



Compatible-Scale Infill Housing (R-2 Zones) Project

*An Update to Anchorage's Zoning Rules for Residential Development
in the R-2A, R-2D, and R-2M Zoning Districts*



Community Discussion Draft
September 27, 2018



Annotated Zoning Code Amendments

Comment by October 26, 2018.
See inside cover for more info.

Compatible-Scale Infill Housing (R-2 Zones) Project

How to Stay Informed:

Visit the web: www.muni.org/Planning/2040actions.aspx

Contact Planning: Tom Davis, 343-7916, davistg@muni.org
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Long-Range Planning Division, 343-7921, anchorage2040@muni.org

How to Comment:

Comments on the Compatible-Scale Infill Housing Project **Discussion Draft** will go to municipal Planning staff as part of developing recommended zoning code changes. Please send comments to Anchorage2040@muni.org or contact Planning at 343-7921 or 343-7916.

Comment Deadline:

Your comments on this Discussion Draft are requested by: **5 p.m., Friday, October 26, 2018.**

Send Your Comments to:

Email: Anchorage2040@muni.org

Mail: Long-Range Planning Division
Planning Department
Municipality of Anchorage
PO Box 196650
Anchorage, AK 99519-6650

Next Steps

Anchorage 2040 directs the Municipality to facilitate amending the R-2 Districts to allow compact housing, with neighborhood compatibility standards, through a collaborative public process. After considering public comments on the Discussion Draft, the Planning Department will prepare a Public Hearing Draft for the Planning and Zoning Commission's consideration. At the time, the public will be invited to provide testimony and written comments at a public hearing currently targeted for December 2018. The Commission may amend the proposal and forward its recommended changes to the Anchorage Assembly.

Step 1: Community Discussion Draft

Step 2: Public Hearing Draft to PZC

Step 3: PZC Draft to Assembly

Step	Public Involvement
1. Fall 2018 Discussion Draft	Initial report and <i>Discussion Draft</i> code changes available for public review in September. Initial meetings, consultations, testing, and feedback in October.
2. Winter 2018 Public Hearing Draft	<i>Public Hearing Draft</i> code changes available for public review in November, and a public hearing at Planning Commission currently targeted for December.
3. Winter 2019 Final Draft to Assembly	<i>PZC-Recommended Draft</i> code changes available for public review prior to Assembly hearing, deliberations, and final approval in first part of 2019.

Compatible-Scale Infill Housing (R-2) Project Summary

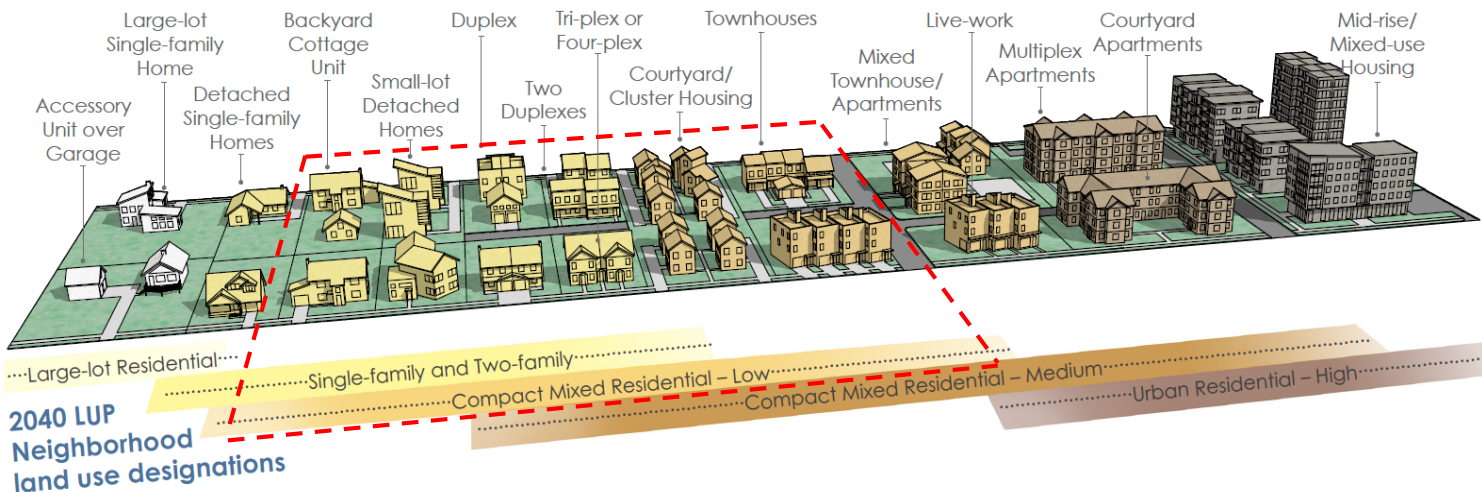
Anchorage's Changing Housing Needs

The Anchorage Bowl population is forecast to grow by up to 21,000 households by the year 2040. Today there is a shortage of “compact” housing that is both affordable and attractive to families. To fill that shortage, new housing will need to occur as **infill** and **redevelopment** in existing neighborhoods. “Infill” is new housing on vacant lots. “Redevelopment” is the enlargement or replacement of older structures with more housing units.

The composition and needs of Anchorage's households are changing. The number of people per household is expected to become smaller with fewer children per household. Household incomes have not kept pace with rising housing prices. Smaller households are likely to prefer or afford more compact homes and live in older neighborhoods near jobs, services, and amenities.

Why Are R-2 Zones Important?

The R-2A, R-2D, and R-2M zones are uniquely positioned for mixed-income, mixed-housing neighborhoods that can accommodate a variety of new compact infill housing: single-family homes, duplexes, townhouses, and (in the R-2M only) small-scale multifamily structures. The R-2 spectrum of housing types is shown in the **red-dashed box** below. This infill housing can be achieved at a scale in a form that fits with existing single-family neighbors.



Project Objectives

This project aims to allow more housing opportunities in the R-2A, R-2D, and R-2M zones, while ensuring the height and scale of new development complements existing neighborhoods:

1. Replace an existing 2.5-story construction limit with a more flexible standard for the size of new housing in proportion to the size of its lot;
2. Reduce height exemptions for rooftop stairwell and elevator towers; and
3. Allow for 3 full stories, while mitigating 3-story building design where abutting neighboring properties.

