

To: Planning Commission
From: Josh Williams, AICP, Senior Development Planner
Memo Date: May 5, 2025
Meeting Date: May 12, 2025
Subject: Development Code Project Update (DCPU) – Check-in

As part of the Development Code Project Update (DCPU), Staff is coming to Planning Commission for a check-in to update the Commission on the status of Staff's work to date, and to seek feedback on potential changes to the Code. Staff have identified several development code updates that we are seeking input on from the Planning Commission as part of a work session during a regularly scheduled meeting. The intent of the DCPU project is to reduce barriers and timelines related to development with a focus on housing. This includes the review of language and processes in the Code to ensure they are clear and objective, consistent, and easily understandable.

The below three areas of the Development Code have been identified by Staff for discussion with Planning Commission to determine if the proposed changes are headed in the right direction. Staff will provide a presentation providing more explanatory information on these items.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Shared Housing/Multifamily.

Issue: The distinctions between residential use types are becoming increasingly blurred. Gresham needs a clear and predictable way to define and regulate various types of uses. For instance, State law requires certain group living uses to be permitted in residential zones where single detached dwellings are allowed. Currently, the Development Code limits these group living uses to areas where multifamily is permitted.

Proposal: To distinguish between what is multifamily and what is not multifamily, Staff and our consultant MIG are proposing to limit dwelling units to no more than 8 bedrooms. When more than 8 bedrooms are provided a dwelling will be classified as Multifamily development.

In addition:

- Group living uses, such as single room occupancy (SROs) and boarding houses, when including more than 8 bedrooms, will be classified as Shared Housing

Facilities. This use type will be a form of Multifamily housing and will be allowed only where multifamily uses are permitted.

- SROs, residential shelters, and transitional housing would be considered a single dwelling when it includes 8 or fewer bedrooms.
- A boarding house will be defined to have more than 8 bedrooms and will be classified as a Shared Housing Facility.
- Definitions in the Development Code will be updated to reflect these distinctions.

2. Accessory Dwelling Units (Section 10.0100).

Issue: The design standards and review process for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) has been identified as an area where the Code needs to be updated to address the need for clear and objective standards, reduce barriers to housing development, and differentiate ADUs as a unique housing type.

Proposal: The building standards in Section 10.0110 - Accessory Dwellings will be updated to reflect the clear and objective building design standards in Section 7.0420 – Design Standards for Single Detached, Duplexes, Triplexes, and Quadplexes. The process for the development of an Accessory Dwelling Unit will be updated to require a Type I review in all land use districts where ADUs are permitted. Development standards will be revised to reflect current housing needs not being met by existing standards.

In addition:

- The maximum size for an ADU in all land use districts will be 900 sq. ft.
- Orientation of ADU entry doors will be a minimum of 10 ft from lot lines
- Rear setback for freestanding ADUs will be reduced

3. Design Review Thresholds (Section 7.0003 – Applications; Table 7.0003 Design Review Categories).

Issue: Currently, small development projects involving limited building and outdoor square footage additions may be required to go through a Type II, Design Review C process, which requires an application submittal with completeness determination and staff report, resulting in a lengthier (and costlier) than needed process. When located in a Design District, these small development projects may also require a pre-application meeting. Smaller scale projects meeting all clear and objective standards should be

reviewed at a Type I, Design Review A level, which is reviewed concurrently with a building permit application.

Proposal: The thresholds in Table 7.0003 Design Review Categories will be updated to increase the threshold for the Type I, Design Review A category based on allowed square footage. For projects in Design Districts, all clear and objective standards must still be met to be reviewed at a Type I, Design Review A level, otherwise a Type II or Type III review will be required.

The proposed change will raise the maximum allowed square footage under a Design Review A from 1,000 sq. ft. to 2,000 sq. ft.

In addition:

- Design Review B: Thresholds will be modified to require a Type I, Design Review B for development types 2,000 sq. ft. and larger. Developments less than 2,000 sq. ft. of new development will be reviewed as a Design Review A. (Note: Design Review B's are applicable to developments located in non-design districts).
- Accessory Dwelling Units, whether attached or detached, will be reviewed as a Type I application.
- Projects reviewed as a Type II, Design Review C, will only require a pre-application meeting when the project is in a Design District and includes up to 2,000 sq. ft. of new floor area or outdoor area, and the development uses between one and three discretionary items.

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