

Zoning for Housing/Housing for All Draft Zoning and Policy Revisions

On September 5, the City Council and Planning Commission [received staff recommendations](#) for the nine Zoning for Housing/Housing for All initiatives. Today, draft Text Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance for five initiatives are posted for community review. The Zoning Text Amendments are required for implementation, pending adoption of staff's recommendations. Also, subject to Planning Commission's review, and City Council approval, proposed revisions to the City's Master Plan and to its 2020-2021 Housing Policy Update are required.

Summary descriptions for the five draft Zoning Text Amendments, the two policy revisions, and Master Plan amendments are included below and are also posted in full for the community's review on the project website. The City's third fall hybrid-Community Meeting, to be held October 12, 6 p.m. at Charles Houston Recreation Center, 901 Wythe Street, Multi-Purpose Room, will focus on these proposed zoning and policy changes.

Questions or comments can be posted on the Zoning for Housing/Housing for All [comment form](#) or by emailing the [interdepartmental project team](#). The Zoning Text Amendments and Policy Amendments will be considered by the Planning Commission and City Council along with the other aspects of Zoning for Housing/Housing for All in November.

Summary Statements for the Five Draft Zoning Text Amendments pertaining to Zoning for Housing/Housing for All

Expanding Housing Opportunities in Single Family Zones: Draft Zoning Text Amendment Summary Description

Increasing the types of dwellings – two to four units in one building – in the single-family zones and allowing the building code to determine occupancy numbers contributes to more accessible and available housing opportunities in the city. This is accomplished by changes to the following sections of the Zoning Ordinance:

- Two-family and three- and four-unit multi-family dwellings
 - Article III
 - Sections 3-100 – 3-500 Single Family Zones
- Family
 - Article II – Definitions
 - 2-136 - 2-141 Dwelling definitions
 - 2-143 Family
 - 2-179 Nursing or convalescent home or hospice.
 - 2-192 Roominghouse
 - Article VII – Supplemental Zone Regulations
 - 7-1400 Roominghouse
 - 7-1900 Roominghouse
 - Article VIII Off Street Parking and Loading
 - 8-200(A)(3) Boardinghouse and roominghouse parking requirements
 - Several additional Articles throughout the ordinance
 - Wherever the term “family” is referenced, “unit” replaces it
- Parking
 - Article VIII Off Street Parking and Loading
 - Section 8-200(A)(1) Enhanced and outside enhanced transit area minimum parking requirements
 - 8-200(C)(7) Location of parking facilities and maximum number of cars parked outdoors

Historic Development Patterns: Draft Zoning Text Amendment Summary Description

Staff proposes deletion of minimum lot size and maximum density (units per acre) requirements for multi-unit dwellings. Staff also proposes elimination of the zone transition setback and all references to that provision.

1. Density and lot requirements for multi-unit dwellings

- 3-605(A) and (B)
- 3-705(A)
- 3-805(A) and (B)
- 3-905(A) and (B)
- 4-105(B)(1)
- 4-106(B)(2)
- 4-205(B)(1)
- 4-206(B)
- 4-305(B)(1)
- 4-306(B)
- 4-405(B)(1)
- 4-406(B)
- 4-405(B)(1)
- 4-506(B)(2)
- 4-605(B)(1)
- 4-805(B)(1)
- 4-806(B)(2)
- 4-905(C)(2)
- 4-1005(C)(2)
- 4-1105(C)(2)
- 5-505(A)
- 5-505(B)(1)

2. Zone transition setback:

- 4-106(A)(1)
- 4-106(A)(4)(a)
- 4-206(A)(1)
- 4-206(A)(4)(a)
- 4-306(A)(1)
- 4-306(A)(4)(a)
- 4-406(A)(1)
- 4-406(A)(4)(a)
- 4-506(A)(1)
- 4-506(A)(4)(a)
- 4-606(A)(1)
- 4-606(A)(4)(a)
- 4-806(A)(1)
- 4-806(A)(4)(a)
- 4-905(A)(1)
- 4-905(A)(4)
- 4-1005(A)(1)
- 4-1005(A)(4)
- 4-1105(A)(1)
- 4-1105(A)(4)
- 4-1205(A)
- 4-1305(A)
- 5-506(A)
- 7-900
- 11-416(A)

Industrial Zone: Draft Zoning Text Amendment Summary Description

Since 1992, largely as a result of the City's Comprehensive Master Plan update and subsequent rezoning, the amount of I/Industrial zoned land within the Alexandria has significantly decreased from 947 acres to approximately 224 acres (2.3% of the city's total land area). Additionally, a significant portion of what is zoned I/Industrial today, located within Eisenhower West, is planned for mixed-use and residential neighborhoods. Future land uses for the other significant portion, located south of Duke Street, will be addressed by the upcoming Duke Street corridor plan.

