



MEMORANDUM

PLANNING DIVISION
DEPARTMENT of COMMUNITY and NEIGHBORHOODS

To: Salt Lake City Council & Planning Commission
From: Andy Hulka, Ben Buckley, Alicia Seeley – Planning Division
Date: June 10, 2026
Re: PLNPCM2025-01184 – Expanding Housing Options – Amending the Single-Family and Two-Family Zoning Districts

ACTION REQUESTED:

Work session only. No specific action is requested. Staff will provide an overview of the proposal and summarize the public input received. Staff is requesting input on several key elements of the proposal.

LINKS:

Project Website:

- [Expanding Housing Options ShapeSLC Website](#)

Proposed Ordinance Drafts:

- [Small Lot Dwellings](#)
- [Definitions of Terms](#)
- [R-1 Residential Single-Family](#)
- [R-2 Single- and Two-Family](#)
- [SR-1 & SR-1A Special Development Pattern](#)
- [Flag Lots](#)
- [Table of Uses for Residential Districts](#)

Previous Meetings & Reports:

- [Potential Approaches to Simplifying and Improving R-1 Districts](#)
- [2/11/25 City Council Work Session](#)
- [3/4/25 City Council Formal Meeting](#)
- [2/17/26 City Council Work Session](#)
- [3/11/26 Planning Commission Work Session](#)

Affected Zoning Districts:

- [R-1/12,000](#)
- [R-1/7,000](#)
- [R-1/5,000](#)
- [R-2](#)
- [SR-1 & SR-1A](#)

Information Sheets:

- [Project Overview](#)
- [Small Lot Dwellings](#)
- [R-1 Zoning](#)
- [R-2 Zoning](#)
- [SR-1 & SR-1A Zoning](#)

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ATTACHMENTS:

- A. [ATTACHMENT A: ShapeSLC Public Input Report as of June 2, 2026](#)
- B. [ATTACHMENT B: Email or Written Comments](#)
- C. [ATTACHMENT C: Recognized Community Organization Comments](#)

BACKGROUND

On March 11, 2026, Planning staff briefed the Planning Commission on the Expanding Housing Options proposal. The briefing and associated memo detailed the recommended text amendments to accomplish the goals from City Council’s March 4, 2025, legislative action:

Initiate a text amendment to consolidate and simplify the R-1 single-family residential districts, including updates to the residential flag lot standards, the addition of new housing options, and to the extent possible, eliminating barriers to homeownership and consider similar changes to the other low density districts such as the R-2, SR-1, and SR1-A zones.

The intent is to continue to study the benefits and impacts through the process of drafting, engaging the public, and finalizing a proposal leading to consideration by the Planning Commission and potential adoption by the Council. Specifically, the Council wants to identify how these potential changes impact the affordable housing incentives and City goals related to housing, walkability, and water conservation.

A guiding principle of the Council is to increase home ownership opportunities for families in Salt Lake City. It is a priority of this Council to include affordable “missing middle” housing options along with family sized housing in any text amendment.

Since that briefing, Planning staff has completed the initial phase of public outreach and compiled the comments received during the engagement period (see attachments). This memo provides an overview of the City’s public engagement activities and additional discussion points regarding several key considerations raised by the public.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Because this project involves multiple zoning districts and impacts almost every neighborhood in the city, an extensive public engagement plan was prepared, exceeding the typical level of engagement for zoning text amendments. This included 12 in-person events across the city as well as hosting a project webpage on [ShapeSLC](#), the City’s new public engagement platform. The project also has a dedicated email address (housingoptions@slc.gov) for written comments. Since the beginning of 2026, staff has promoted the project online; distributed flyers at grocery stores, local businesses, and libraries; held in-person open houses; met with stakeholder groups; presented to community council chairs; conducted news interviews; and spoken with hundreds of residents.

Throughout the public engagement process, staff received comments representing a wide range of lived experiences, from landlords who own multiple properties to residents living in their vehicles to others who live outside of Salt Lake City. This overview provides a brief summary of staff’s public engagement efforts.

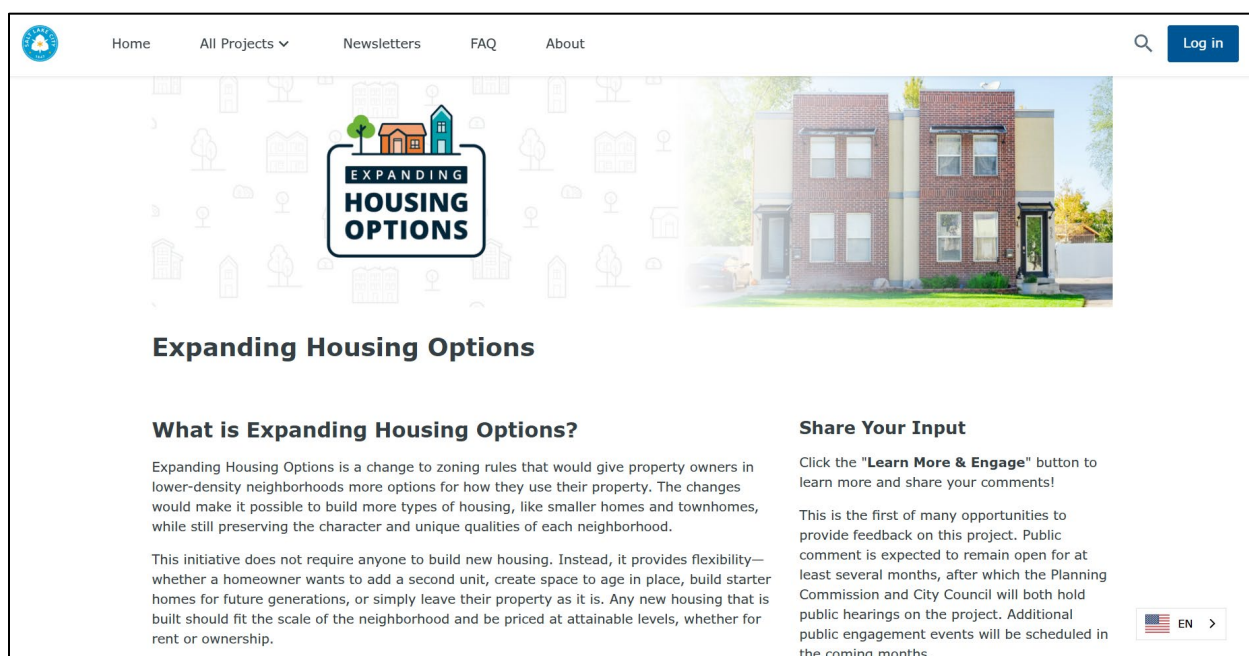


Flyers posted at a local coffee shop (Culture Coffee) about engagement events.

Discussions of specific issues and common themes identified through the engagement process are provided in the “Key Considerations” section of this memo. Each topic in the “Key Consideration” section includes examples of public comments received, staff analysis, and requests for additional feedback and direction.

ShapeSLC

[Expanding Housing Options](#) has a project page on the City’s new engagement platform, ShapeSLC. The website includes an overview of the project, information sheets with renderings of potential outcomes, frequently asked questions, a searchable map of impacted properties, and numerous places for users to leave feedback and comments. Links to the website and information sheets are provided on the first page of this memo. The website also provided details about each of the events that were open to the public. As of May 1, 2026, the website had 2,448 visitors, peaking with nearly 320 visitors on February 16, 2026. 152 visitors participated in the survey and feedback sections.



Screenshot of the ShapeSLC website.

The written comments submitted through the website represent a diverse range of opinions. Some respondents simply expressed general support or opposition, while others shared comments about specific issues or standards. Overall, the majority of comments received online were positive.

The survey portion of the website also included several optional demographic questions. Not every respondent answered these questions:

1. 75% of respondents live in Salt Lake City
2. 19% of respondents were 65 years old or older
3. 2% of respondents were 19-24 years old
4. 23% of respondents reported a household income of \$50,000-\$100,000
5. 56% of respondents identified as white
6. District 7 (Sugar House) had the most identified respondents (30) of the seven council districts
7. District 2 (Glendale/Poplar Grove) had the fewest number of respondents identified (6)

Social Media & Email Campaigns

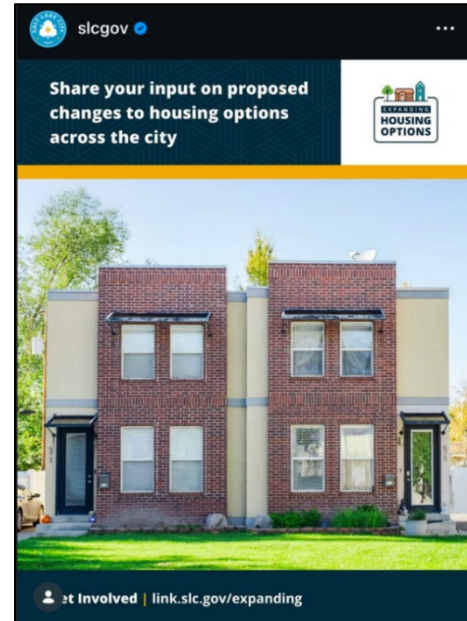
In addition to the project website, other online noticing for Expanding Housing Options included posts on social media and multiple email campaigns. These posts and emails were intended to educate the public about the proposal, promote upcoming events, and solicit feedback. The Planning Division maintains an email list of over 2,000 contacts interested in planning-related updates.

Social media posts included:

- [SLCGov and SLCCouncil Instagram post on February 23 detailing event schedule](#)
- [SLCGov and SLCCouncil Instagram post on March 9 detailing the proposal](#)
- “Story”-style posts advertising the public open house events.

Email campaigns included:

- Planning listserv emails on December 16, 2025, & March 24, 2026.
- Emails from the Salt Lake City Council to their districts on February 20, 2026.
- A request for input from all Recognized Community Organizations (RCOs) on January 23, 2026. Follow-up emails sent to RCOs on Feb. 23, Mar. 4, Mar. 23, & Apr. 16.



Instagram post from the @SLCgov account.

Media Coverage

The Expanding Housing Options project has also been featured in multiple news articles, blogs, and newsletters.

- [Salt Lake City could overhaul its single-family zoning code to allow more units. Here's how.](#); Building Salt Lake; February 19, 2025.
- [Salt Lake City tees up debate on single-family zoning reform](#); Building Salt Lake; December 19, 2025.
- [CityCast SLC newsletter](#) email on February 11, 2026.
- [Salt Lake City to consider 2,000-square-foot home lots in single family zones](#); Building Salt Lake; February 20, 2026.
- [In major bid for more housing, SLC could vastly expand where backyard homes are allowed — with some caveats](#); Salt Lake Tribune; February 27, 2026.
- [Salt Lake City has a housing shortage. Will expanding housing options fix affordability?](#); KSL.com; April 1, 2026.
- [Salt Lake City weighs zoning proposal to expand home types, boost infill development](#); homes.com News; April 9, 2026.
- [Most SLC residents are worried about housing and don't think the city has done enough, new research finds](#); Salt Lake Tribune; April 28, 2026.
- [Salt Lake City single-family zone changes are poised for debate](#); Building Salt Lake, May 1, 2026.

Events & Meetings

Planning staff attended numerous events and meetings throughout the year to present the project and gather feedback from residents. The public open houses typically began with a presentation by staff, followed by an open format where residents could share their feedback or ask questions. These events had lower attendance than others, ranging from about 10-50 residents per open house, but the open format allowed for longer conversations. Other events, like the Olympic Watch Party, were tabling opportunities where staff shared printed resources and gathered verbal and written comments. Staff had conversations with hundreds of people at larger events, including the Watch Party and Farmers Market.

- **Salt Lake Community Network Meeting** (January 15, 2026)

- Staff presentation to the Chairs of the City's Recognized Community Organizations.

- **Wasatch Advocates for Livable Communities (WALC)** (January 27, 2026)

- Tabling opportunity at housing advocacy group policy preview event.

- **2026 State of the City Address** (January 27, 2026)

- Mayor Mendenhall said that “in the months ahead, we will present a plan to expand housing options to our City Council. These changes give residents even more flexibility to add housing that fits their neighborhoods.”

- **The Watch Party** (February 6, 2026)

- Tabling opportunity at the Winter Olympics Watch Party in Library Square.

- **Salt Lake Homebuilders Association** (February 10, 2026)

- Staff presentation to industry experts at the Homebuilders Association's Government Relations Meeting.

- **Your City Loves You!** (February 14, 2026)

- Tabling opportunity at Casa Del Pollo, District 1 Valentine's Day event.

- **Open House at Highland High School** (February 24, 2026)

- Staff presentation was not possible due to technical issues. Another open house was scheduled at a different eastside location to make up for the missed presentation.

- **Winter Farmers Market** (March 7, 2026)

- Tabling opportunity at The Leonardo.

- **Open House at Sorenson Unity Center** (March 12, 2026)

- Staff presentation followed by public open house.



Image from WALC Event



Image from Winter Farmers Market Event

- **Affordable Housing Panel** (March 19, 2026)
 - Panel discussion on affordable housing at the University of Utah, hosted by U3 (Urbanists at the University of Utah).
- **District 5 Town Hall** (March 25, 2026)
 - Staff presentation to town hall meeting at Horizonte Instruction and Training Center.
- **Open House at the Salt Lake City Main Library** (March 31, 2026)
 - Staff presentation followed by public open house.
- **Open House at The Neighborhood Hive** (April 13, 2026)
 - Staff presentation followed by public open house.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Throughout the public engagement process, staff gathered feedback, thoughts, comments, and questions regarding Expanding Housing Options to assess the public’s level of support for or opposition to the various elements of the proposal. Comments of all types have been received throughout this process. Comments in support of the proposal have ranged from general support for more housing to wishing that the proposal went much further. Comments in opposition to the proposal have ranged from general opposition to believing that Expanding Housing Options will tear apart the residential fabric of Salt Lake City.

In order to facilitate a productive discussion, staff has identified several common themes to focus on for further consideration. These are themes that were repeatedly identified by the public throughout the public engagement process. Each category is discussed in further detail below, with discussion points to consider. All recommendations related to a zoning text amendment should be based on the standards for general amendments found in [21A.50.050](#).

Floor Area & “Family Sized” Housing

In order to be classified as a “Small Lot Dwelling”, units may not exceed a certain maximum size. These size limits are intended to allow new construction built at market-rate that is still relatively less expensive than the average single-family dwelling in the city, while also providing an adequate amount of space for families to call home.

The Small Lot Dwelling section of the proposal includes regulations on the principal building gross floor area. Gross floor area refers to the sum of all floor area within a building, including upper floors and basements. The proposed maximum gross floor area would depend on the height of the Small Lot Dwelling; with less floor area allowed for taller structures. Dwellings up to 17 feet tall would be allowed up to 1,700 sq. ft., while those over 17 feet in height would only be allowed up to 1,200 sq. ft. 17 feet was selected because it is tall enough to allow a single-story building with a pitched roof, but two-story buildings generally require more height. Incentivizing shorter buildings is one way to address privacy concerns (see “Building Heights, Side Setbacks, & Privacy” section below for further discussion).

Public Comment Summary

One of the overarching themes from comments that staff received during the public engagement period was that the gross floor area limits may not be large enough to accommodate large families, therefore not accomplishing the goals laid out by City Council. Other residents pointed out that not all families have the same preferences and that some families might be okay with a smaller space.

- **Example comments in support of Small Lot Dwellings:**
 - *“I think smaller lots and smaller homes make sense and are the future as our population grows - we need to take up less space, use fewer resources, and maintain healthy natural environments and land to grow food for people.”*
- **Example comments in opposition to 1,200 square foot dwellings:**
 - *“...the proposed 1,200 sq. ft. maximum does not support the needs of growing families who require more space. Many families, including my own, seek larger homes when planning for children. My friends with young children who currently live in 1,500–1,800 sq. ft. bungalows are actively trying to upsize, not downsize...”*
 - *“The 1,200 square foot maximum home size conflicts with existing neighborhood patterns and does not support adequate living space for a family of 3-5 individuals. In addition, this size limitation does not fit with current market demand for larger homes.”*

Staff Analysis

Large Enough for Three Bedrooms

1,200-1,700 sq. ft. may seem small compared to the nearly 2,200 sq. ft. average home size in Salt Lake County ([Federal Reserve Economic Data](#)), but it is still an adequate size for up to three bedrooms. City planners from Durham, NC say that after their city adopted a similar zoning amendment allowing small homes up to 1,200 sq. ft. in size, all of the new homes had three bedrooms and two bathrooms. In Salt Lake City’s other zoning districts that allow townhomes, two- or three-bedroom floorplans are common for townhome units up to 1,200 sq. ft. Projects with up to 1,700 sq. ft. of floor area are typically large enough to accommodate up to four bedrooms.