The existing 2.5-story limitation makes it harder for larger lots in the R-2M zone to fit the actual number of allowed housing units. The proposed code changes remove this housing barrier and better address bulk, privacy, and sunlight issues when bigger, taller homes are built next to neighboring homes. New construction may be bigger than nearby older homes, but it can still be in context with the neighborhood character and scale (as depicted in the diagram above), and avoid overwhelming neighboring properties.

What this Project Does

This project is a targeted amendment to the city's land use regulations (Title 21), so that new housing fits within existing R-2 neighborhoods, and the full number of housing units allowed by the zoning district on the lot can be built.

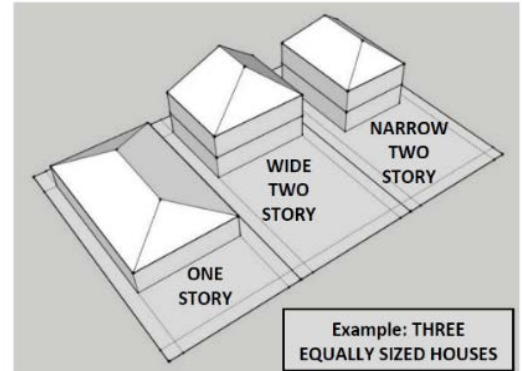
The proposed amendment includes the following three topics:

1. Height and Scale of Houses.

Change the limits on the size of housing structures in order to increase design flexibility:

- a. Remove the 2.5-story limitation, and replace it with a limit on the size of houses and multi-unit structures in proportion to the size of the lot, using a *floor area ratio* (FAR).
- b. Exclude basements, and attics with low ceiling heights, from the house size limits.
- c. Allow extra square footage for detached accessory structures (e.g., garages, sheds, and ADUs).

(Note: This project does not change the 30-foot height limit.)



Three possible configurations of equally sized structures, under an FAR size limit. The FAR closely links building height and building coverage. Housing could either be taller or more spread, but not both.

2. Height of Rooftop “Appurtenances” on Three-story Buildings.

Revise the height exceptions for large rooftop “appurtenances” on top of three-story (30-foot tall) structures in the R-1 and R-2 zones:

- a. Reduce the maximum exempted height for rooftop access stairwells, mechanical penthouses, and elevator enclosures.
- b. Reduce the height exception for solid parapet walls while continuing to allow railings to exceed the height limit.
- c. Exempt small dormers from building height measurement.



Rooftop access stairwell enclosures and railing on a rooftop deck.

3. Design of Three-story Buildings on Smaller Lots.

Improve 3-story building design on infill lots next to other properties:

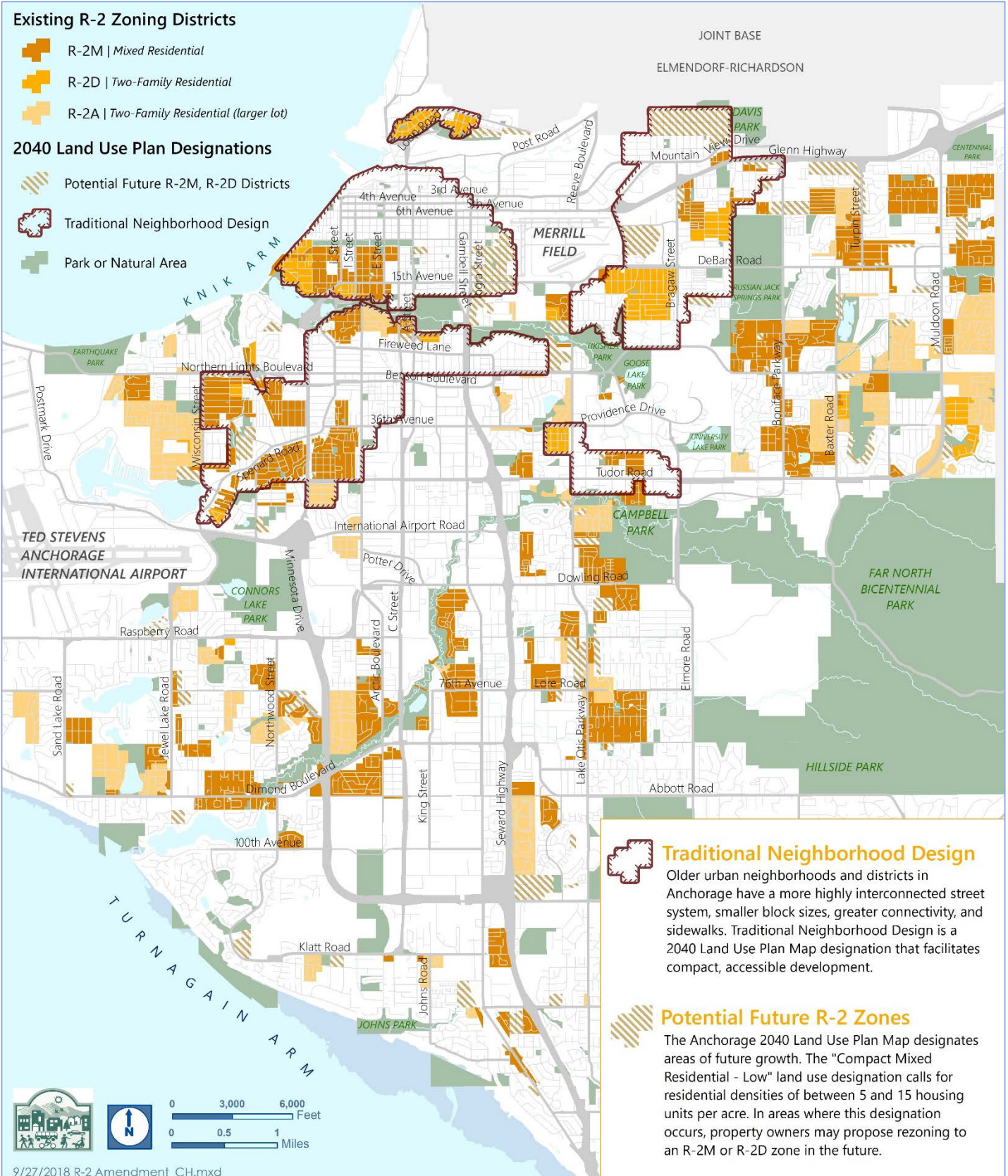
- a. Replace the limitation on the length of 2.5-story buildings with a limitation on the length of 3-story townhouse buildings.
- b. Require that flat, blank, 3-story facades abutting neighboring properties be divided into smaller sections (wall planes).
- c. Limit the height of exterior, above-grade stairs that lead to the main entrance.



Architectural interest on a 3-story façade.

Where are Anchorage's R-2 Zones?

