

Copy of OSD&LN Consensus

OSD&LN Housing Options Consensus

You may already know that the City of Olympia is proposing a set of zoning changes to Olympia's single-family neighborhoods. This proposal is called the "Housing Options Plan".

The purpose of the plan is to increase housing density and the variety of housing types in our neighborhoods. You might also know that manufactured homes, townhouses, ADUs, cottages and tiny houses are already allowed in our neighborhoods. The new housing types proposed in Housing Options are larger multi-family buildings.

It's possible that the Council will make a decision on this plan by the end of the summer. In the meantime, the Planning Commission is reviewing it, and it will soon give recommendations to the Council for each part of the plan.

So that OSD&LN can be sure that we are accurately representing the consensus of our membership (around 1800 people), we want to know your opinion on each piece of the plan. We can then let the Council know our positions. To see the City's official Housing Options changes, go here, or to the link below and select "Presentation 2"

<http://olympiawa.gov/city-government/codes-plans-and-standards/housing-code-amendments.aspx>

Background: Olympia's single-family neighborhoods are zoned R-4-8 and R-6-12. An R-4-8 neighborhood allows a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 8 units per acre. An R-6-12 neighborhood allows a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 12 units per acre. In Olympia, the acres of land for density calculations include private property, streets, sidewalks, alleys and other rights of way.

To see where R-4-8 and R-6-12 zones are in Olympia, look at the Olympia Zoning map by going here. You can download it as a pdf. The map can zoom to fine detail if you want. Alternatively, you can copy and paste the link below into your browser

<http://olympiawa.gov/~media/Files/CPD/Maps%20Official%20Updates%202016/2016ZoningSigned.pdf?la=en>

The rating system in the questions below is found in a drop-down menu, ranging from Strongly Disapprove to Strongly Approve

How it Is: ADUs are already allowed in all residential neighborhoods, but they are limited to 16 feet in height, can be no larger than 2/3rds the square footage of the house, to a maximum of 800 square feet. Off-street parking is required and the owner must live on-site.

1. Maximum ADU square footage (currently 800 sf) will increase to 1000 sf

2. Maximum ADU height (currently 16 feet) will increase to 24 feet

3. ADUs will no longer require off-street parking (currently required)

4. The owner no longer has to live on-site (currently must live on-site)

5. If an ADU is attached to a garage or shop building: it can be up to 1000 sf, and the garage can also be up to 800 sf [1800 total sf] (currently the garage width facing the street is limited to half of the house width)

How it Is: Duplexes are already allowed in R-6-12 neighborhoods, but not R-4-8 neighborhoods (see zoning map). The minimum lot size right now for a duplex is 7200 sf (1/6th acre). The minimum lot width is 80 feet.

Most existing single-family lots are about one eighth of an acre (5450 sf), with a width of 50 to 60 feet. However, the minimum single-family lot size is 4000 sf (1/11th acre) in R-4-8, and 3500 sf (1/12th acre) in R-6-12.

Changes: Duplexes would now be allowed on any single-family corner lot

These questions are about allowing duplexes on corner lots.

6. Duplexes will be allowed on ALL lots on street corners in residential neighborhoods

7. A duplex lot size can now be as little as 4000 sf in R-4-8, and 3500 sf' in R-6-12 (about half what they are now).

8. Duplex lot widths could be as small as 45 feet in R-4-8 and 40 feet in R-6-12 (about half what they are now).

These questions are about allowing duplexes, triplexes and courtyard apartments on all lots in single-family neighborhoods

How it is: Duplexes are already allowed in R-6-12 neighborhoods with a minimum lot size of 7200 sf and a minimum lot width of 80 ft. Triplexes are only allowed on arterials in R-6-12 zones, with a minimum lot size of 7200 sf and a minimum lot width of 80 ft. The triplex building must be at least 10' from the side-yard property lines. Courtyard Apartments are not allowed in single-family neighborhoods

Changes: Triplexes would now be allowed on any single family lot in R-6-12 neighborhoods (as little as 3500 sf and a 40' width). The 10' side-yard setback now becomes 5'. Maximum height is 35'. It's possible that green-space and other requirements would disqualify some lots for triplex development, or else drive the buildings to be taller..

Courtyard apartments haven't been defined in the Housing Options plan. However, they are commonly described as 4-12 living units surrounding a central common space. Not yet decided are the minimum lot sizes, open space, parking requirements, etc.

9. Duplexes will now be allowed on any single-family lot in single-family neighborhoods

10. Triplexes will now be allowed in R-6-12 neighborhoods, on single-family lots, with 5 off-street parking spaces required.

11. Courtyard Apartments will now be allowed in R-6-12 neighborhoods

These final questions are about housing density.

How it Is: Density refers to how many housing units are allowed on an acre. Most near-downtown Olympia neighborhoods already have between 5 and 9 units per acre, while some outer neighborhoods were built with bigger lots, and so have lower densities.

Changes: In the recently-passed State law 2343, a goal of 6 units per acre (City average) was given. The new Housing Options development could cause local densities to go much higher than 8 and 12 units per acre.

In the Housing Options plan, the City would monitor density increases in each zone once a year, to see if it has exceeded 12 units per acre. Olympia has about 7 square miles of R-4-8 zoning and about 2 square miles of R-6-12 zoning in its neighborhoods.

The Housing Options proposal doesn't say what the City would do if average density did reach 12 units per acre, just that it would "make revisions" as necessary. This could mean limiting further development, or rezoning the area to allow a higher density, or other approaches.

12. Do you think the City's proposal to monitor density by zone will be effective in keeping densities from going above 12 units per acre in all neighborhoods?

13. A single neighborhood could reach a very-high density, while the overall average density for the zone wouldn't change much. What should be the maximum size of the unit of land used to calculate density each year, to prevent this situation?

Really, THE LAST QUESTION. Since the Housing Options plan will encourage larger, higher-profit, multifamily housing in residential neighborhoods, it's possible that older, cheaper housing might be torn down and replaced.

14. How likely does it seem to you that neighborhoods with more-affordable, older housing will be targeted by new investors, more often than newer, more-expensive neighborhoods?

15. Are there any other comments you want to make on the Housing Options plan?

Thanks for spending the time on this survey. You will be sent the results later.