“Right-sizing” Housing

Although smaller sized housing may not be right for every family, staff received many comments from young couples and families who felt this size would be ideal. Staff also heard from older residents who were “empty nesters” with no children at home who were interested in downsizing but wanted to stay nearby. Allowing smaller housing options in residential districts would make it possible for older residents to age in place, making their larger homes available to larger families.

Shifting Household Size

As of [July 1, 2024](#), the US Census Bureau estimated that the average household size in Salt Lake City was 2.14 people, which is down from the average of 2.75 people per household in [2000](#). With shrinking household sizes, one might expect that building sizes would also decrease proportionally. However, recent trends in new single-family construction show that the market continues to produce larger homes. New homes are commonly built with significantly more square footage than what a three-person family needs, at a price that is unattainable to most families. Allowing new construction that is relatively smaller and more attainable may help to align construction trends with demographic trends.

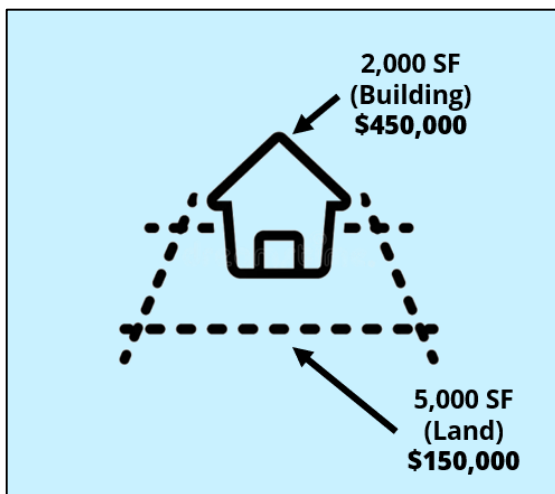
Existing Neighborhood Patterns

The 1,200 square foot size restriction is consistent with housing in established neighborhoods of Salt Lake City. Modestly sized, two- to three-bedroom bungalows are prevalent throughout older neighborhoods and represent a desirable housing option for households with children. In more recent years, newer development consisting of larger homes and larger lot sizes has disrupted historic block patterns. Allowing smaller homes that were once a common housing type is a policy that could lead to new housing that is compatible with existing development.

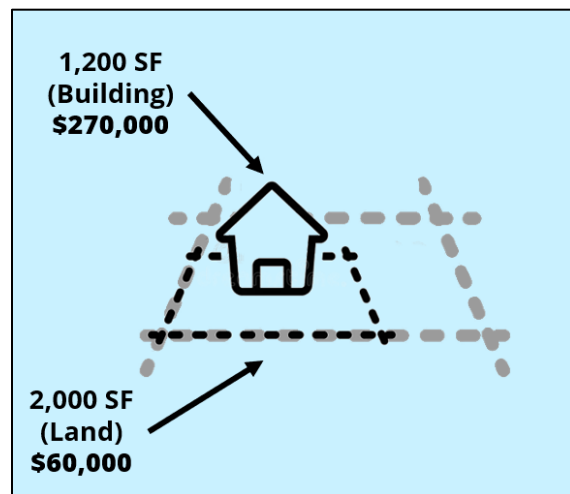
Smaller Scale, Smaller Price

The final sales price of a home is determined by multiple factors, such as land cost, building cost, taxes, and other fees (real estate fees, permit fees, closing costs, etc.). The two most significant factors, the land and building costs, are priced per square foot, which is something the zoning ordinance can directly regulate. Reducing the minimum lot size lowers the cost of land and limiting the maximum floor area lowers the cost of the building.

To help demonstrate this concept, consider the following example. This hypothetical illustration uses rounded numbers for discussion purposes. At \$30 per sq. ft., the cost of land on a typical 5,000 sq. ft. lot would be \$150,000. At \$225 per sq. ft., the cost of a 2,000 sq. ft. building would be \$450,000, bringing the combined total to \$600,000. By comparison, a Small Lot Dwelling at the same price per square foot would only cost \$330,000.



R-1/5,000 Base Zoning District Example Cost: \$600,000



Small Lot Dwelling Example Cost: \$330,000

Real world prices will vary depending on the neighborhood and the specific property. Unlike the Affordable Housing Incentives code, the Small Lot Dwelling code would not limit the final price, so there is no guarantee that a dwelling will be sold at this price. This example is simply intended to demonstrate how a smaller size leads to a lower price if all other factors remain equal. When [Durham, NC](#), adopted a similar proposal, they found that the median price of a small house (under 1,200 sq. ft.) on a small lot was approximately \$250,000 less than the median price of a single-family home.

Smaller Scale, Smaller Impact

Many public comments expressed concerns over “large apartments” that wouldn’t fit in with their neighborhoods. Limiting the footprint and gross floor area of new units is also intended to ensure that new development is not out of scale with the surrounding neighborhood. Size limits, along with compatible height and setback standards, are the primary method the zoning ordinance can ensure new buildings are compatible in size and scale to existing buildings nearby.

Small Lots Not Required

It is important to note that this ordinance would not force anybody to build a Small Lot Dwelling. If a property owner chooses to build a larger home than what is allowed under the proposed Small Lot Dwelling ordinance, that home would simply be required to meet the base zoning standards. Larger homes on larger lots (up to the maximum lot size) would still be allowed in each of the affected zones.

Feedback Requested

Staff is requesting feedback on the appropriate maximum floor area for Small Lot Dwellings. Please consider the following options:

Option 1: Keep as proposed (1,200 sq. ft. gross floor area for principal buildings over 17 feet tall)

As discussed above, there is a correlation between the size of a unit and its price, so larger units may be less affordable. 1,200 sq. ft. was initially chosen based on the success of Durham, NC. If affordability is the main priority, then keeping the maximum gross floor area for Small Lot Dwellings over 17' at 1,200 sq. ft. is recommended.

Option 2: Grant 300 sq. ft. of additional space for three-bedroom units over 17 feet tall

The proposal could include an incentive for dwellings with three or more bedrooms. The Small Lot Dwelling standards could be updated to allow up to 1,500 sq. ft. of gross floor area for principal buildings over 17 feet in height with at least three bedrooms. Allowing an additional 300 sq. ft. of gross floor area would allow more room for larger families in a way that still ensures compatibility with existing neighborhoods. No modification would need to be made to the maximum footprint standard. Additional floor area for buildings less than or equal to 17 feet is not recommended, because 1,700 sq. ft. is more than adequate to accommodate three or four bedrooms.

Allowing larger floor areas could help address some of the concerns related to “family-sized” housing but could also lead to housing units that are relatively more expensive. Changing the maximum from 1,200 sq. ft. to 1,500 sq. ft. would represent a 25% increase in the allowable building size, and, therefore, a potential increase to the construction cost by a similar margin.

Front Yard Setbacks

The distance between a structure and a property line is commonly referred to as a “setback” or “yard.” Both terms are sometimes used interchangeably when discussing zoning regulations, but the Salt Lake City zoning ordinance specifically regulates “required yards,” with specific minimum yard depths required in each zoning district. A yard is defined as “...an open space which is unoccupied and unobstructed from its ground level to the sky, except as otherwise permitted herein” (21A.62.040). Some obstructions are allowed in required yard areas; things like playgrounds, fences, and flagpoles (21A.36.020).

To build a new home on a vacant lot in the affected zones, the code currently requires a minimum front yard depth equal to the average of the block face. The block face includes all of the lots on the same side of the street between two intersecting streets. If there are no dwellings on the block face, the front yard requirement is 20 feet. If there is an existing home on the property built before 1995, the established front yard is the setback.

Front yard averaging can be a useful method to help achieve a more uniform appearance along a block face, but the standards can be difficult to explain to residents and costly to implement. For example, in the image to the right, the vacant lot’s front yard would be determined by measuring each of the neighbors’ yards and taking the average.

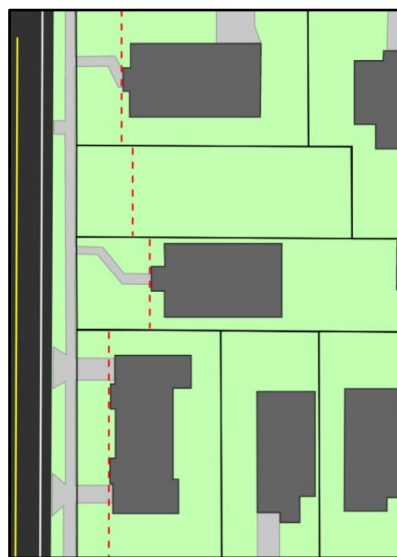


Diagram illustrating block face averaging.

To make the code easier to understand and implement, Expanding Housing Options proposes removal of the block face averaging requirement for front yards. The proposal would instead allow new homes to provide a 20-foot front yard setback or match one of their next-door neighbors' front yard setbacks, whichever is less. The Small Lot Dwelling code requires a minimum front yard depth of 10 feet.

Public Comment Summary

Public feedback regarding the base zoning districts' front yard measurements were generally supportive, while the feedback on the Small Lot Dwelling front yard standard was split. Many believe that smaller setbacks for Small Lot Dwellings next to larger existing setbacks could negatively impact the neighborhood's streetscape. Other commenters noted that some people may not wish to have a large front yard or that smaller front yards use less water.

- **Sample comment in support of reducing front yard setbacks:**
 - *“18’ front yards – these yards are mostly unused, and reduced setback would use land and resources more effectively without major character changes.”*
- **Sample comment in support of removing setback averaging:**
 - *“The averaging rule of front yard setbacks is and has been a significant issue. Much of our neighborhoods are very old and vary in setback lengths greatly. Some being very close and others being towards the rear of lots causing a huge problem of skewing an average in a single block face. Which then reduces the usability of a lot if a homeowner is required to significantly move the front wall of their home rearward if some of the properties on the block face have huge differences in setbacks. I think the idea of setting a standard rather than an average eliminates this disparity and also allows for a uniform use case from a building perspective. Also allowing the homeowner/builder to match an existing abutting property will keep the block face in a similar aesthetic from the curb viewing perspective while also following the letter of the law.”*
- **Sample comment against removing setback averaging**
 - *“Front setback needs to fit in better with the existing housing and should be the average of the housing block face setbacks minus 3 feet. That way it doesn’t stick out and make all the neighbors unhappy.”*
 - *“Front yard setbacks should not be less than abutting front yard setbacks. The current proposal offers an option of 20’ or abutting front yard setbacks. Thus, if abutting front yards have a 40’ front yard setback, the proposal would permit a home to be constructed closer to the curb than the abutting properties, resulting in a hodgepodge look to the block / neighborhood and detracting from the visual appearance of the street.”*
- **Sample comments in support of the 10-foot front yard setback for Small Lot Dwellings**
 - *“Many people want smaller lots with less yard maintenance. Smaller lots also reduce outdoor water use. Smaller lots also enable smaller structures. Less land and smaller homes are two ways to increase affordability.”*
 - *“I don’t think setback requirements are necessary or could be made smaller.”*
 - *“I’m generally in favor of this change, and if anything the one area that would be worth considering is also easing up on the height and setback requirements to encourage more density and visually interesting neighborhoods.”*

- **Sample comments against the 10-foot front yard setback for Small Lot Dwellings**
 - “The single-family homes on my Bonneville Hills block have a typical front yard setback of 35 feet. The proposed small lot development ordinance calls for a 10-foot front yard setback. How is this 25-foot difference (sawtooth configuration) in keeping with the proposed ordinance language: *THE STANDARDS FOR THE DISTRICT ARE INTENDED TO PROVIDE..... DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS AND TO PRESERVE THE EXISTING CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD?*”
 - “This seems great and should move forward. The only issue I see is the front yard set back. At only 10 feet it seems like these building will jut out too much into the neighborhood.”

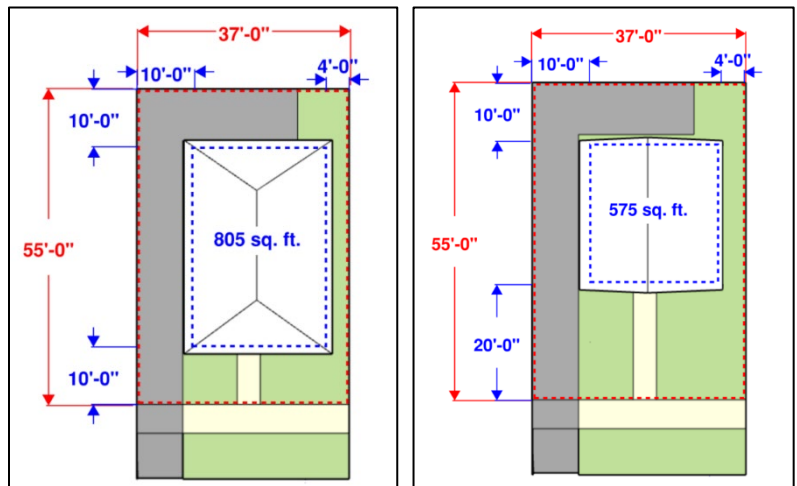
Staff Analysis

Front Yard Averaging in Base Zoning Districts

The proposal includes the removal of front yard averaging along the block face. This requirement is not only difficult for staff to explain to residents, but it can also be difficult, costly, and time-consuming for residents to accomplish. Instead of averaging, the proposal would require a minimum front yard of 20’ or equal to one abutting front yard on the same block face. This makes the standard clear and easy to implement for residents and contractors.

Small Lot Dwelling Front Yards

As mentioned previously in this memo, larger setback requirements disproportionately impact smaller lots. With the minimum lot size reduced to 2,000 sq. ft., setbacks equal to the base zoning district would significantly reduce the amount of buildable area available. For example, a lot that is 37 feet wide and 55 feet deep has a lot area of 2,035 sq. ft. With 10-foot setbacks provided in the front and rear, the remaining lot depth is 35 feet. If the front yard requirement was changed to 20 feet for Small Lot Dwellings, that would leave



a depth of only 25 feet. This would result in a significant decrease to the buildable area of the lot, from 805 sq. ft. down to 575 sq. ft. This hypothetical lot would be unable to build to the maximums permitted under the proposed code as the largest home could be 1,150 sq. ft. (575 sq. ft. x 2). The diagrams above illustrate the difference in buildable areas for lots with a 10-foot and 20-foot front yard.

The minimum yard requirements for Small Lot Dwellings are applied to the perimeter of the development and not to the individual principal buildings within the development. It is anticipated that most Small Lot Dwellings will not be built on standalone 2,000 sq. ft. lots, but more likely as part of a larger development with multiple Small Lot Dwellings or behind an existing home. In these cases, the impact of the front yard requirement would only affect the front lots, but not those built behind an existing home.

Consistent Setbacks Along the Block Face

As currently proposed, the front yard setbacks for Small Lot Dwellings (10 feet) would differ from the requirements in the base zoning districts (20 feet). Several comments were received that expressed concerns about this disrupting the symmetry of the streetscape and potentially leading to “sawtooth configurations” with newer developments sticking out in front of the established neighborhood wall.



Rendering of Small Lot Dwellings with 10-foot setback abutting single family homes with 20-foot setbacks.

While increasing the Small Lot Dwelling front setback to 20 feet may help keep new development in line with existing homes, it would significantly limit the buildable area, eliminating some potential homes and allowing for fewer bedrooms in others. Decreasing the setback in the base zones would allow more freedom for both Small Lot Dwellings and for existing homes to expand, but it could still result in some buildings that do not match their neighbor’s setbacks.

Aligning Setbacks with Other Standards

As discussed above, increasing the minimum required front yard for Small Lot Dwellings beyond 10 feet could reduce the buildable area to a point that renders projects infeasible. When zoning ordinances are drafted, it’s generally considered a best practice to align setbacks with other dimensional standards, such as building coverage or floor area maximums. Harmonizing the standards of the code so that one standard does not conflict with others is an important way to avoid confusion and ensure a clear and predictable development process. Ideally, the development standards for Small Lot Dwellings should allow for a home on a minimum-sized lot that meets the required setbacks and can still realistically accommodate a “family-sized” unit. Increasing the minimum front yard for Small Lot Dwellings beyond 10 feet may lead to some Small Lot Dwellings that are significantly smaller and less desirable to households with children.

Feedback Requested

Staff requests feedback on the appropriate front yard requirements for Small Lot Dwellings and in the base zoning districts. Please consider the following question:

1. What modifications can be made to the front yard setbacks to address concerns without limiting the ability to create Small Lot Dwellings?

Building Heights, Side Yard Setbacks, & Privacy

The proposed modifications to the base zoning districts include increasing heights while also decreasing and standardizing rear and side yard setbacks. Further discussion of the reasons for these changes is provided in the “Staff Analysis” section below. The following table provides a comparison of the proposed increases in building heights in the various zones.