The R-2A, R-2D, and R-2M districts are found across the Anchorage Bowl and comprise about **one-third** of the city's residentially zoned area. More than 30,000 properties are in the R-2 zoned areas below.



What this Project Does Not Do

- Does not change the existing 30-foot height limit, the 40% maximum lot coverage, or required setbacks in the R-2 districts.
- Does not rezone any property or change how much housing or what type of housing is allowed.
- Does not make any existing, legally constructed building a “nonconforming structure” as a result of the proposed FAR building size limits.
- **Does not apply the Anchorage R-2 zoning district’s proposed building height, FAR, or district-specific design amendments to Chugiak-Eagle River’s R-2 Districts (CE-R-2A, CE-R-2D, and CE-R-2M). Also, it does not apply in the Turnagain Arm communities or Girdwood.**
- Does not address all site design and building design issues that affect infill housing, such as parking or driveway requirements, or the allowed number of units on a lot. **For these and other topics, see the other upcoming *Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan* implementation projects below.**

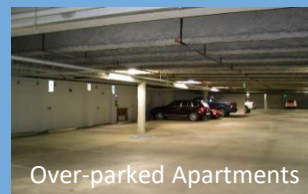
Related Anchorage 2040 Implementation Projects

Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan calls for improving land use regulations for infill housing. The Compatible-Scale Infill Housing project dovetails with the related code amendment projects below.

Draft code amendments for these projects will come forward separately, each on its own schedule:

1. Parking Reductions By-right (2040 Action 4-3):

- Streamlined approvals for a reduced number of parking spaces.
- Increase some percentage reductions.
- Delete duplicative parking requirements for multiple buildings.



Over-parked Apartments

2. Mixed-use Development (2040 Actions 3-1 and 3-5):

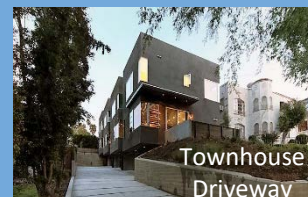
- Make the R-4A mixed-use urban residential zone easier to use.
- Simplify regulations for mixed-use residential projects.
- Fix the CCO zone to better implement goals for town centers.



Mixed-use Building

3. Residential Driveways for Infill Housing (2040 Action 4-6):

- Reduce width of driveways and vehicle on-site circulation.
- Delete duplicative driveway requirements for site condos.



Townhouse Driveway

4. Reinvestment Focus Areas (RFAs) (Actions 2-1 to 2-4):

- Establish RFA approval process and development incentives.
- Initiate the first RFA area, potentially in Spenard/Midtown.

5. Additional Housing Units by Design (2040 Action 4-4):

- Allow lots in multifamily zones to have 1 or 2 additional units.
- Incorporate standards for neighborhood compatibility.



Before

After

Zoning Code Amendments

This section presents the discussion draft code amendment language for the *Compatible-Scale Infill Housing (R-2 Zones)* Project.

The amendments are arranged thematically in order of **the three topics of this ordinance**, and the zoning code sections affected:

Location of Change by Topic and Zoning Code Section	Page
<i>1. Height and Scale of Houses</i>	
21.04.020F.2. R-2M: Mixed Residential District – District-specific Standards	3
21.06.020B. Table 21.06-1.: Table of Dimensional Standards – Residential Districts	5
21.06.030E. Floor Area Ratio (FAR) – Areas Not Considered in Measuring FAR	7
21.12.040C. Nonconforming Structures – Buildings Exceeding Maximum FAR	9
21.14.020 Definitions	11
<i>2. Height of Rooftop “Appurtenances” on Three-story Buildings</i>	
21.06.030D.6.c. Height Exceptions – Building Appurtenances	13
21.06.030D.6.e. Height Exceptions – Dormers (<i>new</i>)	15
<i>3. Design of Three-story Buildings on Smaller Lots</i>	
21.04.020F.2. R-2M District-specific Standards – <i>Mitigation of 3-Story Building Design</i>	17
21.10.040B.6.b. CE-R-2M Mixed Residential District – District-specific Standards	19

How to Read this Document

This document is formatted to ease readability by showing the amended code language on the right-hand (odd-numbered) pages, and explanatory annotation on left-hand (even-numbered) pages. The annotation explains or illustrates how to interpret or apply the draft amendment language. Sometimes the annotation also describes the issue being addressed or the intent of the proposed code change.

The explanatory annotation (left-hand page) is in *Comic Sans Serif* font. Zoning code language (right-hand page) is in *Arial* font and has line numbering in its left margin.

Proposed changes to zoning code language (called “amendments”) appear as “tracked changes” text:

- Added code language is underlined.
- Deleted language is in ~~striketrough text~~.
- Text without underlines, strike-throughs, or highlights is current code language not being changed.

Each page of tracked-changes code language begins with a header showing the chapter and major section that contains the proposed changes. In order to show only those subsections being changed, a set of three asterisks (* * *) indicates that all intervening parts of the chapter are unchanged between the section header above the asterisks and the language shown below the asterisks.

Section 21.04.020F.: R-2M Mixed Residential District

Chapter 4 of Title 21 establishes the zoning districts in the code and provides district purpose statements and district-specific standards. Section 21.04.020F. is the R-2M district.

Purpose statements explain the legislative intent behind each district. They are not regulatory requirements.

The purpose statement for the R-2M district, along with the policies of the *Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan* and other elements of the *Comprehensive Plan*, has helped to guide the draft code changes.

F.2. District-Specific Standards

The R-2M district-specific standards apply in addition to the generally-applicable regulations found elsewhere in the code.

The standard in F.2.b. is intended to help keep taller townhouse structures from becoming as large as apartment complexes that are out of context with the R-2M neighborhood. The proposed change in F.2.b. replaces a reference to 2.5 stories with 3 stories. This reflects other changes in this ordinance that delete the 2-1/2 story limit. It then changes the maximum length from 150 feet for 2-1/2 story buildings to a max of 125 feet for 3-story buildings.

A length of 125 feet typically accommodates five or six attached townhouse units. By contrast, a length of 100 feet would typically accommodate four or five attached units.



10th Avenue Townhouses (4 units)
approximately 3 stories; length is 98'



Mountain View Village (14 units)
3 stories; length is 120' (excluding stair tower)

CODE LANGUAGE to be added is underlined. Language to be deleted is in ~~strikethrough~~.

