

Proposed Changes to Multifamily Development Standards

PURPOSE

The purpose of the changes to the development standards for multifamily projects is to reduce constraints on the development of rental housing by making standards simpler, objective, easier to understand, and more consistent.

SIMPLIFYING STANDARDS

The proposed code changes would remove some of the existing complexity in the multi-family development standards, where standards from multiple zoning districts or unit types may apply. The proposed changes would use a single, objective set of development standards for multi-family projects within any urban zoning district where multi-family housing is allowed, including the Affordable Housing (AH) and the proposed Workforce Housing (WH) Combining Zone. The AH and WH combining zones would refer to the High Density Residential (R3) development standards to ensure consistency and ease of processing. The standards have been clarified to be more objective, enabling housing projects that meet affordability requirements on-site to be approved with design review.

RESIDENTIAL DENSITY UNITS

Staff is proposing use of a Density Unit Equivalent concept to encourage more, smaller rental housing units, and fewer larger units. The use of density units adjusted for the size and anticipated occupancies of smaller housing units will encourage the construction of these types of units without increasing building mass or requiring a density bonus. This concept allows an increased number of units without increasing the building mass by counting small units as a fraction of one density unit as shown in the table below. For example, the provision of three very small micro units would be equal to the provision of one three-bedroom unit in terms of the allowed density.

Dwelling Unit Size	Density Units
Micro-apartment or Studio (< 500 sf)	0.33 density unit
One-bedroom (< 750 sf)	0.5 density unit
Two-bedroom (< 1000 sf)	0.75 density unit
Three-bedroom	1.00 density unit
Four or more bedrooms	1.5 density unit