Building Height Comparison

Roof Type (by Zoning District)	Existing	Proposed	Change
Pitched roof (R-1, R-2, and SR-1)	28 feet	30 feet	+2 feet
Pitched roof (SR-1A)	23 feet	25 feet	+2 feet
Flat roof (R-1, R-2, and SR-1)	20 feet	24 feet	+4 feet
Flat roof (SR-1A)	16 feet	20 feet	+4 feet

Of the six zoning districts included in this project, four (R-1/5,000, R-2, SR-1, and SR-1A) have side yard setbacks of four feet on one side and 10 feet on the other. The R-1/7,000 district includes setbacks of six feet and 10 feet while the R-1/12,000 district has setbacks of eight feet and 10 feet.

Side Yard Setback Comparison

Zoning District	<u>Side Yard 1</u>			<u>Side Yard 2</u>		
	Existing	Proposed	Change	Existing	Proposed	Change
R-1/5,000, R-2, SR-1, & SR-1A	4 feet	4 feet	0 feet	10 feet	10 feet	0 feet
R-1/7,000	6 feet	4 feet	-2 feet	10 feet	10 feet	0 feet
R-1/12,000	8 feet	4 feet	-4 feet	10 feet	10 feet	0 feet

Rear yard setbacks in these districts vary. Some districts, like the R-1/5,000 and R-2 districts, require the rear yard to be a certain percentage of the total lot depth but also have a maximum. The R-1/7,000 and R-1/12,000 districts require 25 feet, regardless of the lot depth. The proposed code reduces the rear yard to be 20% of lot depth in all six districts, with various maximum required yards (between 20-25 feet).

Rear Yard Setback Comparison

Zoning District	Existing	Proposed
R-1/5,000	25% of depth, no more than 20 feet	20% of depth, no more than 20 feet
R-1/7,000	25 feet	20% of depth, no more than 20 feet
R-1/12,000	25 feet	20% of depth, no more than 25 feet
R-2	25% of depth, minimum 15 feet, maximum 30 feet	20% of depth, no more than 15 feet
SR-1 & SR-1A	25% of depth, minimum 15 feet, maximum 30 feet	20% of depth, no more than 15 feet

Public Comment Summary

Public feedback regarding an increase in building heights and a reduction in side and rear yard setbacks was largely supportive. Many comments indicated that the proposed increases are minor and would align Salt Lake City closer to other surrounding municipalities while still allowing development reflective of historic Salt Lake City neighborhoods. Opposition to the building heights increase largely

focused on a potential loss of privacy or viewsheds, as well as general disagreement with the modifications to the low-density residential districts as a whole.

Comments in support of side yard modifications noted how the changes provide more autonomy to property owners and appreciated the simplification and alignment of the R-1 zones. Those against side yard modifications again noted a loss of privacy as a key issue.

- **Sample comment in support of increasing building heights:**
 - *“I support the changes. I would support a max height of 35’ to match the architectural style of higher ceilings. Could even add a 2 story max to keep people happy.”*
 - *“I agree that the maximum building height should be addressed. The current 28’ standard barely allows for a short 2 story structure to be built. In order to accommodate the 28’ standard some things would have to be forgone in height to meet that standard. Such as ceiling heights or attic space. If the height was increased to 33’ all forms of a 2 story home would be accommodated and coincide with new building trends.”*
- **Sample comments against increasing building heights:**
 - *“The reduction of setbacks and increases in height allowances means that taller homes will be built closer to existing homes. As homes are sold by current owners, there is a strong possibility lots will be bought by investors wanting to maximize profits by building as many homes as possible on lots as close to the property lines as possible. It’s likely the new dwellings will be rental units rather than owner occupied because there are no deed restrictions to require owner occupancy. The thought of multiple, tall dwellings being built on the lots next door to me, close to my property line, is very upsetting to me. My lot is a little more than 1/2 acre. I will lose the peace and quiet in my yard that I currently enjoy.”*
 - *“I would strongly oppose a change in height limits if the new building would block valley views.”*
- **Sample comments in support of reducing side yard setbacks:**
 - *“I would suggest that for side yard setbacks in the R-1/5,000 district for interior lots without an existing structure the minimum side yard setback on both sides should be 4’.”*
 - *“Cutting red tape that is not directly safety related is always a good thing.”*
- **Sample comment against reducing side yard setbacks**
 - *“My concern with side yard restrictions being reduced is mainly a safety issue. This reduces free spaces and visibility. I am worried about kids playing in their already too small yards. An additional problem is obviously privacy. The smaller the side yards the closer to the neighbors.”*

Staff Analysis

Building Heights

The proposed modifications are modest in nature and are intended to allow for modern construction trends and an easier-to-build second story, particularly for flat roof structures. The additional height could allow some households with children to build a second story addition to their home, potentially allowing them to stay in the city instead of moving elsewhere for more space.

As discussed in the March 2026 memo, surrounding municipalities generally allow a maximum building height between 30 and 35 feet. Some of the city's residential districts with higher development potential, such as FB-UN1 and RMF-30, allow a maximum height of up to 30 feet. Increasing the R-1, R-2, and SR-1 building heights is a way to grant more flexibility to property owners, while also aligning the standards with what is commonly allowed elsewhere in the city and in other nearby municipalities. The modest height increase also allows for greater flexibility and variety in building design and architectural detailing, adding interest and character to the block face.

In some cases, the Fire Code may stipulate additional requirements for buildings over 30 feet. For example, an additional 6 feet of extra road width is required for fire apparatus access roads leading to structures greater than 30 feet in height ([SLC Residential Fire Code Checklist](#)). This may be difficult to provide on established streets and in rear yards. For this reason, as well as congruity with other zoning districts, staff did not initially recommend raising the maximum height above 30 feet.

The proposal would also increase heights in the SR-1A district by the same amount (+2 feet for pitched roofs, +4 feet for flat roofs). It is common for SR-1A properties to be located within a local historic district, where some zoning standards (including height) may be modified through a Certificate of Appropriateness if they meet certain historic preservation standards. However, there are pockets of properties zoned SR-1A that are not located in a local historic district and are strictly held to the building height standards for new construction. Modifying the heights in the base zoning district is equitable, as these property owners cannot realistically build a two-story flat roof home at 16 feet.

Under the current code, all R-1, R-2, and SR-1 (not SR-1A) structures with a pitched roof are allowed up to a maximum height of 28 feet. Impacts to neighbors' privacy and views are expected to be similar whether the maximum height is 28 feet or 30 feet. Each property owner is entitled to the same property rights as other property owners in the same zoning district. If a property owner chooses to build to the maximum allowed height, then they are permitted to do so as long as all other applicable regulations are met.

No additional height is proposed for Small Lot Dwellings. The maximum height for all Small Lot Dwellings, regardless of building type, is proposed to be the district maximum.

Side Yard Setbacks

Standardizing the side yard setbacks across the low-density residential districts helps avoid unnecessary complication under such circumstances and generally helps improve consistency and ease of use. Staff is proposing to reduce this requirement to four feet and 10 feet in only two zoning districts, the R-1/7,000 and the R-1/12,000, for consistency across residential zones. This would reduce the side yard setback requirements of roughly 17,000 properties in the R-1/7,000 and R-1/12,000 districts..

For example, under [21A.36.020.A](#), the code states that in any residential district, if a lot was legally established prior to April 12, 1995, that lot may follow the R-1/5,000 zoning district standards. Because of this provision in the code, an R-1/12,000-zoned lot that was subdivided in 1990 could build a home to the R-1/5,000 standards, which includes side yard setbacks of four feet and 10 feet. This applies even if the lot is only a few feet less than 12,000 square feet.

The Small Lot Dwelling proposal includes identical perimeter yard setbacks as the proposed base zoning districts.

Impacts on Privacy and Safety

The proposed reduction in side yard setbacks to four feet on one side and the proposed increase in building heights to 30 feet for a pitched roof and 24 feet for a flat roof are expected to have minimal impacts on privacy and safety. The proposed increases in building heights are relatively minor, and property rights currently allow for property owners to build up to 28 feet for a pitched roof or 20 feet for a flat roof. Further, with the existing code exception allowing legal residential lots to follow the R-1/5,000 standards, there will be minimal change to the potential homes that could be built. The potential benefits of adding housing or making housing more attainable to more people is a worthwhile trade-off for minor impacts to privacy.

Side yard setbacks of four feet are common in residential neighborhoods and can typically be built without issue under the current fire and building codes. A four-foot setback is generally considered an adequate size to allow access around the side of the home for regular maintenance and yard work. While reductions in side yard setbacks generally do not pose additional risks to health, safety, or the general welfare of Salt Lake City residents, all new construction will be evaluated by the Fire Department at the building permit stage. Additional setbacks may be appropriate on a case-by-case basis as determined by the Fire Department.

Feedback Requested

Staff recommends standardizing side yard setbacks across the low-density residential districts to promote consistency across similar districts. Staff also recommends increasing building heights to allow for modern construction trends and easier additions to promote family-sized housing. The proposal was drafted with the anticipated impacts to privacy in mind, and the current proposal is designed to balance those impacts with the goals of the project. However, the commission may consider additional options:

1. Side yard setbacks
 - a. Keep as currently proposed (4'/10' in all zones)
 - b. Keep existing setbacks (larger setbacks in R-1/7,000 & R-1/12,000)
 - c. Decrease setbacks further (4'/4' in all zones)
2. Building heights
 - a. Keep as currently proposed (up to 30' for pitched roofs in most zones)
 - b. Keep existing building heights (up to 28' for pitched roofs in most zones)
 - c. Increase building heights further (greater than 30')

Off-Street Parking

Every new building in Salt Lake City is required to meet certain off-street parking requirements. Minimum and maximum off-street parking requirements are established for each land use based on the parking context, which is determined by zoning district and proximity to fixed-rail transit. For single-family dwellings, the minimum requirement is typically two spaces per dwelling unit. Parking must be provided on a paved surface, and the required spaces may not be provided in the front yard, with few exceptions (i.e., driveway spaces in front of a home may be used for parking, but those spaces don't count towards the minimum required). On-street parking also may not count towards the required minimums.

While no changes are proposed to the parking requirements in the base zoning districts, Small Lot Dwellings would have separate parking standards. The current proposal would require one off-street

parking space per Small Lot Dwelling unit. Required parking spaces would be allowed on any lot within a development, so parking could be provided in a shared garage or other parking area if desired. Otherwise, all parking must conform to the standards of [Chapter 21A.44: Off Street Parking, Mobility And Loading](#) and the [Off-Street Parking Standards Manual](#).

Public Comment Summary

Comments about parking were prevalent, both online and in-person. Some residents who live in areas where street parking is already highly utilized were concerned that any new housing would exacerbate existing issues. The majority of parking-related comments received online could be classified as generally negative or in favor of requiring higher parking minimums. Complaints about parking were also common at the public open house events. Comments about parking were not all negative, however, as there were also residents who felt that the City should either reduce or eliminate parking minimums.

- **Sample comment supporting higher parking requirements:**
 - *“The added infill housing proposal requires only one off-street parking space per unit. Parking is an issue throughout the city. The average number of cars per household is two. Our current system of mass transit does not meet the needs of residents. The proposal does not address this problem adequately.”*
 - *“Concerned that limited parking on the property will fill streets and lead to more congestion in communities.”*
- **Sample comments supporting lower parking requirements:**
 - *“Waive parking requirements near high-frequency transit corridors, consistent with the city’s existing ADU policy; and reduce the staging area on driveways... Parking requirements often function as hidden density caps. Even when zoning permits additional units, mandatory off-street parking consumes buildable area and increases construction costs, sometimes by tens of thousands of dollars per unit. For small lots, especially near transit, parking mandates can render otherwise viable projects infeasible.”*
 - *“This is good, but you need to remove parking requirements. This will severely hamper development of these lots.”*

Staff Analysis

The parking requirements for Small Lot Dwellings have been initially proposed at 1 space per unit. This requirement is aligned with existing parking requirements for other similar land uses, like Accessory Dwelling Units and Affordable Housing Incentives developments, which also require 1 off-street parking space per unit.

In some cases, parking alternatives or reductions may apply. The Accessory Dwelling Unit code allows the parking requirement to be waived for properties within ¼-mile of public transit (bus or TRAX) or within ½-mile of a designated bicycle lane or path ([21A.40.200.G](#)). No parking reductions or modifications are listed for Affordable Housing Incentives developments or Small Lot Dwellings specifically, but the parking chapter does allow reductions for certain building types within ¼-mile of fixed-rail transit (TRAX). This reduction does not apply to single-family (attached or detached) or two-family uses ([21A.44.050.C](#)), but could apply to triplex or fourplex uses. When parking calculations result in a fractional number, any fraction of 0.5 or larger is rounded up ([21A.44.030.A.6](#)). For example, if a triplex requires 3 parking stalls, a 25% reduction would equal 2.25 stalls, which would round down

to 2. The table below is provided to help compare the parking requirements for housing options within the affected zoning districts.

It is worth mentioning that while the code requires off-street parking to be provided, it does not require someone to park in their off-street space, rather than on the street. All residents will maintain equal access to legal, on-street parking, regardless of off-street parking requirements.

Required Off-Street Parking & Allowed Parking Reductions

	Single-Family Dwelling (Base Zoning)	Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)	Affordable Housing Incentives (AHI)	Small Lot Dwellings (Proposed)
Minimum Off-Street Parking	2 spaces per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit
Proximity to Transit (1/4 mile)	No reduction allowed	0 spaces per unit	Triplex & 4-plex: 25% reduction if 1/4 mile to fixed-rail transit	Triplex & 4-plex: 25% reduction if 1/4 mile to fixed-rail transit
Proximity to Bicycle Lanes (1/2 mile)	No reduction allowed	0 spaces per unit	No reduction allowed	No reduction allowed

Cost & Affordability

Each additional parking space required by the City represents an additional cost to the builder, which are costs that are likely passed on to prospective residents in the form of higher rents or sale prices. Parking experts in the field of urban planning have written extensively on this subject (e.g., *Parking Reform Made Easy* by Richard Willson and *The High Cost of Free Parking* by Donald Shoup). While a simple driveway extension for one space might only add thousands of dollars to a project, adding multiple spaces or including a carport or garage could add tens of thousands of dollars. Some estimates put the cost of a single-car garage at \$30,000-\$50,000.

Size & Design

The Off-Street Parking Standards Manual includes minimum dimensions for parking spaces, which vary depending on factors like the parking angle and aisle width. A typical parking stall measures about 9 feet x 18 feet, with additional space required for the aisle to back in and out. Increasing the minimum parking requirements could mean requiring hundreds of additional square feet on a small lot to be reserved for parking rather than housing.

Compatibility With Existing Standards

As noted above, the initial recommendation was intended to closely match the parking requirements of other similar development types. Consistency of standards across zones is one way to ensure regulations are fair and equitable, as well as helping avoid confusion when implementing the code. Requiring more parking for one type of housing option when other similar options require less parking could be confusing and may deter property owners from using that option.

Feedback Requested

Staff recommends keeping the off-street parking requirement at one space per unit, consistent with similar housing requirements, to maximize space available for housing. The commission could consider additional options such as:

Option 1: Keep as proposed (one parking stall per dwelling unit)

As discussed above, parking stalls add significant costs to construction that are passed on to residents via rent or sales prices. One stall per unit is identical to the Affordable Housing Incentives requirements.

Option 2: Increase required parking but offer exceptions

If it is determined that there should be a larger parking requirement for Small Lot Dwellings, such as 1.25 or 1.5 spaces per unit, staff would urge planning commission to consider adding the exceptions that the ADU code provides (proximity to transit and bicycle lanes/paths). This would allow for fewer parking stalls where appropriate rather than forcing every small lot development to provide an increased amount parking.

Investor Ownership & Owner Occupancy

Zoning ordinances regulate the size, location, and type of buildings allowed on a property, but generally should not regulate who can own or occupy a property. The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, and disability. One way that zoning ordinances can legally regulate who lives on a property is by requiring owner occupancy. For instance, the city's current ADU code requires the property owner or relative to reside on the property, enforced by a restrictive covenant recorded in the Salt Lake County Recorder's Office. The draft ordinances as currently proposed contain no restrictions on who can own or occupy a property.

Public Comment Summary

A frequent concern that staff received, both written and verbal, was about investors owning properties. As this issue has been thrust into the spotlight in recent months, it has naturally come up as a concern during the public engagement for Expanding Housing Options.

