

TALENT HOUSING CODE UPDATE PROJECT

Planning Commission/Advisory Committee Meeting Discussion Guide

June 27, 2019



Questions are listed for each proposed zoning chapter below, with answers (if available) noted in *blue italics* for PC/AC discussion and feedback to guide code revisions.

Land Use Classification (TMC 18.20)

Q: What defines the “dispute” process for use classification?

A: A dispute in this case would involve staff making a determination that a particular use is not allowed based on the classification standards in Section 18.20.020 and a property owner or applicant disagreeing with the staff interpretation. In this case, staff would forward the classification request to the Planning Commission for consideration.

Residential Low Density (TMC 18.25)

Q: Can you explain where the 2 to 3 dwelling per lot allowance originated from?

A: A fair amount of research was conducted to determine the origin of this particular section, but information was found that would explain if there was a specific purpose for this addition. Staff recommends removing the language because it serves no purpose. If a lot or parcel can accommodate multiple parcels it is likely it could be divided.

Residential Medium Density (TMC 18.30)

No questions in this section.

Residential Manufactured Home (TMC 18.35)

No questions in this section.

Residential High Density (TMC 18.40)

Q: What is the suggested density that change a multi-family dwelling review from a Type II to a Type III?

A: A tiered system with a Type II and Type III review path based on project density is not recommended because it could have a chilling effect for any projects with higher density because of the additional review requirements, which would undermine the intent of recent changes to the RM-HD zone to support higher densities. Instead, the recommendation is to offer a clear and objective, Type II review option for projects of any size or density, with a discretionary, Type III review option for projects that propose alternative or creative designs outside the clear and objective standards.

Q: Is there a way to lower the open space requirements, but require the space be more specific “usable space”? Could the open space requirements for multi-family developments be the same as the cottage cluster standards?

A Yes, less open space but more usable open space could definitely be a tradeoff. The existing multifamily standard is 250 square feet per unit, and the proposed cottage cluster standard is 150 square feet per unit. It would make sense to bring those numbers closer together, since residents of both types

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of developments presumably have similar open space needs. The recommendation is to require 150 SF per unit for all projects, with requirements for open space improvements such as children's play areas for multifamily projects with 20 units or more. Staff and the Consultant believe that it makes sense to only require improvements for 20 units and up, which total 3,000 SF of open space, it also makes sense to require a common green space for developments of all sizes. Cottage clusters with 4-12 units, as proposed, are required to provide it and it is a central feature.

Commercial Neighborhood (TMC 18.45)

No questions in this section.

Central Business District (TMC 18.50)

Q: Are the restrictions on residential development of no more than 50% necessary? Should we consider allowing more than 50% development in the CBD to be residential?

A: Allowing more than 50% of a commercially zoned property to be built as residential would be counter to the intent of the zone if the property is "substantially" developed as residential. There are a number of reasons that this could be problematic, but most importantly, the intent of the commercial zone is to serve as the hub of government, public services and social activities and encourages retail trade, personal and business services. Adding residential to the area is encouraged only to strengthen and enliven the downtown. If too much of the commercial land is consumed by residential uses, the City risks not having enough buildable commercial land in its core downtown area and risks losing the vibrancy that a balanced mix of uses provides. Additionally, allowing more than 50% of commercial land to be used for residential could conflict with the Economy Element and could be out of compliance with the State's requirement to have a 20-year supply of commercial buildable lands. If the desire is to see more acreage in or near the downtown core converted to residential, it may be more appropriate to rezone the commercial land to high-density residential.

Q: Wouldn't that meet stated goals, increase support for existing and new commercial by increasing pedestrian traffic and people in the neighborhood (vs. driving by the highway)?

A: Yes, but staff believes that at some point the high demand for residential will consume much of the downtown commercial land. Once committed to residential uses, it is unlikely to be converted back to commercial. Staff believes that a balance is necessary, unless a zone change to high-density residential can be justified through the zone change process and consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and statewide planning goals as they relate to economics.

Q: Is it realistic that Talent could end up with a deficit of commercial lands as a result of this?

A: Yes, removing residential use allowances would be difficult in the future should the City determine that too much commercial land was being consumed by residential.

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General Standards (TMC 18.90)

Q: What about solar setbacks when a 3-story building is next to residential? Is there a difference in setbacks on the west or east?

A: There are no regulations for solar setbacks in the Talent Zoning Code except for those that have an easement. If the Planning Commission would like to examine this further, staff recommends that the solar setback review be completed after the code amendments have been completed.

Q: In 18.090.050 Building height (B) transitions, we discussed confusing language over the standard applying to buildings exceeding 30 feet or two stories whichever is less. We may have also had a question on the consultant comment on setbacks. Do we need to clarify these standards?

A: After clarifying, Section B and subsection 1 should read the same. The intent is to allow buildings up to 30 feet in height with not mention of number of stories. This will be corrected in the next set of revisions.

Landscaping, Fencing and Hedges (TMC 18.105)

Q: A.2 states that “the type of buffer shall be considered in relation to existing and future land use. This is not clear/defined. Does this mean zoned use? The sentence goes on to state that the degree of conflict between adjacent uses would also be a consideration but does not clearly lay out one which side of a conflict the burden of buffering would fall.

A: No significant changes to the transition buffers for commercial and industrial development are proposed with this project, because we are focusing on residential standards which must be clear and objective. Future code updates could improve the commercial and industrial standards as well; generally, standards that are based on the site’s base zone are easier to interpret than ones based on use categories, if there is debate about what use category applies to a certain development.

