

Midtown Community Council
1057 West Fireweed Lane, Suite 100 Anchorage, AK 99503
Executive Letter Concerning
Anchorage Ordinance 2023-66 Changes to Zoning of Anchorage Residential Property
July 24, 2023

Anchorage Assembly Members, Mayor, and Anchorage Clerk

The Midtown Community Council (MTCC) is making the following comments on the proposed Anchorage Ordinance 2023-66.

First off, the MTCC commends the Anchorage Assembly for their desire to address the housing crisis that Anchorage has been experiencing for the last 20+ years. The lack of supply of new housing units in Anchorage is crippling all aspects of our lives. The Midtown Community Council agrees that changes need to be made so that Anchorage can become more dense. Thank you for taking the initiative to address this issue.

That said, it is MTCC's position that the proposed ordinance is flawed. Mainly because there are three easier changes that should be implemented first that will better achieve the Assembly's desire to increase density in the Anchorage Bowl.

It is MTCC's recommendation that the proposed ordinance not be passed BUT that the Assembly immediately starts work on an ordinance that incorporates the following three changes.

Change 1: Change Current Multifamily Zoning Districts

Instead of changing the R-1 zoning district, focus instead on making the existing multifamily zoning districts more effective and denser. This can be accomplished by creating only two multifamily zoning districts instead of the current six. First, combine the R-3, R-3A, R-4 and R-4A zoning districts into the current R-4A zoning district. Second, combine the R-2D and R-2M zoning districts into the current R-3 zoning district. The two new multifamily zoning districts would allow for far greater density than is currently available and make more land available.

Change 2: Change Title 21

Review and makes changes to Title 21 by focusing on the "density killer" aspects of the code. Items to look at might include landscaping setbacks, parking setbacks, building setbacks, the review process, private open space requirements and any other code issues that prevents and limits density.

Change 3: Implement an Anchorage Bowl Property Tax exemption

The final recommended change is to implement an Anchorage Bowl property tax exemption to incentivize multifamily housing. There is currently a "gap" between the cost of new multifamily housing and the constructed value of new multifamily housing. In order to close the gap, an Anchorage Bowl property tax incentive is needed.

In conclusion, thank you again for starting the conversation on how can we get more housing units constructed in the Anchorage Bowl. We know this is a difficult issue and we appreciate the Assembly's desire to work on this.

It is the MTCC's position that the current proposed ordinance should not be passed but instead the Assembly should focus on the above three changes.

Thank you for your time.

Kristine Stoeher
President
MTCC
907-240-4324