1 **Section 21.04.020, Residential Districts**

2 * * *

3 **F. R-2M: Mixed Residential District**

4 **1. Purpose**

5 The R-2M district is intended primarily for residential areas that allow for a variety of single-
6 family, two-family, and multifamily dwellings, with gross densities between five and 15
7 dwelling units per acre. The R-2M district provides residential neighborhoods with a
8 greater diversity of housing by allowing a mix of both detached and a variety of attached
9 dwelling types in close proximity to each other, rather than separated into different zoning
10 districts. The R-2M district is to be located in established or redeveloping residential
11 neighborhoods or is to create a transition between single-family, two-family, and higher-
12 density multifamily and mixed-use areas. The design of new development, such as
13 building scale and setbacks, parking facility size and location, and yard landscaping, should
14 be complementary to the existing neighborhood and mix of dwelling types.

15 **2. District-Specific Standards**

16 **a.** Residential buildings shall contain no more than eight dwelling units.

17 **b.** The maximum length of a building elevation that is three two and a half stories in
18 height at any point shall be 125 150 feet. Otherwise the maximum length shall be
19 180 feet.

20

Section 21.06.020A.: Table 21.06-1. Table of Dimensional Standards

Table 21.06-1 establishes the basic dimensional standards for lot size, setbacks, and building size in the residential zones. The R-2A, R-2D, and R-2M zones are excerpted on the next page.

Maximum Height of Structures

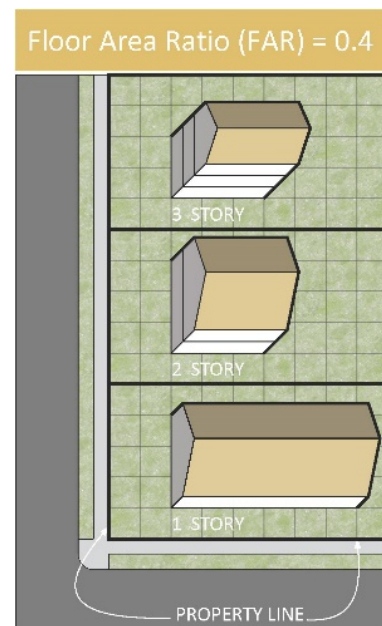
The "maximum height" column on the far-right of the table for R-2A, R-2D, and R-2M districts is amended by deleting the 2.5-story limitation. No change to the 30-foot building height limit.

Max FAR (Floor Area Ratio)

With the elimination of the 2.5-story limitation, a new column with maximum floor area ratios ("Max FAR") is proposed to address building bulk. FAR is a simple tool for keeping the bulk of large structures in proportion to the size of the lot, while providing flexibility in building siting, style, and design. FAR is already used by Title 21 in some single-family, multifamily, and commercial zones. (See FAR definition on p. 11.)

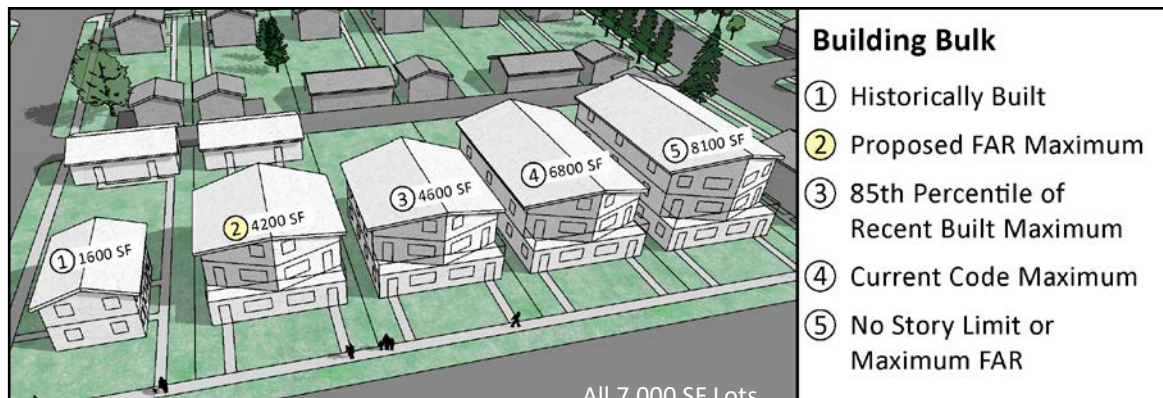
FAR provides for an amount of building square footage (SF) that is proportionate to the lot. It coordinates with maximum height and lot coverage so that the building scale is in context with the neighborhood.

Builders have the flexibility of how to allocate the square footage (SF). At right are three possible configurations of equally-sized structures all having an FAR of 0.4 (four SF of floor area per 10 SF of lot area). The proposed FARs also accommodate the full number of housing units allowed by the district on each lot size.



The illustration below compares the potential size of duplexes on 7,000 SF lots in the R-2M, under current code and proposed code ②. Most housing typically is not built to the maximum allowed size. However, housing unit sizes have increased in recent years. The largest known recently built duplex in

R-2M zone is 5440 SF.



CODE LANGUAGE to be added is underlined. Language to be deleted is in ~~strikethrough~~.

1 A. Table of Dimensional Standards: Residential Districts

TABLE 21.06-1: TABLE OF DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS - RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS (Additional standards may apply. See district-specific standards in chapter 21.04 and use-specific standards in chapter 21.05.)									
Use	Minimum lot dimensions ¹		Max lot coverage (%)	Minimum Setback Requirements (ft)			Max number of principal structures per lot or tract ²	Max. FAR ⁷	Maximum height of structures (ft)
	Area (sq ft)	Width (ft)		Front	Side	Rear			
R-2A: Two-Family Residential District (larger lot)									
Dwelling, single-family detached	7,200	60	40	20	5	10	1	<u>0.45</u>	Principal: 30, not to exceed two and one-half stories Accessory garages/carports: 25 Other accessory: 12
Dwelling, two-family	8,400	70	40	20	5	10	1	<u>0.50</u>	
Dwelling, single-family attached	3,500	35 (40 on corner lots)	40	20	N/A on common lot line; otherwise 5	10	1		
All other uses	7,200	60	40	20	5	10	N/A		
R-2D: Two-Family Residential District									
Dwelling, single-family detached	6,000	50	40	20	5	10	1	<u>0.45</u>	Principal: 30, not to exceed two and one-half stories Accessory garages/carports: 25 Other accessory: 12
Dwelling, two-family	6,000	50	40	20	5	10	1	<u>0.60</u>	
Dwelling, single-family attached	3,500	35 (40 on corner lots)	40	20	N/A on common lot line; otherwise 5	10	1		
All other uses	6,000	50	40	20	5	10	N/A		
R-2M: Mixed Residential District									
Dwelling, single-family detached	6,000	50	40	20	5	10	1	<u>0.45</u>	Principal: 30, not to exceed two and one-half stories Accessory garages/carports: 25 Other accessory: 12
Dwelling, two-family	6,000	50	40	20	5	10	1	<u>0.60</u>	
Dwelling, single-family attached	3,000	35 (40 on corner lots)	40	20	N/A on common lot line; otherwise 5	10	1		
Dwelling, townhouse	2,400	24 (30 on corner lots)	60	20		10	10	1	
Dwelling, multifamily (up to 8 units permitted per building)	8,500 + 2,300 for every unit over 3	50	40	20	10	10	More than one principal structure may be allowed on any lot or tract in accordance with subsection 21.07.110F.2.		
Dwelling, multifamily, with single- or two-family style construction of multiple buildings on a lot	3,000 per unit	50	40	20	10	10		<u>0.60</u>	
All other uses	6,000	50	40	20	5	10			
* * *									
⁷ FAR (Floor Area Ratio) is defined in subsection 21.14.040, <i>Definitions</i> . See subsection 21.06.030E. for exemptions and potential increases to FAR.									