- **Example comment with concerns over investor ownership:**
 - *“There is also a broader concern that should not be overlooked. Increasing the number of rentable units per property creates strong financial incentives for investors to acquire single family homes and convert them into income-producing assets. Over time, this risks shifting neighborhoods away from owner-occupied stability toward investor-driven turnover.”*
 - *“There needs to be restriction upon PE (private equity) purchasing the single-unit homes that are built. Requiring individuals/couples/actual people purchase them could be a small way to: close the gap between corporate ownership and people trying to start their lives; ensure they are lived in by committed, long-term property taxpayers. I believe this poses an issue with the multi-unit, as they would require a "landlord", which, culture states, are business-/money- minded people and not in the industry of hospitality or service, which is what providing a home to others should be, first and foremost.”*

Staff Analysis

Salt Lake City is a majority-renter city ([Housing SLC](#)). Despite this fact, many of the comments received were negative toward renters as a group. Staff acknowledge that encouraging homeownership is a goal supported by the City, but owner occupancy requirements can often act as a modern exclusionary tool. There are currently no owner occupancy requirements for standard single-family dwellings, so the proposal would keep smaller homes consistent with what is currently allowed for larger homes.

The Planning Division is not proposing any owner occupancy requirements in the draft ordinance for Small Lot Dwellings because additional requirements in the code could act as barriers to the production of new housing. The requirement to record a document against the title of a property restricting its use can be an imposing legal task for some applicants and increases the cost and time to administer and enforce the ordinance.

It is likely illegal for zoning laws to regulate who may own land and monitoring who may live in a dwelling is challenging to enforce. Tracking and categorizing the ownership and residency status of residential properties could pose a variety of issues. Questions arise of what makes somebody an investor, how many units one must own, and how to track investors who hold properties under different LLCs or corporations. Targeting all LLCs could unintentionally target individuals and families who have put their property in an LLC for a variety of different reasons. Furthermore, research from the Progressive Policy Institute ([Institutional Investment in Single-Family Housing: Separating Fact from Fiction](#)) concluded that while housing affordability is a very big issue, targeting institutional investors is not an effective solution and that institutional ownership has not resulted in housing unaffordability. PPI suggests municipalities reform their zoning and streamline the permitting process and that state and federal governments address institutional ownership.

Feedback Requested

Because owner occupancy requirements could severely hamper the production of Small Lot Dwellings, staff recommends against adding them to the proposal. If adding regulations is desired, the commission should consider limiting owner occupancy to one unit within Small Lot developments. Owner occupancy requirements already exist in the code for Accessory Dwelling Units and could reasonably be implemented by staff. This would require a similar restrictive covenant and documentation as ADUs currently require, as well as additional staff time to administer. Civil Enforcement and the City Attorney's office may also need more staff time to review the associated legal documents and enforce violations.

Demolition of Existing Homes

The City's anti-displacement strategy, [Thriving in Place](#), states that "while units lost to demolition are a fairly small part of the displacement challenge (affecting less than one percent of the city's housing stock between January 2020 and December 2022), the impact on tenants who were living in those units can be profound." Demolitions can result in the loss of naturally occurring affordable housing and can impact neighborhood character, but most properties have a right to be demolished, unless they are located in a Local Historic District or have a preservation easement. In an effort to incentivize the retention of existing homes, the proposed ordinance contains a provision allowing a bonus unit for developments that retain an existing home as part of a Small Lot Dwelling project.

Public Comment Summary

Many comments received are wary of the potential for teardowns in neighborhoods throughout the city. Many commenters expressed concern that Small Lot Dwellings may entice developers to purchase existing single-family homes, demolish the home, and build multiple Small Lot Dwellings on the lot.

- **Sample comments on concerns about developers and/or teardowns**
 - *"As a resident of this part of Salt Lake, I am strongly opposed to these proposed changes in zoning. These changes benefit developers in the short term, but do not*

benefit the community in the long term. Salt Lake City needs diverse zoning to ensure its continued appeal to residents within the community and those moving here. Adoption of these amendments will hurt Salt Lake City residents and not address the housing crisis its proponents suppose.”

- *“I don’t agree with the proposals. It needs to be more controlled and restricted because developers will develop whatever they can regardless of the neighborhood input.”*
- *“I oppose the amendment to SR-1A and zoning that is protecting the opportunity to have single family dwellings and the ability to maintain character of what makes SLC unique. I realize that there is a balance between creating more opportunities for people to live, but also, SLC is NOT getting more affordable. Developers are buying the land and then planning communities with zero character and zero community and forcing people looking for homes to live in these developed homes that are still expensive. This appears to be a way for these developers to get around current zoning and maximize their own profits rather than solving housing shortages.”*
- *“The fear is that allowing the subdivision of current lots into 2000 feet² lots will encourage developers to buy up existing homes, demolish them, and replace them with two to four Small Lot Dwellings throughout the neighborhoods.”*
- *“Widespread use of the Small Lot Dwelling provisions [encourage] developers to tear down existing homes and build multiple units in their place.”*

Staff Analysis

Throughout the process, concerns about developer-led displacement and potential loss of existing housing have been at the forefront of many conversations. To evaluate the potential for demolitions, staff looked to various cities that have implemented similar ordinances. The Small Lot Dwelling ordinance is closely modeled after the small lot ordinance from Durham, NC. Their ordinance established the minimum lot size at 2,000 sq. ft., a building footprint of 800 sq. ft., and a gross floor area of 1,200 sq. ft. [Between adoption in October 2019 and December 2023](#), Durham tracked Small Lot housing production and residential demolitions. In 2019, 89 residential demolition permits were issued. In the four years that followed, demolitions declined overall with an annual average of 53. Also in those four years, a total of 215 Small Lot Dwellings were built. The data from Durham suggests that allowing for gentle increases in density is very unlikely to lead to wholesale demolitions of single-family homes.

Houston, known for aggressive housing reform, saw similar trends regarding demolitions after amending their code. [This article](#) notes that only 0.5% of all single-family parcels saw redevelopment between 2007 and 2020, stating that this indicates “this type of land-use reform is unlikely to cause major changes to the physical character of most residential neighborhoods.” A redevelopment rate of 0.5% applied to all districts affected by the Expanding Housing Options proposal gives an estimated 201 properties that would likely be redeveloped.

In Salt Lake City, both the Accessory Dwelling Unit ordinance and the Affordable Housing Incentives, updated or adopted in 2023 and 2024, respectively, elicited similar concerns. Some residents were worried that these proposals would negatively impact existing neighborhoods and trigger wholesale teardowns. Data from recent years illustrates how these changes have been incremental, with a limited number of projects completed in any given year. A total of 83 ADUs have been completed (27.67 per year) since the Council voted to update the ADU code in 2023, and a total of 18 units have been built (nine units per year) under the AHI code in the six affected districts.

A review of the AHI projects that have either applied for or received a building permit in the six affected districts shows that two homes were demolished to make way for the redevelopment. One of the demolitions was of a boarded, vacant home. Four AHI projects retained the existing structure as part of the development. While many commenters during the public engagement process for both updates were concerned about the impacts the ordinances would have, the utilization of both has not been overwhelming. Instead, there has been a slow, incremental use of both options.

When a single-family dwelling is demolished in Salt Lake City, it is typically replaced by a significantly larger single-family home on the property. These homes are often out of scale compared to other nearby homes but are still allowed by zoning. While these larger homes may accommodate larger household sizes, the demolition of a smaller home is removing a home that may have been less expensive and attainable to more people.

Small Lot Dwelling Affordability

One of the pieces of the proposal is a Small Lot Dwelling code that reduces the required lot size for a home but also limits the footprint and gross floor area of the home on that lot. Smaller homes on smaller lots is another method to encourage affordable or attainable housing.

Public Comment Summary

Public feedback regarding the potential affordability of Small Lot Dwellings was divided. There are many who believe this could lead to more attainable options while others believe that this will only benefit developers and will not produce attainable homes.

- **Sample comments supporting affordability or attainability**
 - *“I fully support this! We need more attainable affordable housing in SLC. We need more density and condos/townhomes. This is a great step in the right direction. Abundance! Housing! Yes!”*
 - *“I think the proposal is great and would a big difference in housing affordability in our city. Please adopt it!”*
 - *“I like the flexibility for people to build different housing types in neighborhoods where we need more diverse housing options. Smaller lots gives larger parcels more opportunities to subdivide - infill development is challenging due to irregularly sized properties and having to make sure there is fire access. Many people want smaller lots with less yard maintenance. Smaller lots also reduce outdoor water use. Smaller lots also enable smaller structures. Less land and smaller homes are two ways to increase affordability.”*
 - *“This is a great idea. As a resident of Capitol Hill, I fully support this. I would like for my children to be able to live in my neighborhood and not have to drive to Saratoga springs or Tooele to be able to afford a house.”*
- **Sample comments opposing affordability or attainability**
 - *“This is great but how do you keep them from becoming Airbnb? Recently some "missing middle" townhomes were built in my neighborhood and 2 of 4 of them are Airbnb. So it's nice that you want to increase housing but the lack of enforcement on short term rentals doesn't give a lot of hope that this will actually increase affordable housing options.”*
 - *“I am so over the City saying they can help housing become more affordable. YOU CANT CONTROL THE MARKET. If you want to help make some rent controlled*

apartments. Developers are wrecking a ball for certain neighborhoods. KICK OUT ALL THE AIRBNB's-- they have taken away 30 + homes in my neighborhood that could be single family homes.”

- “The current process is so application driven with unreachable qualifications, how would another administratively heavy project help this lack of available affordable housing.”
- “This looks absolutely horrible. If I lived near one of these small lots I'd be horrified. We are turning nice neighborhoods into crap, and it will have absolutely no impact on affordability. There aren't enough of these to impact prices, but enough to ruin a street, neighbors and neighborhood.”

Staff Analysis

During the drafting of this proposed code, staff researched various initiatives throughout the country. As detailed on the Expanding Housing Options website, there is ample evidence that smaller homes and missing middle housing is more attainable than a standard single-family home:

1. The median sales price of condos, townhomes, and twin homes in Utah was approximately \$150,000 less than that of a single-family home, according to a [recent report](#) by the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute.
2. [Durham, NC](#), found that the median price of a small house (under 1,200 sq. ft.) on a small lot was approximately \$250,000 less than the median price of a single-family home.
3. [Portland, OR](#), found that the average sales price of a new market-rate middle housing unit was \$250,000 to \$300,000 less than a new market-rate single-family detached house.

Expanding Housing Options, particularly the Small Lot Dwelling code, builds off the successes of various cities to encourage attainable housing. The data overwhelmingly supports the idea that smaller homes on smaller lots are more affordable and attainable than the average standard single-family home.

Rent Control

During the public engagement process, staff received a handful of comments suggesting the City implement rent control. [Utah State Code 57-20-1](#) prohibits counties, cities, and towns from enacting rent control unless it has the express approval of the state legislature. Salt Lake City implementing rent control would be illegal and, therefore, is not an option.

Short-Term Rentals

Many comments suggested that Small Lot Dwellings would be used as short-term rentals. The [table of permitted and conditional uses](#) for the six districts does not list short-term rentals as a permitted or conditional use. The proposed Small Lot Dwelling code also includes a line that expressly prohibits short-term rentals. Short-term rentals are, and will continue to be, illegal in the six districts. Residents are encouraged to report any short-term rentals in these districts via the mySLC phone application or by calling Civil Enforcement at 801-535-7225. The proposal could include larger fines, similar to the Affordable Housing Incentives, for Small Lot Dwellings that are used as a short-term rental.

Impact on Property Values and Property Taxes

Some of the listed purposes of the zoning ordinance are to promote the “...prosperity and welfare of the present and future inhabitants of Salt Lake City” and to “protect the tax base” ([21A.02.030](#)). This

proposal aims to add more housing options for future inhabitants, but also to protect the tax base for current residents.

Public Comment Summary

Residents frequently commented about their expectations of how the proposed changes might impact their property values or taxes. Those who felt this proposal would have a negative impact on values generally thought that new construction would devalue the overall neighborhood and lead to a decline in values, but those who were in favor of the proposal felt it would increase the value and desirability of a neighborhood.

- **Sample comment expecting negative impact to property value:**
 - *“I feel that this will de-value homes and not improve the landscape of the city. People live here because of the character of the city and this proposal will diminish the character.”*
 - *“Adding 3 plexes and 4 plexes and reducing front setbacks in R-1 and R-2 neighborhoods will destroy the attractiveness and reduce the value of the remaining single-family homes. This is NOT a good change.”*
 - *“With the potential for a property to grow from one household to three or four households, property values will drop, as the tranquility attribute of the neighborhood will be diminished. An academic argument is made for the loss of property value, or “Welfare Loss” by Joseph Gyourko and Sean E. McCulloch in their 2024 paper [“The Distaste for Housing Density,”](#) NBER Working Paper.*
- **Sample comment expecting positive impact to property value:**
 - *“The experience of Houston provides particularly strong evidence that zoning reform can simultaneously improve affordability and strengthen local tax bases. Research on Houston’s subdivision reforms shows that allowing smaller lots increased land values and taxable property values per parcel by enabling more housing units on the same land ([Hamilton 2024](#); [Gray & Millsap 2020](#)). At the same time, these reforms made it possible to build smaller homes on smaller parcels, creating more attainable entry-level homeownership opportunities while increasing the overall value generated by residential land.”*

Staff Analysis

Assessed vs. Market Value

When discussing potential impacts to property values, it’s important to note the distinction between assessed value and market value. Assessed value is calculated by the County Assessor and is used to determine property taxes, while market value is determined by buyers and sellers in the real estate market. Appraisers in the County Assessor’s office calculate the assessed value of properties using industry-standard Ad Valorem appraisal techniques, with an aim to appraise as close as possible to market value. Assessed value is the amount that is used to calculate property taxes.

For example, appraisers commonly compare properties to other recently sold, comparable properties (or “comps”). A comparable property would typically be a property with similar characteristics, so a large house would be compared to another large house, a duplex to another duplex, and so on. If a fourplex was built in an existing neighborhood, it would not generally be used as a comp to assess the value of a nearby single-family dwelling, but it could impact the value of nearby fourplexes.

Property Tax Rates

Property taxes are used to fund schools, County services, City services, and other special districts. The amount of tax assessed for each property is calculated based on several factors: the annual budget of a taxing entity, the property's taxable value, and the final adopted tax rate. First, taxing entities adopt a budget each year. The portion of the budget that is funded by property taxes is then divided by the taxable value of all properties within the relevant boundaries. This is how the tax rate is determined.

Residential Tax Exemption

Residential properties used as primary residences are eligible for a property tax exemption. Residential properties receive a 45% deduction from their home value to determine the taxable value, which means they pay property taxes on 55% of the home's value (visit the Salt Lake County website for more information about property [assessment](#) and [taxes](#)).

Property Tax Increases

Property tax rates in Utah are based on the amount of property tax revenue collected in the previous year. According to state law, the City can only receive the same dollar amount in property taxes as it did in the prior year, with the exception of taxes from new developments. However, the City can initiate the Truth in Taxation process to increase property tax revenue ([SLC Budget 101](#)).

In Utah, rising home values don't automatically mean higher property tax bills. Since property taxes are calculated to produce a certain amount of revenue every year, instead of using a fixed tax rate, the property taxes for a specific property could change based on how much their property value increased compared to their neighbors ([Utah Association of Counties- YouTube](#)). In a given year, without a change to the budget, if one neighborhood increases in value significantly more than another neighborhood, then those properties may be charged a higher property tax rate. Ensuring that all single- and two-family zoning districts are impacted equally is key to ensuring that no neighborhoods are disproportionately impacted. For this reason, removing or exempting certain zones from this proposal is not recommended.

The Impact of "Upzoning" on Property Values

Several public comments received included links to scholarly research on the impacts of "upzoning" on property values. One comment pointed to a 2024 paper titled "[The Distaste for Housing Density](#)" to explain how they thought this proposal could lead to lower property values. This paper evaluates the preferences of suburban homeowners related to density and found that "about two-thirds of households have at least a moderate dislike for more density, but a few have an intense dislike and about one-third positively value density." They estimate that a modest increase in density (about 0.5 additional housing units per acre) in their surrounding area produces an average welfare loss of about \$9,500 for incumbent suburban homeowners. In economics, the term "welfare loss" represents a lost surplus resulting from market inefficiencies. In this case, that means that people with negative attitudes towards density are willing to spend more to live in areas with more exclusive zoning.

It's important to point out that welfare loss does not necessarily equal property value loss. A property could increase in value after a zoning change but still might have welfare loss if it could have sold for a higher price under different circumstances. [Research on effects of zoning changes](#) shows that upzoned parcels likely retain higher values, responding to increased development rights, but findings vary depending on specific circumstances. Upzoning can lead to speculation, increased land values, and displacement, especially when limited only to a specific property or neighborhood. Larger scale zoning

changes on a broader, citywide level, like the changes made in [Houston](#), are less likely to have a significant impact on increased land values. Zoning reforms that encourage a large amount of housing construction can also place downward pressure on rents due to the increased housing supply, making housing more affordable in the long term.