Due to the future envisioned changes in areas currently zoned I/Industrial, where there will be more residential uses, staff recommends urban design standards for any new buildings that are built within the zone. The intent is for any potential new industrial zoned building to be compatible with the future housing and mixed-use, walkable neighborhoods. These standards do not apply to expansions or additions to existing buildings. This is accomplished by changes to the following sections of the Zoning Ordinance:

Article IV. - Commercial, Office, and Industrial Uses

- 4-1202 Permitted uses.
- 4-1206 Use limitations.

Residential Multi-family Zoning: Draft Zoning Text Amendment Description

The RMF Zone was created in 2019 to implement the housing affordability goals of the 2018 South Patrick Street Housing Affordability Strategy. In addition to allowing affordable housing with a density bonus, it allows neighborhood-serving commercial uses on the ground floor. The zone currently requires Special Use Permits for several of these uses, including restaurants, medical care facilities, and fitness studios, that are normally allowed by-right in other zoning districts. These uses do not undermine intent of the zoning district and so staff is recommending a text amendment to make the RMF zone more flexible regarding these uses. This is accomplished by changes to the following section of the Zoning Ordinance:

Article III. - Residential Zone Regulations

- 3-1402 - Permitted uses.

Townhouses: Draft Zoning Text Amendment Summary Description

Staff proposes amendments to existing yard, bulk, and open space requirements for residential uses. Staff also proposes a new provision which would grant single-unit, two-unit, and townhouse dwellings on lots with similar sizes to those currently zoned RM similar development rights to those provided by the RM zone.

1. Create section 12-902 and delete the following sections: 3-607(A), (B), and (C); 3-707(B); and 3-1108(A), (B), and (C).

2. Front yards:

- 2-122.1
- 3-606(A)(1)
- 3-706(A)(1)
- 4-106(A)(2)(a)
- 4-206(A)(2)(a)
- 4-306(A)(2)(a)
- 4-406(A)(2)(a)
- 4-606(A)(2)(a)
- 4-806(A)(2)(a)
- 4-905(A)(2)(a)
- 4-1005(A)(2)(a)
- 4-1105(A)(2)(a)
- 5-111(C)(1)
- 5-211(C)(1)
- 5-311(C)(1)
- 5-404(B)(3)(a)
- 5-512(C)(1)

3. Side yards:

- 3-606(A)(2)(e)
- 3-706(A)(3)(e)
- 3-806(A)(2)(d)
- 3-906(A)(2)(d)
- 3-1106(A)(2)
- 4-106(A)(2)(b)
- 4-206(A)(2)(b)
- 4-306(A)(2)(b)
- 4-406(A)(2)(b)
- 4-506(A)(2)(b)
- 4-606(A)(2)(b)
- 4-806(A)(2)(b)
- 4-905(A)(2)(b)
- 4-1005(A)(2)(b)
- 4-1105(A)(2)(b)
- 5-111(C)(2)
- 5-211(C)(2)
- 5-311(C)(2)
- 5-404(A)(3)
- 5-404(B)(3)(b)
- 5-506(B)(1)
- 5-506(C)(2)

4. Floor area ratio:

- 3-706(C)
- 4-106(B)
- 4-606(B)(2)
- 4-806(B)(2)
- 4-1106(C)(2)(b)
- 5-105(A)(2)
- 5-205(A)(2)
- 5-305(A)(2)
- 5-504(A)(2)
- 12-902

5. Open space:

- 3-606(B)
- 3-706(B)
- 3-806(B)
- 3-906(B)
- 4-106(A)(2)(d)
- 4-206(A)(2)(d)
- 4-306(A)(2)(d)
- 4-406(A)(2)(d)
- 4-506(A)(2)(d)
- 4-606(A)(2)(d)
- 4-806(A)(2)(d)
- 4-905(B)
- 4-1005(B)
- 4-1105(B)
- 5-107(A)
- 5-207(A)
- 5-307(A)
- 5-508(A)

Summary Statements for the Draft Policy Revisions and Master Plan Amendment pertaining to Zoning for Housing/Housing for All Initiatives