2

Section 21.06.030E.2.: Areas Not Considered in Measuring Floor Area Ratio

Section 21.06.030 establishes the generally applicable ground rules for applying FAR limitations. FAR is defined in the Chapter 14 definitions section 21.14.020. (See page 11).

Subsection E.2. Areas Not Measured (i.e., FAR Exemptions)

Basements, attic living spaces, and certain spaces are not included in the calculation of FAR. The proposed changes to the FAR exceptions for attics and detached accessory structures better address the smaller lots and structures that typify the R-2 residential zones.

Attic exceptions a. and b. are combined into a single, more inclusive exception. It provides for standard roof pitches and "half stories" (defined on page 11) that have dormers and side walls that rise a few feet off the floor.

The attic revision exempts attic spaces with ceiling heights less than 80" (i.e., 6'8", see illustration), which are not counted as habitable area per the building code. Because of their low ceiling heights these spaces have less impact on a building's bulk.



The detached accessory structure exception in item d. is revised to exempt just the first 0.1 FAR worth of floor area. This change addresses the bulk impacts that large detached accessory structures can have in low-rise residential districts like the R-2. See the photo at right of a duplex and its detached garage with a second floor.



The proposed FAR limits accommodate all types of accessory structures allowed by Title 21 (garages, B&B vacation rental units, ADUs, etc.). Including accessory structures in FAR calculations is already administered by Title 21 in the low-density residential zones in Girdwood.

The middle house in the bottom photo puts it all together. Its two main floors count toward FAR. It has a daylight basement that is not counted in FAR. Its attic half-story and detached garage (in back) are partially counted.

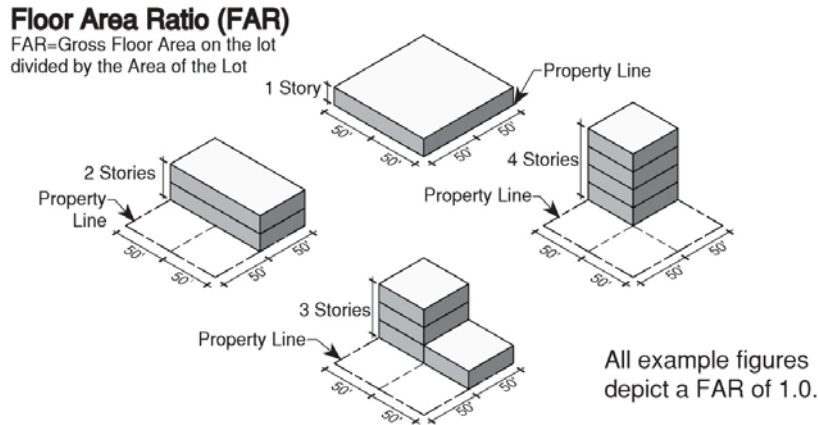


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1 **Section 21.06.030E., Floor Area Ratio (FAR)**

2 **1. Purpose**

3 Floor area ratio (FAR) establishes the amount of use (the intensity) on a site. FAR provides
4 a means to match the potential amount of uses with the intended functions and character
5 of the area and the provision of public infrastructure and services. FARs also work with
6 the height, setback, and lot coverage standards to ensure the overall bulk of development
7 is compatible with the area. It is also the purpose of this title to provide floor area ratio
8 bonuses to encourage development characteristics that advance community objectives,
9 such as affordable housing, below grade parking, and open space.



10 **2. Areas Not Considered in Measuring Floor Area Ratio**

11 Unless otherwise provided in this title, all gross floor area shall be considered in
12 determining FAR except for the following:

- 13 ~~a.~~ ~~Uninhabitable attics in residential structures;~~
- 14 ~~a. b.~~ ~~Portions of an attic or half story where the ceiling height is eighty inches or less.~~
15 ~~Residential space in an attic under a roof slope of between 8:12 and 12:12,~~
16 ~~provided the residential space is limited to one story;~~
- 17 ~~b. c.~~ Crawl spaces less than five feet from floor to ceiling;
- 18 ~~c. d.~~ Floor area in stories below grade plane;
- 19 ~~d. e.~~ Detached accessory structures, up to a combined FAR of 0.1 for all accessory
20 structures on the lot;

21 * * *

22 **3. Maximum Floor Area Ratios**

- 23 **a.** Where Maximum FARs Are Established Downtown and Other Districts
24 For zoning districts in which FARs apply, maximum FARs in the DT-1, DT-2, DT-
25 3, R-4, R-4A, and other districts in which FARs may apply are established within
26 the dimensional standards tables of section 21.06.020 or in the district-specific
27 standards in chapter 21.04. Increases in allowable FAR are available in some
28 districts through incentives ~~also~~ provided in the district-specific standards.

29 * * *

30

Section 21.12.040: Nonconforming Structures

Chapter 12 of Title 21 regulates the continued existence of legal uses and structures that were established prior to the current regulations that no longer conform to the regulations. The acknowledgement and relief granted to existing property and structures provided in Chapter 12 are intended to minimize negative effects on development that was lawfully established prior to subsequent changes to the land use regulations.

21.10.040C. (New): Building Exceeding Maximum FAR

The proposed section recognizes that some existing buildings could become legally nonconforming as a result of the FAR bulk limits. Under the proposed FAR limits, this would be a small percentage of existing buildings. The proposed new subsection 21.10.040C. applies to any existing building that may become legally nonconforming as to FAR, and declares those buildings as conforming.