NEXT STEPS

Staff will revise the draft ordinances based on feedback received. After the ordinances have been revised, staff will schedule the proposal for a public hearing. After holding a formal public hearing, the Planning Commission will forward a recommendation of approval, approval with modifications, or denial to City Council.

City Council will hold additional briefings and public hearings on the proposed amendments. The City Council may make modifications to the proposal and approve or decline to approve the proposed amendments.

If ultimately approved by the City Council, the changes would be incorporated into the Salt Lake City Zoning Ordinance, and new development would be required to follow the new regulations. If denied, the existing zoning standards would remain in effect.

ATTACHMENTS:

- [ATTACHMENT A: ShapeSLC Public Input Report as of May 1, 2026](#)
- [ATTACHMENT B: Email or Written Comments](#)
- [ATTACHMENT C: Recognized Community Organization Comments](#)

ATTACHMENT A: ShapeSLC Public Input Report as of June 2, 2026

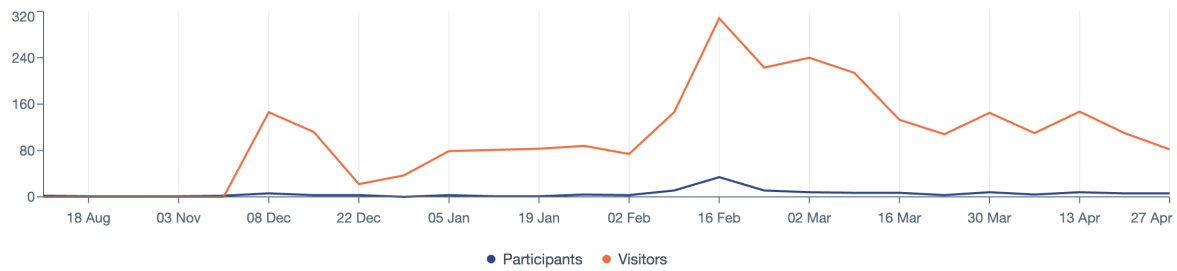
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Proposal Review & Public Input

Participation Metrics


Metric	Value
Visitors	2448
Phase participants	142
Participation rate	5.8%
Surveys submitted	152
Completion rate	88.4%

Participation over time



Demographics & Audience

What is your age?

 No reference census data is available yet for this demographic dimension. [Add it here](#) to understand how representative your data is.

- Phase participants

18 or Younger



Household Income

 No reference census data is available yet for this demographic dimension. [Add it here](#) to understand how representative your data is.

- Phase participants



How would you describe your ethnicity?

PLN CM 2025-01184

 No reference census data is available yet for this demographic dimension. [Add it here](#) to understand how representative your data is.

Questions

Total 152 responses

Page 1: About the Proposal

71/152 responses

1. General Comments

71/152 responses

AI Summary: Concerns about real estate investors and corporate builders dominating new development and leading to characterless, unaffordable, or “cookie-cutter” housing were raised frequently. Several respondents worry that increasing density without protections against price gouging or investor-driven rentals will not address affordability or community longevity. There is support for expanding housing options and zoning changes, especially from homeowners who see personal and neighborhood benefits in being able to add units or work with local developers. Some specifically request relaxing lot size requirements to allow more infill development. Concerns about preserving neighborhood character and the impact of increased density on community cohesion and families were also common. Some respondents feel the proposals do not do enough to maintain the “low-density character” of neighborhoods, while others worry that allowing duplexes mid-block or small homes on small lots could disrupt established communities and make neighborhoods less attractive to families. There are suggestions to restrict duplexes to corner lots and to require home ownership rather than rentals to support community stability. Some respondents question the effectiveness of proposed size caps (e.g., 1,200 sq ft) and suggest these limits may not help meet the city’s goals. Overall, the main themes are: support for more flexible zoning and infill, strong concerns about investor-driven development and loss of neighborhood character, and questions about whether the proposed changes will truly address affordability and family needs.

Responses

Addressing affordability is a great idea. Yet it's too many steps into the future - who cares about affordability if the air is toxic from the death of the Great Salt Lake and if there is no water? Additionally, increasing population density without modifying/tightening noise ordinances first will only harm the health of all residents. Parking will undoubtedly be an issue and the city would be wise - after addressing water, noise, and air quality degradation problems that come with increasing populations - to make affected residential streets permitted parking only - and make some money off of this. Effective public transportation is a better long-term solution but it's clear public transit is not a priority anywhere let alone the west. It's a good idea but ill-conceived. Address the infrastructure problems first and then you can rezone/build. But otherwise? You're putting more people in the line of fire of toxic dust and noise pollution

An adu in my neighbors backyard would make my home unlivable and devalue my property. I didn't buy here over 40 years ago just to lose my privacy in order to pack in more people in a city that lacks the water and infrastructure to support it. I'm against allowing these proposed changes on existing homes in my neighborhood!

Any new housing is good - that means all kinds from new standalone houses, to mother-in-law apts or ADUs to apartment/condo complexes

Anything you can do to expand the amount of and type of housing in Salt Lake City, particularly in the avenues and east central neighborhoods would make this city more livable. Not everyone wants a big house with a yard. More options to buy and rent would benefit all renters and wannabe buyers. Thank you for proposing changes that make this reality more likely

As a homeowner in Fairpark this would be incredible, I have a large lot that currently sits empty with little potential for affordable housing. With this change I could work with a local infill developer who's already working in the neighborhood with similar projects to expand affordable housing in my neighborhood and help me benefit more than I would in a residential sale. This would be win-win-win for the Fairpark neighborhood, for me, and for the local small developer.

As a homeowner in Sugar House for the last 25 years, I am very much opposed to the amendments to the zoning. I purchased my house because I did not want to live next to a 3-plex or 4-plex, especially ones towering above my one-story home, eliminating my backyard privacy and sunlight.

As a renter, I greatly appreciate the ideas here to make it easier to build starter homes, and thus make it easier to buy a home! I really like some of the older housing types I see mixed in the older neighborhoods that were built before restrictive zoning was in place. I'd love for us to return back to common sense and let people do more with their land and let more neighbors live alongside us.

As a resident of this part of Salt Lake, I am strongly opposed to these proposed changes in zoning. These changes benefit developers in the short term, but do not benefit the community in the long term. Salt Lake City needs diverse zoning to ensure its continued appeal to residents within the community and those moving here. Adoption of these amendments will hurt Salt Lake City residents and not address the housing crisis its proponents suppose.

Don't let the NIMBY bastards ruin this.

For long-term health of the City and State we need to significantly increase our housing density.

Great plan!

How are we in a "severe housing shortage" when every available corner of the city has a new apartment complex popping up on it?

How would you feel if you were about to retire, wanted to rent out your family home, but felt like Salt Lake City was tying your hands? My husband and I would like to do volunteer service abroad. After a lifetime of living in and paying taxes in Salt Lake City, and raising four children to do the same, we are now faced with a miserable dilemma. Do we conform with SLC's outdated ordinance and not rent out our 6 bedroom, 3200 square foot home to more than three unrelated individuals? (The pool of people who can afford the rent under these circumstances is tiny.) Or do we disregard the city's policy and allow more than three people to rent our home? (This latter choice makes us feel bad for breaking the rules and also doesn't help SLC solve its housing shortage problem.) The time has come to change a dysfunctional policy.

I am a General Contractor and builder in Salt Lake City. I want to comment on the rooftop building heights. I am "for" the roof top ceiling heights to increase from 28 feet to 30 feet for pitched roofs and from 20 ft to 24 ft for flat roofs. This would allow more flexibility with architectural and design, meet the demands of consumers who now prefer higher interior ceilings (higher than what current code allows due to current rooftop height restrictions). If we logically think about building a house and add up the vertical height of the build: -1' of

foundation wall -16" of i-joist or floor trusses, -8.5 foot walls main level -16" of i-joist or floor trusses -8.5 foot walls second level -Another 1' of subfloor and top plates -Plus the pitch of the roof or flat ceiling - 6 feet give or take a foot depending on the pitch. -Total 22 feet plus 6 feet = 28 feet. As you can see with everything it's extremely tight to get under the 28 feet. Now days, Consumers prefer even higher ceilings of 9 ft. So the additional 2 ft would be a huge win for architects and Contractors and would give them more flexibility with design and build without the additional stress to keep it under 28 ft. Consumers on the other hand would have more modern houses and higher ceilings making their living space feel more open and larger. As for the flat roof, the same impact, however this would provide more flexibility for rooftop ammenties which are becoming more relevant particularly with smaller lots where outdoor space is limited. I have a current build on Lincoln street where the flat roof is 20 ft but as as soon as I add a railing, a parapet, fence or other safety structure of 3ft then that system becomes part of the roof system and it is not allowed because it exceeds the flat rooftop height limits. So, if we increase the flat roof to 24ft I hope that there is no fine print or exceptions that would exclude rooftops. So YES to increase rooftop heights in R-1 areas!

I am in favor of allowing more than three unrelated residents to live in a single rental unit. As long as you identify a reasonable amount of space per person, or a reasonable number of bedrooms per person, this seems like a good way to address SLC's housing shortage. It also prevents diligent landlords with larger homes from making the frustrating decision of whether to obey the city's policy or ignore it in order to make a reasonable return on their investment.

I am opposed to this measure. As a 19 yr resident of Rose Park area, the reduction in setbacks is outright dangerous for traffic. Example is the street exiting southerlands between apollo burger and hyve apts. Whoever approved these setbacks needs to rethink them. I've been to NYC and salt lake is making grave errors in city ordinances with setbacks. For higher density and foot traffic larger setbacks are needed so drivers can see around corners and so more people can use sidewalks. The surface roads in SLC have also become even smaller in the last 19 years and slower speed limits. This is creating a traffic chokehold making commutes longer especially on 1000N and 900W. These roads needs to be 4 lanes, not 2. I know we have this dream of bike friendly roads, but these aren't the roads to do this on. I see 2 bikes for every 1000 cars. SLC planning needs to get it in their heads that adding apartments and more houses will only make the traffic problems worse. I'm looking to move out of SLC for these very reasons. You can't blindly silo housing solutions into more dwelling units without making roads for them. The next issue will be sewer, gas, water lines, power, etc. The areas were designed for the number of houses built. At some point we need to admit that it's not worth the cost of infrastruture to piece meal houses or "infill" into existing housing. The city can allow 1000's of apartments to be built but this place is getting too crowded and it's only filling with single adults. The families are moving out and renters are moving in. Davis county is more reasonable and doesn't put crazy concrete all over in the residential roads nor do they lower speed limits to 25mph on secondary roads like 1000N. You guys are wasting money on bike lanes that choke traffic and making it so much less attractive to live here. Let the surrounding cities build apartments. SLC has done enough.

I am overall supportive of the initiative, but I would like to see even more aggressive action and wanted to express support for more density-friendly policies, less single-family zoning, as well as allowing up to 6 units on single-family lots. I think this plan is very conservative and not truly rooted in the character of SLC's neighborhoods, which were intended to be much denser originally.

I am very in favor of upzoning to allow for higher density housing. As someone who previously owned a single family home and who now lives in a 5 unit apartment in a

mostly single family home area, I think all are important and help with housing costs and add to community!

I applaud the ambitious proposal; however, i see some glaring issues that i believe should be addressed. Specifically capping gross floor area at 1200 Square feet. i am happy to explain in detail why i think this will backfire and not aid in the cities goals.

I don't agree with the proposals. It needs to be more controlled and restricted because developers will develop whatever they can regardless of the neighborhood input.

I fail to see where people will park their cars. I am a homeowner on a street zoned for single family occupancy and there is already an issue with few places to park on the street. Most homes have a single car width driveway and at most a one car garage. Some houses literally only have space for 1 car on their property. My understanding is that SLC allows 1 vehicle per licensed driver in a household to park on the street. Over half of the properties on my street only have space for one car to park in front of their house. We have already had issues with a neighbor who had more than 3 unrelated adults living in the home. That property does not have an ADU permit. At one point there were 9 vehicles connected to the house and the city wouldn't do anything about it. When larger numbers of roommates and/or more homes on a single property becomes permissible by the city code what will the city do to manage excessive vehicles? There is already a process for ADUs. Part of that process requires the homeowner or relative of the homeowner to reside in the home as well. This builds in accountability to the neighborhood and its occupants. Granting landlords the ability to have more tenants occupy a property removes that accountability while adding potential issues for homeowners and existing renters in the neighborhood. This also has the potential to reduce property value in the long term. I have seen what happens when too many college students are allowed to rent a home in our neighborhood, which normally would be cost prohibited were it not for a landlord allowing extra tenants than why is allowed by law. My wife and I will always be against these types of projects until vehicle management is addressed. We are not against more people, we are primarily against more cars. Other big cities that have this issue require parking permits for street parking and limit the number of permits per property. Other large cities also have better public transportation and biking infrastructure to support people not having a vehicle.

I fully support this! We need more attainable affordable housing in SLC. We need more density and condos/townhomes. This is a great step in the right direction. Abundance! Housing! Yes!

I have wanted to do something with my flag lot for years now, but the restrictions have always prevented me from being able to do anything. I would love to see you make it easier to build on flag lots.

I oppose the amendment to SR-1A and zoning that is protecting the opportunity to have single family dwellings and the ability to maintain character of what makes SLC unique. I realize that there is a balance between creating more opportunities for people to live, but also, SLC is NOT getting more affordable. Developers are buying the land and then planning communities with zero character and zero community and forcing people looking for homes to live in these developed homes that are still expensive. This appears to be a way for these developers to get around current zoning and maximize their own profits rather than solving housing shortages.

I support all of the zoning changes proposed and would encourage the city council to go even further with their rezoning efforts. It is incredibly unaffordable to purchase a home in SLC, especially as a younger adult. Since we are not able to increase wages through the power of local government, the next best thing is to implement policies and make changes to current laws and regulations in order to support housing affordability.

I support the proposed changes to the various residential and small lot zones in Salt Lake City.

I support zoning changes to allow people more options on what they build. My main concern is corporate builders coming in and taking advantage of the situation and building characterless building like the new stuff on 21 and 21.

I think SLC needs to go further and allow duplexes and triplexes citywide.

I think everywhere should be upzoned personally

I think the proposal is great and would a big difference in housing affordability in our city. Please adopt it!

I think this is a fantastic project and a common-sense approach to addressing rising costs of living.

I think this is a very bad idea. WE do not need to encourage more people to come here by providing more housing. WE DO NOT HAVE THE WATER TO SUPPORT THIS INCREASE IN HOUSING THUS INCREASE IN PEOPLE.

I wholeheartedly support these changes!

I would love to see Salt Lake City start allowing Tiny Home villages. For the older generations. I don't want to live with my adult children. I moved here to Utah from Oregon to be near my family. I am not going to be able to afford to retire.

I would strongly oppose a change in height limits if the new building would block valley views.

I'd love for the City to create some of the small lots in order to sell them to City Employees. There could be provisions that could require owners to allow the City have the right of first refusal when the home goes back on the market. I know many young City employees that aren't married and are making less than median income needed to buy homes. I also know many young married City employees that are still \$40,000 a year short of the needed median income needed to buy homes in Salt Lake City.

I'm excited to see this proposal overall and would be delighted to see any part of it passed!

In general, I support the amendment of zoning to support more varied housing types. More housing types will give more opportunities to rent or own for Salt Lakers in varying income brackets, especially because owning a home or property is becoming increasingly out of reach.

Increasing density with no action to mitigate price gouging by real estate culture (what this constituent believes to be a major player in the housing crisis) does very little for longevity. Multi-Unit homes can be a beautiful way to create community, but if the building is rushed (devoid of individuality and life) to meet a metrics demand, the culture of building a life and family (desires for the area) will be thwarted. Thank you.

I'm in favor of these changes, I have an ugly back yard that I can no longer upkeep. I have dual frontage but because of city's ordinances I can't.

Leave SLC alone. This mayor sucks

Lots in these areas are so incredibly small. It would make more sense to approach this in areas where there are bigger lots.

Love this effort. Keep it as simple as possible. Minimize restrictions and rules on property owners to maximize their flexibility to do what they want with THEIR land that THEY OWN as long as they are not violating building codes (safety risk) or building in setbacks near neighbors (fire spread risk). Be prepared for NIMBY neighbors to complain and ignore them as much as possible since those are the same hypocritical a-holes who would lose their minds if anyone tried to tell them what they can or can't do with their own homes and property that they own.

My concern is not allowing more than three unrelated people to live in a home. Having more brings too many cars to the neighborhood and too much noise and partying. It changes the character of family neighborhoods. It brings in people who are not invested in the neighborhood and often not good neighbors.