2020-2021 Housing Policy Updates: Draft Summary Policy Revisions

- Coordinated Development Districts: Draft Policy Language for the 2020-2021 Housing Policy Update – Addition to the [2020-2021 Housing Policy Update](#):
 - Consistent with Zoning Ordinance Section 7-700 and as a condition in CDD Special Use Permits, City policy is to require that 1/3 of the density requested above what is recommended in the underlying Small Area Plan be provided as committed affordable housing.
- Conversions: Draft Policy Language for the 2020-2021 Housing Policy Update – Addition to the [2020-2021 Housing Policy Update](#):
 - In zones in which the commercial FAR is higher than the maximum permitted residential FAR, City policy for commercial to residential conversions in existing buildings is to apply Section 7-700 in order to allow additional FAR for the proposed residential use.

Master Plan Amendments: Draft Revisions pertaining to Zoning for Housing Initiatives

- a. Amend the following sentence in the City’s Master Plan wherever it occurs, as follows:
 - i. "Areas of the city currently zoned residential should remain zoned for residential use ~~at no higher than their current density.~~";
- b. Incorporate the following note in all Master Plan chapters:
 - i. References to low density will continue to refer to development configuration that limits overall building height and lot coverage compatible with the existing neighborhood;
- c. Incorporate the following note in all Master Plan chapters:
 - i. Ensure race and social equity is “incorporated and centered in all planning” per City Council’s [Resolution 2974](#) including, but not limited to, all references to preserving and protecting neighborhoods and character;
- d. Amend the Housing Master Plan, Zoning Tools Section, Page 107, to include:
 - i. “The Residential Multifamily (RMF) zone was adopted in 2019 to incentivize the preservation and creation of deeply affordable housing in the city. The zone allows for additional Floor Area Ratio with a Special Use Permit in exchange for one-third of the additional density being provided as housing affordable to households with income averaging 40% of the area median income. Projects with a requested zoning to RMF should generally be in areas planned and/or zoned for medium or higher density development. This does not preclude other sites that may be appropriate for the RMF Zone and are consistent with city housing goals and land use and urban design best practices.”

Draft Zoning Text Amendments

- [3-600-RA-ZONE](#)
- [3-700_RB_ZONE](#)
- [3-800_RC-X_ZONE](#)
- [3-900_RC_ZONE](#)
- [3-1000_RD_ZONE](#)
- [3-1100_RM_ZONE](#)
- [3-1200_RS_ZONE](#)
- [3-1300_RT_ZONE](#)
- [3-1400_RMF_ZONE](#)
- [4-100_CL_ZONE](#)
- [4-200_CC_ZONE](#)
- [4-300_CSL_ZONE](#)
- [4-400_CG_ZONE](#)
- [4-500_CD_ZONE](#)
- [4-600_CD-X_ZONE](#)
- [4-800_OC_ZONE](#)
- [4-900_OCM-50_ZONE](#)
- [4-1000_OCM-100_ZONE](#)
- [4-1100_OCH_ZONE](#)
- [4-1200_I_ZONE](#)
- [4-1300_UT_ZONE](#)
- [4-1400_NR_ZONE](#)
- [5-100_CRMU_L_ZONE](#)
- [5-200_CRMU-M_ZONE](#)
- [5-300_CRMU-H_ZONE](#)
- [5-400_CRMU-X_ZONE](#)
- [5-500_W-1_ZONE](#)
- [5-600_CDD_ZONES](#)
- [6-300_FLOODPLAIN_DISTRICT](#)
- [6-500_OLD_TOWN_NORTH_URBAN_OVERLAY_DISTRICT](#)
- [6-600_MOUNT_VERNON_AVENUE_URBAN_OVERLAY_ZONE](#)
- [6-700_KR_ZONE](#)
- [ARTICLE I - GENERAL REGULATIONS](#)
- [ARTICLE II - DEFINITIONS](#)
- [ARTICLE III - RESIDENTIAL ZONES](#)
- [ARTICLE IX SIGNS](#)
- [ARTICLE VII - SUPPLEMENTAL_ZONE REGULATIONS](#)
- [ARTICLE VIII OFF STREET PARKING AND LOADING](#)
- [ARTICLE XI DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS](#)
- [ARTICLE XII - NONCOMPLIANCE AND NONCONFORMITY](#)
- [ARTICLE XIII ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT](#)