CODE LANGUAGE to be added is underlined. Language to be deleted is in ~~strikethrough~~.

1 **Section 21.12.040, *Nonconforming Structures***

2 * * *

3 **C. Buildings Exceeding Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR)**

4 **1.** If a lawful building erected prior to **effective date of this ordinance** does not comply with
5 the requirements of this title with regard to floor area ratio (FAR), such building shall be
6 deemed conforming with regard to FAR.

7

Section 21.14.040: Definitions:

Chapter 14 of Title 21 sets forth the terms and definitions used throughout the land use regulations.

"Floor Area Ratio"

No changes are proposed to the definition for FAR, except to add a residential example with a new illustration.

"Story, one-half" and "Story, half"

The current title 21 term and definition "Story, One-half" is deleted, as it will no longer be used once the 2.5-story height limitation is deleted from the R-2 districts.

The replacement term "Story, half" supports the expanded FAR exemption for attics on page 13. The new language is adapted from standard architectural dictionaries, the municipal property appraisal department's manual for describing half-stories, and other codes.

A new illustration is added for "half story."

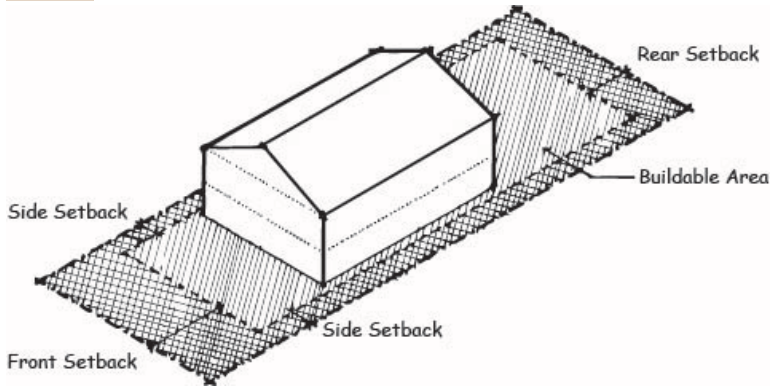
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1 **Section 21.14.040, Definitions**

2 * * *

3 **Floor Area Ratio**

4 The ratio of the total gross floor area of all building(s) on a lot, to the area of the lot. Floor area ratio is calculated
5 by dividing the total gross floor area of all buildings on a lot by the area of the lot. For example, a floor area ratio
6 of 1.0 yields 12,000 square feet of building gross floor area on a lot with an area of 12,000 square feet. A floor
7 area ratio of 2.0 on the same lot would yield 24,000 square feet of building gross floor area. In the example
8 pictured below, a floor area ratio of 0.5 yields 3,500 square feet of building gross floor area on a 7,000 square-
9 foot lot:



Floor Area Ratio (FAR) Example:

Lot Size: 7,000 square feet

FAR: 0.5

Building Gross Floor Area:
3,500 square feet

Illustration assumes two stories of
floor area.

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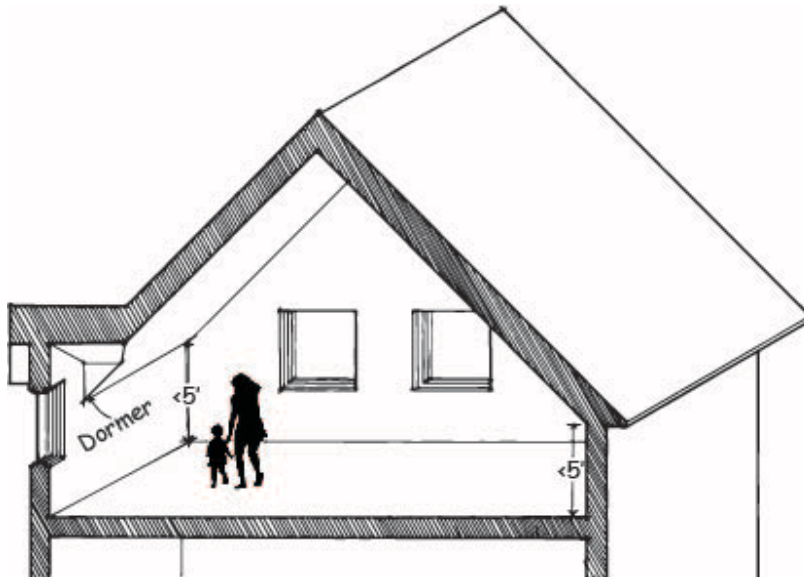
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Story, Half

The uppermost story of a building, located within a sloping roof, in which the height of at least two opposite
sidewalls, not including dormers, is less than five feet and the sloping ceiling replaces the upper part of these
sidewalls. Half stories typically use dormer windows or windows located at the gable end-walls for natural
lighting.



Story, One-Half

A story under a gable, shed, or hipped roof, that that contains habitable floor area, including floor area under
dormers, not exceeding 50 percent of the floor area of the floor below.

Section 21.06.030D.6.c.: Height Exceptions

Title 21 allows building appurtenances to not be counted toward the maximum allowed building height in the district. Appurtenances are things like antennas, chimneys, and rooftop stairwell enclosures. Section 21.06.030D.6.c. sets the rules for these exceptions. While not counted, appurtenances in residential neighborhoods do contribute to the bulk and scale of buildings.

Subsection iv., Height in Excess of District Maximum

The changes to subsection 21.06.030D.6.c.iv. respond to other amendments in this ordinance that enable construction of three-story, flat-roofed buildings with rooftop stairwell enclosures.

Currently, subsection iv. allows stairwells and mechanical enclosures to exceed the R-2 districts' 30-foot height limit by 15 feet. Elevator enclosures may exceed by 25 feet. The proposed changes reduce the exemption for stairwells to 10 feet, and for elevators to 16 feet.

The current exceptions were written for multi-story apartment complexes and commercial office buildings in higher intensity districts, and not for the scale of the R-1 and R-2 zones. Historically, this was not an issue because three-story flat-roofed buildings with stairwell towers were rare in these zones. But recent trends are toward taller buildings with greater massing and height impacts on the neighbors.

The proposed dimensions reflect consultations with municipal building structural reviewers and elevator inspectors regarding the minimum height needs of rooftop access stairwells and elevator models that are commonly used in residential buildings of three stories or less.