My only feedback at this point is that we have already seen an influx of new housing on the west side. Most of the new apartment complexes are not even near half occupancy. These apartments do not provide parking for all their tenants which has now made it difficult for the rest of us to find parking in front of our own homes. The increase of more cars parked on the streets has increased crime (vehicle break-ins) and litter/trash on the side of the streets. Instead of more housing on the west side, I want to start seeing more neighborhood restaurants, better grocery stores, convenience stores (like Maverik) and green space.

No more high density housing in single family neighborhoods

Not comfortable with this change at all.

Overall I strongly support this and consider myself a YIMBY. I love seeing palatable tweaks to zoning introduce the opportunity for a bit more density. One area I would love to see the city go a step further is scaling back minimum parking space requirements. Having lived in denser cities, finding parking in residential SLC is anecdotally very easy -- too easy. Even downtown at peak hours, I've never had to search for a parking spot for longer than a few minutes. Parking capacity is wasted potential that could be additional green space or housing.

Right now, housing is expanding at a break-neck pace without adequate thought to roads. Traffic becomes backed up. I see drivers run red lights on a DAILY BASIS because of the lack of thought put into the traffic arteries. What needs to be addressed is the lack of RELIABLE alternative transportation. I would gladly leave my vehicle parked and take UTA, but UTA is unresponsive to my needs. Bus lanes are a great start, but are only a bandaid on a problem that calls for major re-thinking on how to cut congestion. If you'd like some common-sense ideas that might solve the problem, email me.

Sugarhouse is suffering from too much building and has lost its village appeal that drew us here more than 40 years ago. With climate change and drought, where is all the water going to come from to accommodate all the people moving in to the apartments going up in Salt Lake City and these are not considered affordable housing. The traffic is another issue. The bus and trax system doesn't offer enough options to be able to not use a car. I don't want my neighbors building adu's in their backyard which will give me no privacy. My neighborhood is dense enough. We don't need or want more buildings.

Terrible idea with no long-term thinking about how this ruins single family housing -- which will never be able to be changed/reversed once this occurs. Salt Lake City cannot be everything for everyone -- there is a reason why for many SLC is not a great option and it is OK that people live in other parts of the SL Valley.

The front setback should be more in keeping with the character of the existing housing. A better code requirement would be the average of the block face setbacks minus -3 feet. That way the new growth fits in better with the existing front setbacks and housing but does allow the new

The greatest single issue these neighborhoods face when talking about increasing density is off-street parking. It should be required first, before any other consideration.

The mainpage says, "The goal is to create gentle infill opportunities that fit in with the character of low-density Salt Lake City neighborhoods. "...but it is not giving any options that preserve the low-density character you highlight.

There are HUNDREDS of studio, one and two bedrooms listed on Zillow in the downtown area all the time. The reason they aren't filled and the actual vacancy rate is high, is due to affordability. The city needs to have more control over pricing. If vacancy rates are at a certain level, there needs to be an automatic rent rate drop - not leave it to big billionaire corps like DeAnza and others to decide when to drop rent prices. We should not have units left vacant just to keep rent rates high, that's not helping anyone except investors.

This is a great idea. As a resident of capitol hill I fully support this. I would like for my children to be able to live in my neighborhood and not have to drive to saratoga springs or tooele to be able to afford a house.

This is great but how do you keep them from becoming Airbnb? Recently some "missing middle" townhomes were built in my neighborhood and 2 of 4 of them are Airbnb. So it's nice that you want to increase housing but the lack of enforcement on short term rentals doesn't give a lot of hope that this will actually increase affordable housing options.

This is such a great idea. The evidence is there that it works and, as I understand it, nobody has to do anything. It is optional. Airbnbs are illegal in these zones so anybody that thinks this will just increase airbnbs can report any airbnb in these zones.

This project raises several concerns: Duplexes which are typically built on corners would now be allowed on mid-blocks of single family communities. That will be very disruptive to neighborhood cohesiveness. Please restrict duplexes to corners.; allowing 1,200SF homes on 2,000 SF lots doesn't attract more families to SLC which is already renter-centric. What demographic would rent or buy a 1,200SF dwelling? It could generally accommodate 2 people. Doubtful it would appeal to 2 adults and 2 children. Families form the backbone of thriving communities. Losing families leads to closing schools, reduced tax revenue, weakened community cohesion and youth organizations. Established single family neighborhoods generally have less crime.; Under this proposed code, real estate investors could purchase a single family property and flip it into an investment portfolio --- restricting home ownership and only allowing renters. And rents would be controlled by investors instead of having a fixed mortgage. This does not wealth generating tool for the next generation or any generation. Add a provision requiring home ownership on these properties. The draft proposal describes the policy as "gentle infill." For many it represents "intense density." Didn't SLC's new ADU code try to do what this new code would do? Doesn't the city already have the tool it needs for these kinds of mini dwellings in neighborhoods. It look redundant.

This proposal would be a great way to help increase more affordable housing options for Salt Lake City residents-- I'm amazed at the innovation of this proposal and the idea of zoning amendments that could make profound impacts for generations to come. In just the last 5 years, the cost of housing has skyrocketed and SLC is always on the top 10 lists of the most affordable housing.

Ug-- y'all this is not the way!

Very good

We have a decent sized lot in capitol hill that is just below the size to split. We would love for lot size requirements to be smaller so we can built a new home at the top of our lot. Thus opening more housing in SLC!

We should absolutely do this

Why don't you just build big buildings up and down State Street. Shops on the first floor, restaurants on the corners, offices on the second floor, studios (low income housing) on the third floors, the next couple floors can be one and two bedroom units, with fabulous penthouse is on top. A free trolley car can run up and down the street. Leave the historic neighborhoods alone.

Why not deal with existing homes sitting for sale and priced too high, home flippers still undercutting the market by buying homes through cash offers before they can hit the MLS, city buy some of these properties and create duplexes?

YES! Love this proposal. We are only going to have more affordable housing if we build more housing. And with the lake and the mountains, there isn't much expansion space. Makes sense to encourage people to build up. Land value tax could also support this

You must require OFF-STREET PARKING for at least two additional vehicles, for each new additional housing unit.

do not overpopulate nice neighborhoods

the main drawback or problem with these ideas is the increase in on-street parking which is a safety hazard and visually negative. Parking space should definitely be a part of the approval for additional units. But I think that overall, it can be a net positive to have these building options.

why would a flag lot need a 20 driveway. most driveways in the city are significantly narrower than this. 12 feet seems like plenty of concrete to support a single house.

Page 2: Creation of a Small Lot Development Ordinance

70/152 responses

2. Share Your Comments

70/152 responses

AI Summary: Several respondents emphasized concerns about the proposed restrictions on housing size and height. The most common issue raised was opposition to the 1,200 sq. ft. maximum home size, with arguments that it would make family-sized homes scarcer, drive up prices, and push families out of neighborhoods. There was also criticism that the size cap would result in developments that do not match the existing neighborhood character, especially in areas where homes are typically much larger. Another frequently mentioned point was the need to reevaluate the 17 ft. height limit, with concerns that it would prevent the construction of quality housing. Some respondents expressed strong support for increasing flexibility for property owners to add housing units, seeing it as a positive step toward expanding housing options. However, the overall trend in the responses was a call for more flexibility in both home size and design to better accommodate families and maintain neighborhood character.

Responses

1,200 square feet is definitely adequate! We live in 900sqft, 2br/1b with a child and an extra 300sqft sounds incredible. Not everybody desires to have a McMansion, and that's okay!

A much needed change in the zoning code. Single family homes are not a sustainable housing method and as a city we need to adapt to growth and increase density.

Adding 3 plexes and 4 plexes and reducing front setbacks in R-1 and R-2 neighborhoods will destroy the attractiveness and reduce the value of the remaining single-family homes. This is NOT a good change.

Addressing affordability is a great idea. Yet it's too many steps into the future - who cares about affordability if the air is toxic from the death of the Great Salt Lake and if there is no water? Additionally, increasing population density without modifying/tightening noise ordinances first will only harm the health of all residents. Parking will undoubtedly be an issue and the city would be wise - after addressing water, noise, and air quality degradation problems that come with increasing populations - to make affected residential streets permitted parking only - and make some money off of this. Effective public transportation is a better long-term solution but it's clear public transit is not a priority anywhere let alone the west. It's a good idea but ill-conceived. Address the infrastructure problems first and then you can rezone/build. But otherwise? You're putting more people in the line of fire of toxic dust and noise pollution

Again this is a bad idea. We do not need more people living in Salt Lake City since we are really at capacity now. There are fewer than 20 residential lots for sale in Salt Lake City at present and the cost of those lots is over \$700,000.00 which is unaffordable to most individuals. A number of those lots are on steep slopes which would not be conducive to building multi-family units and still allow for driveways and garages. WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO GET THE WATER FOR THESE PEOPLE? And will this not contribute to the already bad air quality many of us suffer from all year.

As an SLC resident looking to move soon, I am very supportive of allowing more housing types (duplexes, townhomes, etc) to allow people like me to be able to stay in the city.

As stated previously, what demographic will a 1,000SF or 850SF dwelling accommodate? Certainly not families. The city has already added tens of thousands of apartments that would suit a demographic looking to live in these tiny spaces. Is the city's intent to add more rentals? The city should be focusing on ways to bring more families here. This doesn't appear to be the right tool. How many single family homes have been built in SLC in the last 5 years?

Don't let the NIMBY bastards ruin it.

Feels very crowded especially with parking and increased view of living space due to decreased minimums from the sidewalk or road.

Front setback should fit better with existing setbacks. Take an average and subtract 3' so it can add some, but really needs to fit in from the front better.

Fully support this!

Good

Great idea, to encourage infill development.

I am highly in favor of allowing owners this flexibility with their property to add housing units as described if they would like to.

I am so over the City saying they can help housing become more affordable. YOU CANT CONTROL THE MARKET. If you want to help make some rent controlled apartments. Developers are a wrecking a ball for certain neighborhoods. KICK OUT ALL THE AIRBNB's-- they have taken away 30 + homes in my neighborhood that could be single family homes.

I am very concerned about the modification to front setbacks for small lot developments. Allowing a 10' setback in the existing R-1 zones will have a substantial impact on the appearance of the streetscape to anyone walking down the street. In my East Liberty Park neighborhood, the existing duplexes and quads (some of which appear to be from the 1960s) generally managed to followed the prevailing setback of other homes on the street, so it is difficult to understand why that should be changed for development now. While the drawings you have provided show the potential layout from above, at pedestrian level it will be difficult to avoid a "sawtooth" appearance if new construction is 10' from the sidewalk while the rest of the housing is 20' back. It is hard to see how new construction that is already going to be a different style and size from the surrounding homes will blend in if it is also thrust noticeably forward from the rest of the homes on the street.

I disagree. This creates very dense housing. I think that it is appropriate in some neighborhoods and some circumstances. It doesn't fit in all cases.

I do not support this proposal

I don't have time to read all of these drafts, but triplexes and fourplexes are definitely inappropriate! That totally changes the look and feel and the congestion in a single family home neighborhood.

I don't want Salt Lake City to start looking like South America any more than it already is. You are already building way too close to the street with big square ugly condos that limit visibility and crowd too many people into a small area. This idea of putting more houses in an already small area is very distasteful and will ruin the feeling even more than you already have. Look at Sugarhouse!!!! I won't even go down there anymore because you have destroyed the area!!!

I don't think setback requirements are necessary or could be made smaller

I find duplexes and cottages to be more palatable than townhomes and rowhomes. I'm curious if any policies are designed to encourage housing diversity/limit take over of complexes. Is their anything stopping a housing corporation from buying 4 lots and placing 4 identical fourplexes in the space?

I greatly appreciate all of the new building types - which by the way are actually old building types that we made illegal more recently, and now proposed to be legal again. Is there any way to allow exceptions or special uses to reduce the parking requirements? I don't own a car and would rather have yard or garden space than more asphalt. There is plenty of old housing that isn't up to current parking requirements. Where there have been retrofits, most of the lot has been paved over for parking, making the neighborhood less livable with less green space / more dysfunctional space. And less parking would make it cheaper to buy.

I like small lot development and enabling a lot size of 2000 sq ft. I'd like to see the footprint, floor area, and height increase in proportion with the lot. The floor area limitations incentivize basements, but many areas, especially on the west side of SLC cannot build full basements. Many homes are split entry because of this. Slab on grade generally reduces building cost, but you don't see that cost savings when you can't feasibly do a second level. it's very difficult to get two floors with a 17' height limitation. Most split entry homes are 20-25 feet high. The 500 sq lost by going over 17 feet (floor

area limited to 1200 sq ft for 17' vs 1700 sq ft for under 17') makes a second level substantially less feasible. If the footprint is already limited, why does the floor area need to be further limited? Also a two level multi-unit would be limited to 600 sq ft on each floor and a stacked duplex would be a 600 sq ft unit on each floor. I think this works well for denser areas for infill and works for smaller families that may typically live in an apartment, but in neighborhoods you may want to enable slightly larger floor areas or footprints so 3 bd units can be built. Another challenge is parking. Garages are an easy way to get parking on site and provide a value to the people who live there. But parking outside of an individual unit vs building it in can be an added challenge. This may be something that could be accounted for somehow. Parking in a garage increases the building footprint and floor area, but reduces the need for additional hard surfaces elsewhere on a property.

I like the flexibility for people to build different housing types in neighborhoods where we need more diverse housing options. Smaller lots gives larger parcels more opportunities to subdivide - infill development is challenging due to irregularly sized properties and having to make sure there is fire access. Many people want smaller lots with less yard maintenance. Smaller lots also reduce outdoor water use. Smaller lots also enable smaller structures. Less land and smaller homes are two ways to increase affordability.

I see many Eastside neighborhoods not being on board with these amendments even though many duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and townhomes already exist in these areas. I love the idea of being able to add more housing in these areas. I would love for them to be for sale instead of the more common for rent.

I support more housing options, but I strongly oppose the 1,200 sq. ft. maximum home size. The City's own data shows households with children have dropped from 24.8% in 2010 to 17.8% in 2023—a clear sign families are being pushed out. By capping new homes at 1,200 sq. ft., the City will make larger family homes even scarcer, which will only drive their prices higher as demand continues to grow. In east-bench R-1 neighborhoods like mine, homes average 3,000–5,000 sq. ft., so multiple 1,200 sq. ft. units on large lots would look like rows of ADUs and would not match existing neighborhood scale. On my 20,000+ sq. ft. lot, the proposal would allow four tiny homes but not two or three reasonably sized family homes, pushing families to buy and demolish existing bungalows instead of moving into well-planned subdivisions. A better model already exists: the cul-de-sac developments on 1700 S between 1800–1900 E and 2100–2300 E, where 15 family-sized homes were added on two parcels, giving families real options without tearing down 15 existing houses. The City should allow a mix of home sizes, especially on large lots, to support families, maintain neighborhood character, and reduce pressure on existing small homes.

I support the creation of a small lot development ordinance. I believe this change will increase the housing supply, increase housing density, and give home owners more autonomy over their residence, all of which will help improve housing affordability.

I support the creation of the small lot development ordinance. I think this change will increase the housing supply and housing density. This should help make housing more affordable in Salt Lake City.

I support these changes.

I think letting people build stuff on their own property would be a fantastic thing, we could double the density of the suburbs while keeping them suburban

I think smaller lots and smaller homes make sense and are the future as our population grows - we need to take up less space, use fewer resources, and maintain healthy natural environments and land to grow food for people.

I think this is a huge leap forward and I love the concept. I support all the housing types that are allowed in this concept and would be happy to see them in my neighborhood. I ardently wish there had been more housing options like this available when I was searching for a house, and this would open up tons of opportunities for my friends and family who want to buy but don't want (and can't afford) a single-family home on a big lot. My first critique is that the minimum lot size should still be smaller. 2,000sf is more than necessary for a cottage or row home, and especially for a fourplex. My second critique is that an across-the-board requirement of one off-street parking space per unit is too strict. Look in your own renderings at how much of the lot needs to be paved over under this scenario! Both in terms of parking and lot size, I think the small lot ordinance should just match the current ADU ordinance. As it stands I could build a second structure with no parking on my 3,400sf lot if I called it an ADU, but it would be forbidden under these rules, which doesn't make much sense. Many of our most desirable and dynamic neighborhoods have small lots like mine that would remain unbuildable under this proposal. I think you should allow projects that would be permitted under the ADU ordinance in cases where the ADU rules would be more permissive - so no minimum lot size as long as setback requirements and 50% coverage maximum are met, and no parking requirement near high-frequency transit and bike paths.

I think this is great to help with affordability and to help Salt Lake become a more mature city. One comment I'd give is higher building heights should be allowed for "missing middle"/higher density.

I'm generally in favor of this change, and if anything the one area that would be worth considering is also easing up on the height and setback requirements to encourage more density and visually interesting neighborhoods. Imagine if these residential neighborhoods had a few more buildings that could accommodate some commerce like bodegas and cafes or boutiques.

