

TALENT HOUSING CODE UPDATE PROJECT

Public Open House: DRAFT Meeting Summary

April 24th, 2019



Zac Moody, Talent Community Development Director, opened the public open house and welcomed community members and the project team. Approximately 40 members were in attendance. Zac introduced Elizabeth Decker, JET Planning and Anais Mathez, 3J Consulting. Zac began with a brief overview of the project background and DLCD technical assistance grant process, and then reviewed key project goals and objectives. Zac described the City's housing goals as "increas[ing] the choices in Talent by supporting development of more housing units, more variety of housing types, and more affordable housing options [and to] support housing development that is efficient, sustainable and consistent with values of the Talent community."

The presentation turned over to Elizabeth. She provided background on the City's existing zoning code and then outlined key proposed recommendations for the following code concepts: low and medium density residential, high density residential, commercial and mixed-use, and land use review procedures. These main policy ideas included:

- Introduce "missing middle" types in low and medium density zones, with corresponding development standards, including cottage cluster housing
- Allow more variety of residential types in high density zone
- Allow more residential options in commercial zones
- Provide clear and objective standards and review processes for residential development

When Elizabeth finished her presentation, Zac announced the project's next steps. A Planning Commission meeting to review the final code language is scheduled for June 4, and the adoption process will begin in July. Zac noted that feedback can be provided to him at any point during the process and is not limited to the open house.

Zac then invited community members to browse the three poster board stations in the back of the room. Station 1 was Project Background and Opportunities and Development and Review Process. Station 2 was Low and Medium Density Residential and Housing Options. Station 3 was High Density and Mixed-Use Development. Staff and consultants were on hand at each station to answer questions and have further discussion on the proposed code amendments for each topic.

Some general public comments that were recorded throughout included:

- Low land inventory creates supply problems, which makes it difficult to build anything and increases prices. Supply has to be addressed before any zoning code changes for new development will be effective.
- A question was raised about how many homes could be allowed as flag lots sharing a common access, and whether those flag lots could be developed with duplexes. This would double the number of units being served and could potentially create parking challenges.

- There is a shortage of parking in the CDB, but businesses are allowed to develop without off-street parking. A question was raised about why that standard is so flexible when parking requirements for residential uses, particularly ADUs, are so high.
- It is felt that ADU parking requirements are so high that they discourage the development of ADUs. An example was shared of having to add three parking spaces for a 500 SF addition, when maybe two would have been sufficient.
- Secondary access is important for new developments. The Railroad District Master Plan addresses that issue but there is a concern that the plan provisions would be misinterpreted over time.
- Secondary access can be dealt with successfully through tools like a maximum number of units allowed before triggering a secondary access, and dispersing individual units. There should be a careful review of the overlap between fire code and zoning code to see how access issues are addressed.
- Affordability problems are related to the fact that construction costs per square foot are so high that even small homes are still expensive. People are disappointed to find that even the new, small homes being built in Talent are still so expensive.
- Land trusts, housing subsidies, and more policy tools are needed to directly address housing costs.
- For multifamily development, the connection fees, open space requirements, and number of parking spaces are not appropriately scaled to the size of the project or the size of the units. Parking spaces in particular should be scaled to the size of the unit; the two spaces per unit requirement is too high for smaller units.
- Despite concerns about the high cost of housing, the economic reality is that rents in Talent are not high enough to support new multifamily construction right now. Bank lending for multifamily construction is very tight.
- Four-plexes with tuck-under parking is a model that has worked in other places, it was suggested that model also be allowed for cottage cluster housing types or other similar housing types.
- An example pointed to the William Way subdivision that allowed modified zero-lot line development. This should not be allowed in the future.
- Of the 15 PUDs have been approved over time, some used smaller lots and setbacks.
- There is a need to maintain required separation between structures to meet fire code, though it may depend on construction factors like fire rating for construction and sprinklers.

In addition to discussion at each of the stations, comment forms were also distributed. These outlined seven policy recommendations and asked members to indicate their level of support. 19 comment forms were turned in at the end of the evening (see Appendix A for a transcription of open-ended questions). Results are as follows:

Proposed Code Amendment	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neutral	Support	Strongly Support	<i>(n)</i>
Realign existing single-family zones as low and medium-density residential zones. Limit manufactured home zone to manufactured home park uses.	1	1	3	5	8	18
Modestly reduce minimum lot sizes, specific to the typical development patterns of each residential type, for more efficient use of land.	1	2		4	9	16
Expand 'missing middle' housing options permitted in low and medium-density zones, including duplexes, townhouses, and cottage clusters.	1		1	6	11	19
Expand permitted housing types in high-density zone (RM-HD) beyond apartments, to include townhouses and cottage clusters, while maintaining density.	1			6	10	17
Support upper-story residential uses in the Central Business District (CBD) by allowing three-story buildings (up to 45 feet) as a permitted use.	1	2	3	5	7	18
Permit residential uses in the Neighborhood Commercial (NC) zone in both vertical and horizontal mixed-use configurations.	1		4	4	9	18
Provide non-discretionary review options for many types of residential development. Require public hearings only for more complicated developments subject to discretionary standards.	4	3	3	7	1	18

The public open house adjourned at 8pm.

APPENDIX A. Comment Form Responses

The following comments on the two open-ended questions have been directly transcribed from the submitted comment forms.

What comments, concerns or refinements do you see around any or all of the seven policy components?

- I would not want to see a narrowing of residential streets. I consider them unsafe in emergency situations where mass exodus is needed to escape fire, for example. Also, emergency vehicles need easy access. They should be more than one way in and one way out of each neighborhood.
- Non-discretionary review seems intrinsically at odds with Talent's goals of public participation.
- Please do not reduce safety requirements in your attempt to increase housing. Specifically, you should retain the 2-access requirement for developments along with road widths broad enough to accommodate both street parking and emergency vehicle maneuverability.
- Parking is a problem that may get smaller as more autonomous vehicles are used. Can you come up with a more flexible parking requirements using neighborhood lots or on street parking to supplement the requirement for individual residences?
- I'd like to commend the vision of the City to try to infill and use existing and buildable lands to meet the needs for more high density/mixed-use/cluster housing to meet our current housing shortage.
- Let us please have a *large* zoning map in the City Hall lobby as we move through the public process, and for use at various meetings.
- Mixed styles and income restraints may not make for good neighbors/neighborhoods. What are the limits to these kinds of developments?

Additional thoughts, questions and comments.

- Public hearings are essential! Citizens need this opportunity to learn more detail about how a new development could impact their property values and quality of life.
- It cannot be overstressed that recent legal/quasi-legal decisions regarding Comprehensive Plan must be considered. Refer specifically to the Hearings Office decision regarding the ELD application for 201 Belmont.
- Safety must be considered. Recent regional events show the critical nature of emergency access, both ingress and egress. Code should reflect a strong preference for 2 or more access routes. Single access, if permitted, should be subject to strict conditions.
- If you attempt inclusionary housing – rentals or owned – make sure they are not temporary-that they are permanently deed-restricted to retain affordability. Otherwise it's going to flip to market rate in short order.
- Glad to see pretty good attendance and public engagement!
- Parking! Currently commercial has been allowed development to write out dedicated parking. Some were permitted to build without parking (actually replaced the three spots they had with customer seating). Also, this "historic" location has been swallowed up by a circus tent. How are these decisions being made?