The height exemption for solid parapet walls in the R-1 and R-2 districts is also proposed to be reduced, from 4 feet to 1 foot. Solid parapets effectively increase the wall height of flat-roofed buildings, contributing to bulk and shadowing impacts. The new parapet limit reflects consultations with municipal

building structural review staff regarding how much clearance parapets need above the roof surface. The changes still allow open and transparent railings to exceed the height limit by up to 5 feet.



Transparent railing on left and solid parapet at right. Roof access enclosures in both.

CODE LANGUAGE to be added is underlined. Language to be deleted is in ~~strikethrough~~.

1 **Section 21.06.030D.6., *Height Exceptions***

2 * * *

3 c. Except as specifically provided elsewhere in this title, the height limitations contained in
4 this chapter do not apply to appurtenances on buildings, such as spires and similar
5 religious appurtenances, belfries, cupolas, flagpoles, chimneys, antennas, rooftop
6 mechanical equipment and its screening, stairwell ~~towers, and/or~~ elevator
7 ~~enclosures~~ ~~penthouses~~, parapets, firewalls, open or transparent railings, solar reflectors,
8 photovoltaic panels, skylights, or similar appurtenances; provided, however, the following:

9 i. Aviation Regulations.

10 The appurtenance ~~shall~~ does not interfere with Federal Aviation Regulations, Part
11 77, Objects Affecting Navigable Airspace.;

12 ii. Roof Coverage.

13 ~~Enclosed The~~ appurtenances such as stairwells, elevators, mechanical
14 enclosures, and skylights shall cumulatively cover no more than one-third of the
15 roof area of all other the buildings, except that when it has been demonstrated to
16 the director and the building official that building HVAC requirements necessitate
17 a larger mechanical ~~enclosure penthouse~~, the appurtenances may cumulatively
18 cover up to one-half of the roof area.

19 iii. Usable Floor Area.

20 The appurtenance ~~shall not be~~ ~~is not~~ constructed for the purpose of providing
21 additional floor area, usable space, or storage room for the building, except that a
22 storage room of 60 square feet or less, combined with ~~a stairwell tower~~ or elevator
23 ~~enclosures~~ ~~housing~~, and directly related to a rooftop use (such as tool storage for
24 a rooftop garden), is allowed. ~~;~~ and

25 iv. Height in Excess of District Height Maximum.

26 The appurtenance ~~shall~~ ~~does~~ not exceed the height limit of the district by more
27 than 10 feet in the R-1, R-1A, R-2A, R-2D, and R-2M districts and 15 feet in other
28 districts, with the following exceptions:

29 (A) The allowed height of high voltage transmission towers is addressed in
30 subsection 21.05.040J.1.;

31 (B) The allowed height of antennas and other telecommunications
32 infrastructure is addressed in subsection 21.05.040K.;

33 (C) Flagpoles and spires and similar religious appurtenances may exceed up
34 to 30 feet in residential districts and up to 50 feet in nonresidential districts;

35 (D) Elevator ~~enclosures~~ ~~penthouses~~ may exceed up to 16 feet on residential
36 buildings in the R-1, R-1A, R-2A, R-2D, and R-2M districts and 25 feet on
37 other buildings and in all other districts;

38 (E) ~~Parapets, f~~ ~~Firewalls,~~ and skylights may exceed up to four feet.;

39 (F) ~~Parapets may exceed by up to one foot in the R-1, R-1A, R-2A, R-2D, and~~
40 ~~R-2M districts, and by up to four feet in all other districts; and~~

41 (G) Open or transparent railings (see definition for “fence, open” in 21.14.020)
42 may exceed up to 5 feet in the R-1, R-1A, R-2A, R-2D, and R-2M districts.

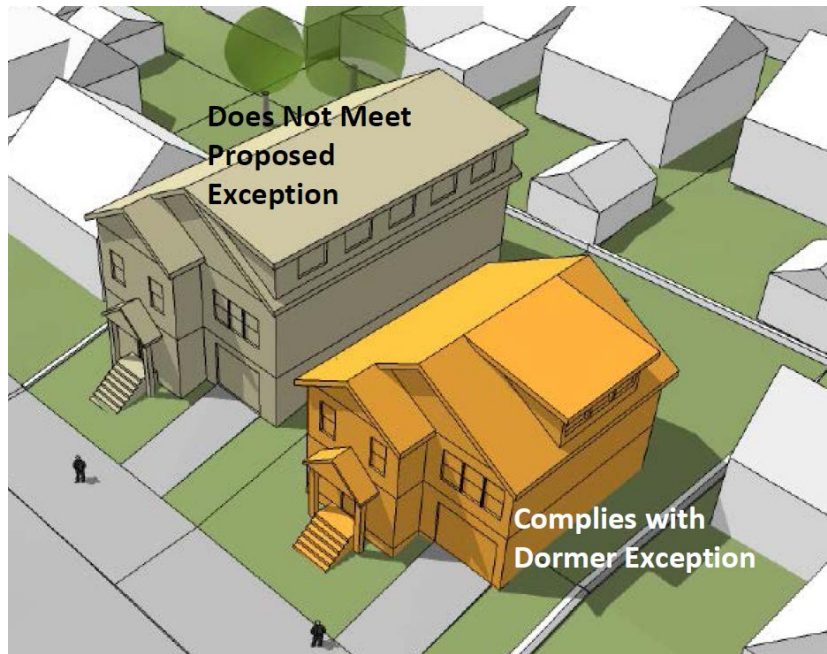
Section 21.06.030D.6.e.: Height Exceptions - Dormers (new)

The amendments on the next page create a height exception for dormers. This change eliminates a disincentive against third floors tucked into attics under pitched roofs. Attic spaces with sloping ceilings are more expensive to build and often need dormers.

When the upper floor is tucked into a pitched roof, it makes a 3-story structure less bulky and fit in better with the existing neighborhoods. Dormers can add useable space and daylighting to attic or half-story rooms. They can also add architectural interest and variety to roof masses. The proposed exception would allow dormers as height exceptions, provided they are sized to remain a secondary roof mass, and are not fully covering the entire top floor as a way to circumvent the height limit.

Currently, dormers are not listed as an exception to the height limit. A dormer typically sits above the lowest eave of the main roof, making the midpoint of a dormer roof higher than the midpoint of the main roof, even when the highest point on the dormer's roof is lower than the peak of the main roof. Therefore, this causes the building to be measured by Title 21 as taller when it has a dormer. This can put buildings with attic living spaces at a disadvantage.

In practice, municipal land use reviewers have not counted small dormers when measuring roof height. There is an undefined, "common-sense" threshold for dormer size. The land use reviewers may determine the dormer is substantial enough to where the measurement of the building's roof height must be to the midpoint of the dormer. The proposed language provides clarity and certainty regarding whether a dormer may be an exception from the height limit.