If the lots were smaller, but there were more single family infills this could be a benefit to the city. Unfortunately, this just seems to be a way to sell really expensive townhomes and shred 'community'

Love it!

Love this effort. Keep it as simple as possible. Minimize restrictions and rules on property owners to maximize their flexibility to do what they want with THEIR land that THEY OWN as long as they are not violating building codes (safety risk) or building in setbacks near neighbors (fire spread risk). Be prepared for NIMBY neighbors to complain and ignore them as much as possible since those are the same hypocritical a-holes who would lose their minds if anyone tried to tell them what they can or can't do with their own homes and property that they own.

Love this idea-- we don't all need massive homes and developers have pushed to increase profits by building too large houses. We need more pragmatic housing options that are affordable

No

No adus in our neighborhood!

Please do not allow additional dwellings on R1-5000 lots. These neighborhoods are already very "intimate". Increasing density will inevitably increase conflict between neighbors over noise, privacy, parking. The increased density will not be occupied by people who care about our neighborhood.

Please focus on larger lots. We don't need to be packed like sardines in these smaller lots

Reevaluate the height limit. At 17 ft max, we wont be building quality housing

SAVE the single family neighborhoods.

Should only be allowed where actually feasible. The cul de sac next to my house has so many people, so many cars, they are paving their front yards illegally and now parking junked, unregistered vehicles into my cul de sac. It's absurd. Way too many adults living in each household illegally. It reduces the quality of life for everyone when ordinances are not enforced.

Stacking more housing into already crowded neighborhoods is just going to increase noise, reduce parking options and present code enforcement issues. The city already struggles to enforce existing regulations.

Strongly favor. As a renter in Salt Lake City, I strongly support changes to zoning that could increase the overall housing stock, and particularly through smaller lot developments that tend to be affordable to first-time homebuyers.

Terrible idea. We have experenced this in our area where special permits were granted to build on existing lots. For example the lot on the north east corner of downington and 1900 East. A small home was added to an existing lot. THis has an ipmact on neighborhood parking, congestion,and blight. Additional evident in the approval of duplexes on the north side of Sylvan Ave between 1700 and 1800 east. These were put inthe middle of a quiet residential area. I would disaprove of adding any more "small homes" to district 7.

The 10' setback for new buildings is a problem/interferes with building ADUs.

The building height of 30 ft is high, that would tower over all the houses in my neighborhood. I wish the height was limited to the highest existing house on the street.

The current process is so application driven with unreachable qualifications, how would another administratively heavy project help this lack of available affordable housing.

The first two bullet points look great. However, I do not support maintaining the height and perimeter setbacks similar to those required for a typical single-family home. I feel like this is completely arbitrary and discourages investment in our neighborhoods. I do not support limiting the size of new buildings to encourage housing attainability. I do not see how this inherently encourages housing attainability, and it forces a low-dense feel in areas where existing infrastructure is built for a significantly higher density. I believe we need less restrictions on size, setbacks, etc. We should encourage development and investment in our city.

The more we can allow middle housing alternatives as permitted as-of-right uses, the better.

The single family homes on my Bonneville Hills block have a typical front yard setback of 35 feet. The proposed small lot development ordinance calls for a 10-foot front yard setback. How is this 25-foot difference (sawtooth configuration) in keeping with the proposed ordinance language: THE STANDARDS FOR THE DISTRICT ARE INTENDED TO PROVIDE.....DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS AND TO PRESERVE THE EXISTING CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD?

There needs to be restriction upon PE (private equity) purchasing the single-unit homes that are built. Requiring individuals/couples/actual people purchase them could be a small way to: close the gap between corporate ownership and people trying to start their lives; ensure they are lived in by committed, longterm property taxpayers. I believe this poses an issue with the multi-unit, as they would require a "landlord", which, culture states, are

business-/money- minded people and not in the industry of hospitality or service, which is what providing a home to others should be, first and foremost. The Values of this project should be guided by the Values of Utah (which should not be scoffed at because they may feel 'religious', for the most religious values are the ones opposite of Money God). Thank you again for this opportunity to blerb haa

There's already a problem with parking on the street and people using the street to park their 5th wheel trailers, flatbeds, etc in my area. More houses mean even more cars on the street. Have you been to the newer areas of Vinyard, UT? Do you really want that kind of situation? I don't.

This is a good start, but the size and perimeter setbacks seem too restrictive. This won't permit new housing in enough neighborhoods. In my R-1/7000 neighborhood, for example, how could townhomes be built if they required 4'/10' side yards on each lot? Unless this proposal includes the possibility of acquiring adjacent lots and combining them into a single lot, there won't be any new housing allowed on any street like mine.

This is good, but you need to remove parking requirements. This will severely hamper development of these lots.

This looks absolutely horrible. If I lived near one of these small lots I'd be horrified. We are turning nice neighborhoods into crap and it will have absolutely no impact on affordability. There aren't enough of these to impact prices, but enough to ruin a street, neighbors and neighborhood.

This mayor sucks

This seems great and should move forward. The only issue I see is the front yard set back. At only 10 feet it seems like these buildings will jut out too much into the neighborhood.

This would be wonderful if it was affordable.

Unsure what "limiting the size of new buildings" means and how that would apply for like a four plex, but overall, highly support

We would love more townhomes and affordable living options in our current neighborhood. Despite our higher income now after completing school and training, we lived for years on a tight budget and don't have enough savings to afford a home in our current neighborhood.

YES!

Yeah! Let's make SLC more like LA!

Yes supportive!

do not overpopulate nice neighborhoods

this is encouraging!

Page 3: Amendments to the R-1 Zones

49/152 responses

3. Share Your Comments

49/152 responses

AI Summary: Most respondents expressed support for simplifying zoning regulations and consolidating tables, with several noting that these changes would make the process clearer and more accessible. There was also general approval for aligning height standards with county norms. Some respondents emphasized the importance of reducing lot widths and setbacks to allow for more flexible housing options. Concerns were raised about the impact of increased density on parking and neighborhood congestion, especially in areas with narrow streets. The retention of current front yard setbacks was seen as a positive feature, but there was worry about side setbacks potentially reaching the sidewalk and the resulting effects on street parking. One respondent questioned whether smaller property sizes would be desirable for families, suggesting that decision-makers should consider the lived experience of residents. Overall, the most common themes were support for zoning simplification and concern about parking and neighborhood impacts.

Responses

4' setbacks are a good option. It may be possible to increase the lot coverage by more than 50% if you change the paving requirements to allow more permeable paving options.

Addressing affordability is a great idea. Yet it's too many steps into the future - who cares about affordability if the air is toxic from the death of the Great Salt Lake and if there is no water? Additionally, increasing population density without modifying/tightening noise ordinances first will only harm the health of all residents. Parking will undoubtedly be an issue and the city would be wise - after addressing water, noise, and air quality degradation problems that come with increasing populations - to make affected residential streets permitted parking only - and make some money off of this. Effective public transportation is a better long-term solution but it's clear public transit is not a priority anywhere let alone the west. It's a good idea but ill-conceived. Address the infrastructure problems first and then you can rezone/build. But otherwise? You're putting more people in the line of fire of toxic dust and noise pollution

Consider reducing the side setbacks. 10' on one side and 4' on the other creates a specific outcome and reduces the housing types that can be built. At a minimum, there should be clear, and not overly burdensome process to get setback reductions. I would suggest 4' on each interior side yad.

Creating more livable space on a smaller footprint makes sense.

Cutting red tape that is not directly safety related is always a good thing

Don't let the NIMBY bastards ruin it.

Focus on larger lots. Smaller lots don't make sense.

Front setback needs to fit in better with the existing housing and should be the average of the housing block face setbacks minus 3 feet. That way it doesn't stick out and make all the neighbors unhappy.

Good

Great cleanup and standardization.

I am a General Contractor and builder in Salt Lake City. I want to comment on the rooftop building heights. I am "for" the roof top ceiling heights to increase from 28 feet to 30 feet for pitched roofs and from 20 ft to 24 ft for flat roofs. This would allow more flexibility with architectural and design, meet the demands of consumers who now prefer higher interior ceilings (higher than what current code allows due to current rooftop height restrictions). If we logically think about building a house and add up the vertical height of the build: -1' of foundation wall -16" of i-joist or floor trusses, -8.5 foot walls main level -16" of i-joist or

floor trusses -8.5 foot walls second level -Another 1' of subfloor and top plates -Plus the pitch of the roof or flat ceiling - 6 feet give or take a foot depending on the pitch. -Total 22 feet plus 6 feet = 28 feet. As you can see with everything it's extremely tight to get under the 28 feet. Now days, Consumers prefer even higher ceilings of 9 ft. So the additional 2 ft would be a huge win for architects and Contractors and would give them more flexibility with design and build without the additional stress to keep it under 28 ft. Consumers on the other hand would have more modern houses and higher ceilings making their living space feel more open and larger. As for the flat roof, the same impact, however this would provide more flexibility for rooftop ammenties which are becoming more relevant particularly with smaller lots where outdoor space is limited. I have a current build on Lincoln street where the flat roof is 20 ft but as as soon as I add a railing, a parapet, fence or other safety structure of 3ft then that system becomes part of the roof system and it is not allowed because it exceeds the flat rooftop height limits. So, if we increase the flat roof to 24ft I hope that there is no fine print or exceptions that would exclude rooftops. So YES to increase rooftop heights in R-1 areas!

I believe that new construction should be required to use water-wise / drought tolerant landscaping. We need to save the Great Salt Lake and watering grass yards is not a sufficiently beneficial use of water to justify the resulting air pollution and threats to health. I don't know if zoning is a place to make this requirement, vs. statute.

I disagree. This seems to benefit developers.

I do not support this proposal

I don't feel this is needed. Letting home be bigger doesn't solve the housing crisis, it just makes houses less affordable.

I like being able to understand things!

I love the elimination of minimum lot widths. This will free up many lots that are currently unbuildable. But you have to be kidding with the requirement for TWO off-street parking spaces. In my neighborhood in Fairpark there are plenty of one-car households, including my own. There are also plenty of lots with zero off-street parking, including my own. And yet it works fine! Again, please consider including exceptions for lots near high-frequency transit. PLEASE do not let parking crybabies stand in the way of real reform.

I love this idea. Based on what has happened in Minneapolis where they got rid of single family housing altogether, there are not sudden dramatic changes that will alter the character of SLC. The changes were actually quite modest. Changes in zoning can be incremental and adjust as needed to changing demographic needs in the region.

I support the amendments to the R-1 zones. I believe this change will increase the housing supply, increase housing density, and give home owners more autonomy over their residence, all of which will help improve housing affordability.

I support the changes to the R-1 zone. I think this change will increase the housing supply and housing density. This should help make housing more affordable in Salt Lake City.

I support these changes.

I support this

I think these updates make a lot of sense! I live in an old small home on a <5k sq foot lot that would be non-conforming by current zoning and have always thought it was silly that it could not be built today.

I think this simplification of the zoning code is great, and I hope required lot widths and setbacks are greatly reduced.

I'm on board with these changes and only wonder if we're not going far enough. We need drastic changes for immediate relief.

Love the clarity

Love this effort. Keep it as simple as possible. Minimize restrictions and rules on property owners to maximize their flexibility to do what they want with THEIR land that THEY OWN as long as they are not violating building codes (safety risk) or building in setbacks near neighbors (fire spread risk). Be prepared for NIMBY neighbors to complain and ignore them as much as possible since those are the same hypocritical a-holes who would lose their minds if anyone tried to tell them what they can or can't do with their own homes and property that they own.

Making it easier to read and understand the Zoning is a good thing. Doing so to allow for more dense building is not.

Making property smaller is good for Individuals who want to own a home. This must be the intention from the start, as asking a family of 4 to live in what feels like a tiny home is not the life or culture 'the people at the top' would want for themselves, so.. what factors are reinforcing their belief that this would be desirable of Westside Residents..

My concern with side yard restrictions being reduced is mainly a safety issue. This reduces free spaces and visibility. I am worried about kids playing in their already too small yards. An additional problem is obviously privacy. The smaller the side yards the closer to the neighbors.

No Seems like a gain for developers and offsite landlords to benefit. Afraid it will also perpetuate the lack of yard care/upkeep and increase of waste and sewer demands.

Right now, no matter what we do to build more housing, the situation is hopeless. Let's just wait for the GSL to dry up. That will drive people away, creating housing opportunities for those who brave the new normal. Yeah, I'm being cynical. Our problem is with transportation, not housing...that and having adequate water for the thirsty masses as well as the GSL.

Simplify zoning yes!

Strongly agree

Strongly favor. I don't know as much about this, but I believe in efficient government, and I want the zoning code to be simple and understandable.

Thank you for the service to Salt Lake City and for the opportunity to express comments regarding the above proposal. I understand the goal of this proposal is to expand owner-occupied affordable housing options for lower- and middle-income families in the City, while preserving the unique character of the City's many residential districts. Some aspects of the proposal do not accomplish this goal and, in my view, even detract from the goal. Here are my concerns: 1. The 1,200 square foot maximum home size conflicts with existing neighborhood patterns and does not support adequate living space for a family of 3-5 individuals. In addition, this size limitation does not fit with current market demand for larger homes; 2. The proposed additional housing does not need to be "owner occupied housing" thus changing the fundamental character of many neighborhoods by permitting additional "rental units" with the attendant issues of absentee ownership, noise, excess congestion and traffic. 3. Front yard setbacks should not be less than abutting front yard setbacks. The current proposal offers an option of 20' or abutting front yard setbacks. Thus, if abutting front yards have a 40' front yard setback, the proposal would permit a home to be constructed closer to the curb than the abutting properties, resulting in a hodgepodge look to the block / neighborhood and detracting from

the visual appearance of the street. 4. Existing infrastructure (i.e. water, streets, sewer, power, etc.) is already stressed or at capacity in many neighborhoods and may not permit more housing without substantial upgrades. The proposal does not address this issue, nor require any infrastructure upgrades as preconditions to the zoning change. 5.

There does not appear to be any analysis or study of how many existing lots in the City could accommodate additional housing under the proposed zoning change or where those lots are located. Such an analysis should be completed before any zoning change is initiated. If there are a minimal number of existing lots that would be impacted, then the effort may not be cost effective.

Thanks for simplifying the code and making adjustments that will allow for more housing to fit in. The increase in max building coverage will be huge to allow for more housing, especially on larger lots. Definitely support this!

The best feature of this proposal is retention of current front yard setbacks. If the illustrations are being interpreted correctly it appears that side setbacks would be allowed to reach the sidewalk --on one side. The other major concern -- a consequence of this density -- is there are 2 spaces for parking but additional cars would be pushed to the street. This will cause volatility and congestion. Since not all neighborhoods across the city are the same -- some neighborhoods with narrow streets - many on the eastside -- will be heavily impacted.

The city is taking these incremental steps (adding ADUs); increasing building footprints etc. to slowly erode the quality of life R-1 homeowners enjoy and to set the stage for major zoning changes to allow apartment buildings in R-1 zones. This is a pattern in other cities across the country. If we really wanted to increase housing options this change isn't going to do it.

The simplification makes the zoning code much more understandable and easy to read. The small changes to height, coverage, and setbacks make a noticeable difference in what can be built, but with very little impact compared to existing standards and may not even be noticeable on a pedestrian level. I think that going to a 32 foot building height wouldn't have a significant impact vs the proposed 30 foot height. On a pitched roof it's not likely to get a full floor, but could enable a more usable article space. In areas where basements aren't doable, like in a lot of the west side, this extra space in height would be really helpful for families.

These are very reasonable adjustments. Especially given the drought situation, I personally think the space allotted to yards could be even less.

These proposed amendments are great (and long overdue) - look forward to the formal adoption. Just a heads up that the diagrams juxtapose the side yard dimensions (C and D) with the wrong dimension assigned to each.

This mayor sucks

This would allow 5 units to be my neighbor instead of the one house that is there. I get we want to increase density, but it would greatly impact noise on my street. A street I purposely chose because of the lack of noise. I would be fine if the max was 3 units, but 5 is too many.

Yes

Yes! I'm all for simple zoning, good step.

building heights are too high as it is

do not overpopulate nice neighborhoods

i think the consolidation of tables makes sense. the 30 foot height matches county standards and many other municipalities.

Page 4: Amendments to the R-2, SR-1 & SR-1A Zones

51/152 responses

4. Share Your Comments

51/152 responses

AI Summary: Parking concerns were mentioned multiple times, with respondents worried that limited on-property parking will lead to increased street congestion and frustration in communities. Issues of privacy, yard space, and architectural design freedom were also raised, with some expressing that these aspects are compromised in denser housing options. There is concern that "more affordable" housing could reinforce class divides and negative social dynamics, especially in communities already experiencing social or cultural tensions. On the positive side, some respondents supported expanding housing options, such as permitting duplexes by right and reducing minimum lot sizes for certain zones (R2), seeing these as beneficial steps. Overall, the main trends are support for increased housing flexibility, but significant concerns about parking, neighborhood character, and potential social impacts.

