through design and amenities
- Need to employ a greater variety of housing options in a wider range of settings than have been previously offered to improve affordability
- Consider current home owners as an additional target market

# Choosing your density

- Need to be clear about the type of experience you want, not just the target market or product type
- **Then** choose the built form that supports this and addresses any site constraints

# Detached units



# Detached units



Swatt Miers Architects, photo by: Russell Abraham, San Fransico



# Detached units



Sumner, Christchurch



# Detached units



Lanefab Custom Homes, Vancouver

# Detached units



Sumner, Christchurch



# Detached units



Ross Chaplan, *Pocket neighbourhoods*, Taunton Press

# Detached units



Project: Umatilla Hill Architect: Ross Chapin Architects Developer: Kimball & Landis Location: Port Townsend, WA



# Cluster development





# Hidden density



# Hidden density





# Hidden density



New Avenue Homes, Berkely, CA



SL Firpo Design Craft, Portland, OR



# Hidden density



Sumner, Christchurch

# Slightly hidden density



Architrix Design Studio, Vancouver



# Slightly hidden density



Lanefab Custom Homes, Vancouver

# Slightly hidden density



Lanefab Custom Homes, Vancouver



# Attached units



BF Homes

# Attached units



Calgary, Metronews.ca





# Attached units



Sumner, Christchurch



# Attached units



Pakuranga Park Village, Auckland

# Attached units



Northwood, Christchurch



# Attached units



Northwood, Christchurch

# Attached units



Christchurch





# Attached units



Tinakori Rd shops, Wellington



# Attached units



San Fransisco, CA

# Attached units



Dutch woonerf



# Mixed density



SWA Group, Santaluz, San Diego, CA

# Mixed density



SWA Group, Santaluz, San Diego, CA



# Mixed density



SWA Group, Santaluz, San Diego, CA



# Mixed density



Orange Splott, Sabin Green, Portland, OR



# Mixed density



Orange Splott, Sabin Green, Portland, OR

# Desired traits

## **Neighbourhood/ Development**

- Mix of housing styles of similar scale
- Services and amenities, including leisure facilities, parks, and safe playgrounds
- Safety and security
- Good access to major roads and transit
- Vibrant, distinctive neighbourhood (perhaps a cul-de-sac)
- Quality controls (design guides or other)
- On and off-street parking

# Desired traits

## Homes/ Units

- Separation from neighbours (noise, privacy)
- Private outdoor space, views of greenspace
- Garage accessed from unit (for parking and storage)
- Spacious, open, bright interior
- Attractive, modern design built with quality materials
- Low maintenance