CODE LANGUAGE to be added is underlined. Language to be deleted is in ~~strikethrough~~.

1 **Section 21.06.030D.6.e., *Height Exceptions (new subsection e.)***

2 **6. Height Exceptions** *(continued from page 7)*

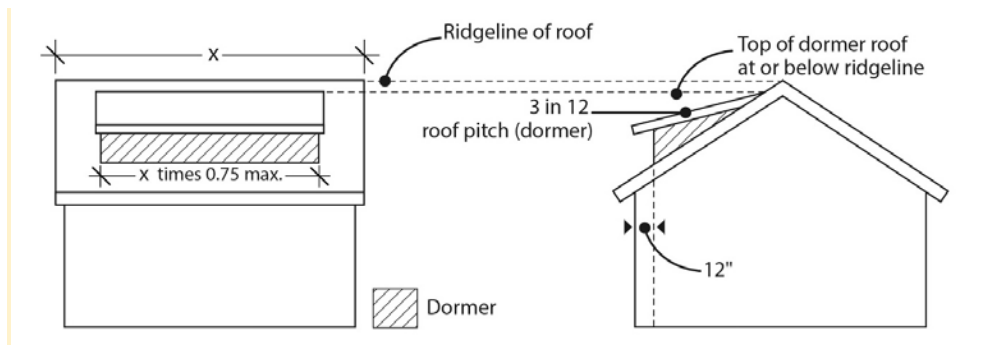
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5 **e. Dormers may extend above the height limit when:**

6 **i. The roof of the dormer has a pitch of at least 3 in 12 and no part of the**
7 **dormer extends above the ridgeline of the roof;**

8 **ii. The walls of the dormer are stepped back at least one foot from the wall**
9 **plane of any exterior wall of the floor below; and**

10 **iii. The width of the dormer(s) is not more than 75 percent of the width of the**
11 **roof from which the dormer(s) project.**



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Section 21.04.020F.2.c.: New R-2M District-specific Standards

New subsection F.2.c. responds to the deletion of the 2-1/2 story construction limit. It seeks to mitigate the adjacencies of three-story, multi-family structures constructed on lots abutting other properties in R-2M neighborhoods.

F.2.c. arises from the concern that if the 2.5-story limit is removed, then it could result in buildings like that shown to the right. Its objective is to promote better design of three-story, 125-foot long multi-unit building walls when abutting other properties in built-up neighborhoods. It tries to ensure large building massing will avoid tall blank walls and is instead articulated down to a scale more compatible with the R-2M zone.



The proposed language applies an existing building articulation menu from the Title 21 residential design standards. It would require that three-story multifamily building walls be divided into smaller, distinct sections (or wall planes) whenever they front on neighborhood streets or face abutting residential properties. See the more articulated facades in the first and second photos below.



Buildings located in the interior of a larger development site are exempted from F.2.c. because they are less of a concern to adjacent neighborhoods.

The proposed language also limits the height of exterior stairs that lead to the main entrance, to "anchor" dwellings closer to surrounding grade and visually reduce the apparent height of the three-story structure. Its six-foot maximum height corresponds with the maximum floor height of the first story above grade as defined by Title 21. Any taller stairs would typically be to the second story above grade.



CODE LANGUAGE to be added is underlined. Language to be deleted is in ~~striketrough~~.

1 **Section 21.04.020, *Residential Districts***

2 * * *

3 **B. R-2M: Mixed Residential District**

4
5 **2. District-Specific Standards**

6 * * *

7 **c.** Three-story building elevations that are street-facing or that face an abutting
8 property with a residential structure shall mitigate scale and height impacts, as
9 follows:

10 **i.** The building elevation shall comply with the building articulation menu of
11 section 21.07.110C.7.

12 **ii.** At least one menu choice selected for i. above shall involve wall plane
13 modulation.

14 **iii.** Exterior stairs providing access to a primary front entrance shall not extend
15 higher than six feet above finished grade.

16 **iv.** Exemptions from this subsection c.: Single-family detached homes are
17 exempt. Building elevations located 50 feet or more from the property line
18 are also exempt.

19

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Section 21.10.040: Chugiak-Eagle River Zoning Districts

Chapter 10 of Title 21 establishes the zoning districts and other land use regulations that apply only in Chugiak-Eagle River. Section 21.10.040 provides the district-specific standards for Chugiak-Eagle River's zoning districts.

Currently, the district-specific standards for Chugiak-Eagle River's CE-R-2M district supplement the Chapter 4 district-specific standards for the R-2M district (pages 3 and 17 above) and are additional requirements. This means that properties in the CE-R-2M district must comply with both the R-2M district-specific standards in Chapter 4 and CE-R-2M district-specific standards in Chapter 10.

While most of Chapter 10 is a supplement that applies in addition to the rest of Title 21, there are exceptions. If any regulation of Chapter 10 conflicts with the other parts of Title 21, then the Chapter 10 regulation governs. For example, Chugiak-Eagle River has its own dimensional standards for lot size and height limits. Therefore, Table 21.06-1 (page 5) does not apply in the CE-R-2M zone.

21.10.040C.6.b.: CE-R-2M: Mixed Residential District District-specific Standards

The proposed new language on the next page exempts the CE-R-2M district from the proposed Chapter 4 R-2M district-specific standards that apply in the Anchorage Bowl. It clarifies that the Anchorage Bowl R-2M standards would not apply in Chugiak-Eagle River.

Most of the R-2M district standards in Chapter 4 are focused on mitigating the deletion of the 2.5-story limit from the Table 21.06-1 dimensional standards for the Anchorage Bowl. Table 21.06-1 (shown on page 5) does not apply in Eagle River, the CE-R-2M district does not contain a 2.5-story limit.

CODE LANGUAGE to be added is underlined. Language to be deleted is in ~~striketrough~~.

1 **Section 21.10.040B.6., *CE-R-2M Mixed Residential District***

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6. **CE-R-2M: Mixed Residential District**

* * *

a. ***District-Specific Standards***

The following standards govern instead of the R-2M district-specific standards of section 21.04.020F.2.b.:

- i. Multifamily buildings shall contain no more than eight dwelling units per building.
- ii. On lots of one acre or more where more than one principal structure is allowed (see table 21.10-6), the development of two to four principal structures on a lot requires an administrative site plan review.
- iii. On lots of one acre or more where more than one principal structure is allowed (see table 21.10-6), the development of five or more principal structures on a lot shall be allowed through the planned unit development



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