Additional changes are recommended to create clear and objective standards for buffering on new residential development that is adjacent to existing commercial or industrial development, to replace existing 18.105.050.B. Standards will include at least two vegetative screening options, such as evergreen trees or shrubs or larger caliper trees planted every 30 feet.

Q: Are pallets an acceptable fencing material? Do any additional requirements exist for pallet fencing?

A: Pallets are not listed on the list of prohibited fence materials. However, Section 18.105.060(F)(1) states that the City can either disallow or require the elimination or mitigation of fences it finds deleterious to public health or safety or at odds with the purpose of the Fence chapter.

Q: By reducing the minimums are we primarily reducing the number of trees required for planting? How much efficiency gain is expected by reducing the minimums?

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A: The City has primarily used the site percentage as a way to calculate the number of required trees and shrubs, rather than a percentage of space that cannot be developed. The recommendation is to use the existing percentages as the basis for calculating the number of required trees and shrubs, while clarifying what the minimum percentage of landscaping standard means and how it impacts site development area. This will ensure no changes to the number of trees planted, while potentially freeing up site area for more residential development.

Q: Is it clear in the code that buffering counts toward landscaping requirements?

A: As long as the buffer area is landscaped, nothing in the code prevents it from being counted towards the landscaping percentage. Standards could more explicitly permit the buffering to count if desired.

Off-Street Parking and Loading (TMC 18.110)

Q: Table 18.110.060-1 and section B under 18.110 Off Street Parking and Loading: Parking Requirements in these sections include half numbers. In the case of the table, and 50% in the latter section, what is 50% of 1 required parking space? Do we round up or down for parking requirements?

A: Typically, the code should have a statement about how to deal with fractions of spaces, requiring rounding to the nearest whole number. 1.5 spaces would be rounded to 2 and 19.2 spaces would be rounded to 19. For larger projects like multifamily, it typically isn't a problem to round. The standards for smaller residential projects could benefit from further review, specifically: should a triplex, at 1.5 spaces per unit or 4.5 spaces total, require 4 spaces or 5 spaces? Cluster housing could also run into similar issues. Additional feedback from the PC/AC would be useful to revise these parking standards and rounding preferences.

Q: Migrant housing was removed but is a state housing goal. Would new migrant housing development just fall under whatever type (multifamily for example) instead of this designation?

A: Yes, any housing intended for migrant households would simply be regulated by the type of housing it is, multifamily or otherwise, which is consistent with the approach throughout the rest of the code. The PC/AC could recommend a reduced parking requirement for migrant housing and/or affordable housing that could help lower development costs for these types of projects, likely codified as a percentage reduction to the number of spaces otherwise required. There is significant debate on whether lower-income households have fewer cars or not, but often the primary purpose of the reduction is to reduce upfront development costs rather than predict parking needs of future residents.

Q: Why do duplexes only require one spot per unit but triplex and quadplex require 1.5?

A: The duplex standard is intended to support integration of duplexes with single-family dwellings: the standard requires two total spaces as a minimum for a duplex, similar to the two spaces for a single-family dwelling next door. Because duplexes can be built on the same size lot as single-family residences, there may not be room for more than two total off-street spaces, and larger parking areas on such a lot could create negative visual impacts. There is also the practical matter of how to divide the spaces: 1.5

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spaces per unit would result in three total spaces, which could be hard to divide between the two duplex units.

The 1.5 spaces per unit standard for a triplex and quadplex is intended to be consistent with the cluster housing and multifamily minimums. The standard could also be lowered to one space per unit as an incentive to develop these types of units and reduce the amount of paved off-street parking on these smaller sites.

In addition to the minimum number of spaces, additional development standards are recommended to reduce the visual presence of parking areas from the street. Quadplexes and triplexes could be required to have a garage or carport for some of the required spaces, with the balance provided in driveways or other paved areas. Alley access and shared driveway standards will also help minimize vehicle-related impacts.

A related recommendation is to clarify that the existing on-street parking credit in 18.110.060.F can only apply to improved streets. This recommendation would require a development adjacent to an unimproved street to bring the street frontage to current standards if the request was to have some required parking be on-street.

Q: Is 1 parking space for MH realistic?

A: The one space per unit for manufactured homes is a minimum and is intended for greater flexibility when applied to existing parks and to support a type of housing that is typically more affordable. The standards also include provisions for overflow or visit parking at a ratio of one space per 8 manufactured homes.

Q: What is the rationale behind exempting bike parking to tri and quadplexes that also have lower parking requirements?

A: Rationale is to make it triplexes and quadplexes more similar to single-family and duplex homes, and to reduce development requirements and make them easier to construct. Triplex and quadplex residents could store their bikes in a garage or accessory structure if provided.

Q: Do we have proposed new language for off-street parking that we have not seen?

A: Other than what was discussed above, we do not have any proposed new language.

Q: Can you suggest more clear and objective language for section 18.110.100? “Conveniently located”, “whenever possible”, “creative designs are strongly encouraged”, “sufficient security”, “well lit” etc., appear more subjective but that may be by design.

A: Future code updates could further refine the bicycle parking standards, but they were not the primary focus of this code update.

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Cluster Housing (TMC 18.162, new)

Is a type 2 permit review the appropriate path for cluster housing (4 to 12 units) rather than a type 3 permit review?

Q: Would an application for 12 1200sf single-family homes be a type 3 permit review while 12 cluster homes would be type 2?

A: A subdivision tentative plan would be required to create 12 new lots for single-family homes, and it would require a Type 2 review under the proposed code changes to ensure there is a non-discretionary development opportunity for all residential development.

Manufactured Home Parks (TMC 18.180)

No questions in this section?