Responses

Addressing affordability is a great idea. Yet it's too many steps into the future - who cares about affordability if the air is toxic from the death of the Great Salt Lake and if there is no water? Additionally, increasing population density without modifying/tightening noise ordinances first will only harm the health of all residents. Parking will undoubtedly be an issue and the city would be wise - after addressing water, noise, and air quality degradation problems that come with increasing populations - to make affected residential streets permitted parking only - and make some money off of this. Effective public transportation is a better long-term solution but it's clear public transit is not a priority anywhere let alone the west. It's a good idea but ill-conceived. Address the infrastructure problems first and then you can rezone/build. But otherwise? You're putting more people in the line of fire of toxic dust and noise pollution

Again, all in favor of these changes and just wish we could be more aggressive with them.

Again, same feedback in previous posts. Barriers for the zoning exist for a good reason. Endless townhouse developments on parcels of land shred any level of uniqueness of SLC and just allow for maximization of profits.

Again, side yard issues, see previous. Privacy, safety and visibility. The height might be a problem. mostly aesthetic, blocking views, etc.

By making it possible to have smaller yards you reduce the space where trees could be planted which would help clean the pollution from our bad air. People need green space to have quality of life and good mental health. Are you going to require parks within walking distance of every resident of Salt Lake City? I thought not.

Concerned that limited parking on the property will fill streets and lead to more congestion in communities.

Depending on infrastructure availability, amount of "greenfield" development potential and the level of density you are looking for, consider doing maximum lot sizes, instead of

minimum. Subdivisions therefore have to create small lots. This would, over time, increase density to desired levels significantly.

Don't let the NIMBY bastards ruin it.

Focus on large lots

Great! Anything that makes zoning code easier to understand and helps with incremental density is fantastic

I disagree. This benefits developers too much.

I do not support this proposal

I like the ability to add more duplexes

I support the amendments to the R-2, SR-1, and SR-1A zones. I believe this change will increase the housing supply, increase housing density, and give home owners more autonomy over their residence, all of which will help improve housing affordability.

I support the changes to the R-2, SR-1, and SR-1A zones. I think these changes will increase the housing supply and housing density. This should help make housing more affordable in Salt Lake City.

I support these changes.

I support these updates. As a slightly denser zoning type, could there be more building coverage? No mention of parking, I'd like to see less parking and more green space to balance out the additional housing and make the area more livable.

I think allowing duplexes by right is great. But this parking stuff keeps getting crazier! FOUR off-street parking spaces for a duplex?? No exceptions even if you're right on a TRAX line? I can't imagine there are many lots where that would pencil out. And do we really want to incentivize paving over green space?

I think building heights should be higher. Why not zone based on form rather than specific measurements? Like why not zone for 3 floors? Would certainly help with townhome development.

I think development standards, including building height, setbacks, lot width, and building coverage should be less stringent than proposed.

I think it's great to add more flexibility for more duplexes in highly desirable areas that are walkable.

I think this is great, especially permitting duplexes as a right to each property owner who would like to create one.

I understand homes are desirable but we already have so many units especially apartments that are empty - we need better cost management not bigger and more places to leave empty. The number of complexes and housing developments are already overwhelming.

In my ideal world, ADUs would be the primary way we build out to increase homes for families. Our school districts lose students because families don't want 2-5 children living in an apartment, or townhome. They want their own space to make a home out of.

Let's pack people in like sardines in a can. More housing does not solve the problem. It just makes developers richer at the expense of the huddled masses.

Limited privacy, yard space, architectural design freedom, and PARKING! (>< always a talking point at community meetups) is not the greatest for GSL communities that have strong division (and derision) across class, culture, and beliefs so some efforts to provide relief to communities with strained social/civic situations should be done first before construction stress kicks off whatever culture will be created. Being 'more affordable' comes at the cost of a bad (or "poor") taste in the mouth because it is associated with the struggle to afford, and increases emphasis on class divides. I worry the unspoken dynamic that builds up assumptions around needing to have less because you have less, subconsciously translating to being less, yet needing more [help, being helpless and needy, which you can say translates to more government reliance if that'll flip switches heh :/].

Love it!

Love this effort. Keep it as simple as possible. Minimize restrictions and rules on property owners to maximize their flexibility to do what they want with THEIR land that THEY OWN as long as they are not violating building codes (safety risk) or building in setbacks near neighbors (fire spread risk). Be prepared for NIMBY neighbors to complain and ignore them as much as possible since those are the same hypocritical a-holes who would lose their minds if anyone tried to tell them what they can or can't do with their own homes and property that they own.

Making the code easier to read is important!

No ADUs in existing neighborhoods!

No comment

Please add SR3

Setbacks and parking are significant obstacles to overcome for infill developments. Maybe allow limited retail uses on some streets and corners.

Setbacks should fit better with the existing housing. Average block face setbacks minus 3 feet seems more reasonable.

Sharing the purpose of removing the minimum parcel width would be helpful. That doesn't seem like a beneficial standard to remove.

Smaller lot sizes for R2 please

Strongly agree

Strongly favor. I think removing barriers to duplex construction could really help someone like me who is 34 years old and still cannot afford to own a home.

Thank you for the service to Salt Lake City and for the opportunity to express comments regarding the above proposal. I understand the goal of this proposal is to expand owner-occupied affordable housing options for lower- and middle-income families in the City, while preserving the unique character of the City's many residential districts. Some aspects of the proposal do not accomplish this goal and, in my view, even detract from the goal. Here are my concerns: 1. The 1,200 square foot maximum home size conflicts with existing neighborhood patterns and does not support adequate living space for a family of 3-5 individuals. In addition, this size limitation does not fit with current market demand for larger homes; 2. The proposed additional housing does not need to be "owner occupied housing" thus changing the fundamental character of many neighborhoods by permitting additional "rental units" with the attendant issues of absentee ownership, noise, excess congestion and traffic. 3. Front yard setbacks should not be less than abutting front yard setbacks. The current proposal offers an option of 20' or

abutting front yard setbacks. Thus, if abutting front yards have a 40' front yard setback, the proposal would permit a home to be constructed closer to the curb than the abutting properties, resulting in a hodgepodge look to the block / neighborhood and detracting from the visual appearance of the street. 4. Existing infrastructure (i.e. water, streets, sewer, power, etc.) is already stressed or at capacity in many neighborhoods and may not permit more housing without substantial upgrades. The proposal does not address this issue, nor require any infrastructure upgrades as preconditions to the zoning change. 5.

There does not appear to be any analysis or study of how many existing lots in the City could accommodate additional housing under the proposed zoning change or where those lots are located. Such an analysis should be completed before any zoning change is initiated. If there are a minimal number of existing lots that would be impacted, then the effort may not be cost effective.

The tables are great for easily communicating standards. Increased height would be helpful for usable attic space, critical for families in homes where basements aren't doable.

This is basically changing an R-2 residential district to an R-4 and I am opposed to this.

This is good, but the parking needs to be less. 1 stall per units seems appropriate.

This mayor sucks

Yeah let the free market do it's thing

Yes

Yes!

also makes sense

ditto

do not overpopulate nice neighborhoods

no more duplexes or high density housing

sr1a is typically in the historic district so they're already able to modify their building height. But there are some sr1a properties that are not historic and do not have the ability to modify heights via the historic commission. This gives them more ability to build what fits their needs and promotes equity in the city.

Page 5: Amendments to the Flag Lot Standards

43/152 responses

5. Share Your Comments

43/152 responses

AI Summary: Most respondents strongly support expanding housing options, particularly through the use of flag lots and residential infill, emphasizing the need for increased density and additional amenities. Several responses express enthusiasm for making flag lot standards easier and more practical, with one noting current standards are problematic and should be improved. There is broad agreement that changes would allow more housing to be built. A minority of respondents express neutral or uncertain opinions, suggesting that flag lots might be better used for multifamily redevelopment or combined with existing lots for more efficient land use. Overall, the trend is strong support for measures that increase housing supply and flexibility.

Responses

20 feet still feels too large. Most SFR in SLC have a 12' or narrower driveway. If the flag lot is only serving a single unit, 12' feet should be plenty.

Addressing affordability is a great idea. Yet it's too many steps into the future - who cares about affordability if the air is toxic from the death of the Great Salt Lake and if there is no water? Additionally, increasing population density without modifying/tightening noise ordinances first will only harm the health of all residents. Parking will undoubtedly be an issue and the city would be wise - after addressing water, noise, and air quality degradation problems that come with increasing populations - to make affected residential streets permitted parking only - and make some money off of this. Effective public transportation is a better long-term solution but it's clear public transit is not a priority anywhere let alone the west. It's a good idea but ill-conceived. Address the infrastructure problems first and then you can rezone/build. But otherwise? You're putting more people in the line of fire of toxic dust and noise pollution

All for it if it allowed more housing to be built!

All for more flag lots. Let's get that residential in-fill, baby! Density AND additional services and amenities! But anyway, yes to easier flag lots.

Also love this

Focus on large lots

Good

Good cutting red tape

I agree.

I do not support this proposal

I don't understand this.

I feel neutral about this. Flag lots could perhaps better function as multifamily redevelopments combined with the lot they are behind for better land use.

I like this. Don't see any issues

I love these changes. I now may decide to finally do something with my flag lot. Thank you.

I support the amendments to the flag lot standards. I believe this change will increase the housing supply, increase housing density, and give home owners more autonomy over their residence, all of which will help improve housing affordability.

I support the changes to the flag lot standards. I think this change will increase the housing supply and housing density. This should help make housing more affordable in Salt Lake City.

I support these changes.

I think this is a great idea! There are a number of houses with this shape in my neighborhood, and they all seem like great places to live. I think it's great to make sure we can use all the land available in Salt Lake.

I think you should have a clause that says all abutting and adjacent lot owners to the flag lot to be developed, if the lot isn't for single family use, must give written consent for the intended development.

Impeach Mendenhall

Leave it as is

Looks good.

Love this effort. Keep it as simple as possible. Minimize restrictions and rules on property owners to maximize their flexibility to do what they want with THEIR land that THEY OWN as long as they are not violating building codes (safety risk) or building in setbacks near neighbors (fire spread risk). Be prepared for NIMBY neighbors to complain and ignore them as much as possible since those are the same hypocritical a-holes who would lose their minds if anyone tried to tell them what they can or can't do with their own homes and property that they own. NIMBYs and our broken process for land use decisions are the #1 reason why we have a massive housing affordability crisis in America.

More dense housing is going to add to the air pollution we already suffer from. And AGAIN, where are you going to get the water for all this housing?

My head cannot take much more of this gibberish.

Opposed

Ownership is key to housing growth so the lot should be able to be subdivided and be owned by different owners.

Reduce the minimum required size even smaller! Why should we have a 7,000sqft lot in the back so long as they comply with setbacks and other standards.

Simplifying flag lots is great and helps infill on deeper lots.

Sounds great!

Strongly agree

The garage provision (line 45) should be left in. I can see people using it being removed as a way to place the garage right on the property line.

The restrictions on flag lots have been there for a reason, they are not compatible with neighborhoods comprised of single family homes. No homeowner wants to live next to a 3 unit structure on a flag lot.

This is amazing

This sounds like an access nightmare and could easily be abused by lot owners in favor of their residence or main property over the flag lot and residents. Also, as a property owner, it feels like a logistical nightmare with permits and emergency services to even set it up.

We have a flag lot on our street and the current owner already has a rental duplex on the property. The person wants to be able to build another house AND an ADU on this lot--we could have 10-12 cars on our street from one property--the flag lot changes will impact the quality of life on our street. The "one off-street parking space" rule is a joke, when you have 3 people per unit (and often, illegally 4-5 unrelated persons living in one unit). These changes are a de facto major rezone of R-1 neighborhoods.

Yes

Yes to flag lots if you can find a big enough lot!

Yes!

do not allow housing in backyards

do not overpopulate nice neighborhoods

idk, seems great!

the current flag lot standards are a mess and i support cleaning them up and making it practical to incorporate.

Page 6: About you

124/152 responses

6. Connection to SLC

124/152 responses

Answer	Count
I live in Salt Lake City	114
I work in Salt Lake City	41
I play in Salt Lake City	40
-	28

7. What is your age?

119/152 responses

Answer	Count
-	33
65 or older	23
30 - 34	17
35 - 39	15
40 - 44	13
45 - 49	13
25 - 29	12
55 - 59	10
50 - 54	7
60 - 64	4
19 - 24	3
Prefer not to disclose	2
18 or Younger	0

8. Household Income

101/152 responses

Answer	Count
-	51
\$50,000–\$100,000	35
\$100,000–\$200,000	33
\$200,000–\$500,000	15
Prefer not to say	7
\$25,000–\$50,000	6
Less than \$25,000	3
No income	1
More than \$500,000	1

9. Year of birth

81/152 responses

Responses
1989
1980
1982
1965
1980
1986
1967
1978
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1983
1981
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1946
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1987
1992
2002

10. Place of residence

109/152 responses

Answer	Count
-	43
District 7 (Sugar House)	30

District 6 (Foothill/East Bench)	23
District 4 (Downtown/East Central)	14
District 1 (Rose Park/Jordan Meadows)	11
District 3 (Greater Avenues/Capitol Hill)	8
District 5 (Ballpark/Liberty Wells)	8
Outside of Salt Lake City	8
District 2 (Glendale/Poplar Grove)	6
Somewhere else	1

11. How would you describe your ethnicity?

101/152 responses

Answer	Count
White	85
-	51
Prefer not to say	12
Hispanic/Latinx	2
Asian	1
Prefer to describe	1
African-American or Black	0
Middle Eastern/North African	0
Native American/Alaska Native/First Nations	0
Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian	0

ATTACHMENT B: Email or Written Comments

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [Buckley, Benjamin](#); [Hulka, Andrew](#); [housingoptions](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: (EXTERNAL) Poll Results: Strong Voter Support for Expanding Housing Options
Date: Tuesday, April 28, 2026 11:54:06 AM

Caution: This is an external email. Please be cautious when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hey Ben and Andy,

Hope you're both doing well! Lauren Cole here with [Wasatch Advocates for Livable Communities \(WALC\)](#) reaching out to share some exciting new poll results that demonstrate strong public support for the Expanding Housing Options initiative. Thank you for your work on this! WALC is eager to build visible support for EHO: we commissioned [Embold Research](#), a San Francisco-based polling firm, to conduct this survey, receiving 616 responses from registered Salt Lake City voters between March 30 and April 7.

At a glance:

- **Three in four** SLC voters do not believe there is enough housing to meet the city's needs, and a similar share report being "extremely" or "very" concerned about housing affordability. This sentiment spans all demographics, including homeowners and higher-income households, but is especially pronounced among younger residents and renters.
- Nearly three-quarters (**72%**) do not think the City has done enough to create more affordable housing options. When asked to prioritize, voters favor creating more housing options (**62%**) over protecting neighborhood character (26%).
- **A majority of voters support the proposed zoning reforms.** Support is strongest for allowing homes to be built on smaller lots (**72%**), while allowing greater parking flexibility receives the lowest support (53%), with a notable share of undecided voters (15%) on that question.

For a deeper look at all questions, topline, and crosstabs, you can find the full results here: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1BcE7suwRle-HJDZBFbPaID0NDJHTAjHM>. Please let me know if you have any issues accessing.

Additionally, the Salt Lake Tribune also published an article today covering the findings: <https://www.sltrib.com/news/2026/04/28/new-poll-finds-most-slc-residents/>. Passing along for you to share with your networks.

As a final FYI: WALC is hosting a virtual [Lunch & Learn](#) tomorrow, where we plan to take a deeper dive into the proposal, WALC's recommended refinements drawing on lessons from Houston, Durham, Portland, and Seattle, and gathering sign-ons from individuals and community organizations.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you'd like to discuss any of this further. We're grateful for your continued work to remove barriers to housing choice, advance affordability, and build more inclusive, connected neighborhoods in Salt Lake City!

All the best,
--

Lauren Cole, J.D.
Policy Manager



April 13, 2026

TO:	Interested Parties
FROM:	Trenton Marlar, PhD, Embold Research
RE:	Salt Lake City Housing & Affordability Poll Results

A new survey¹ by Embold Research shows deep concern among Salt Lake City residents about housing affordability and a widespread belief that the city is not doing enough. Residents believe the city should prioritize creating more housing options that more people can afford, and they support proposals to allow denser housing in residential neighborhoods and building homes on smaller lots, among other reforms.

Salt Lake City Residents Are Feeling the Housing Affordability Crisis

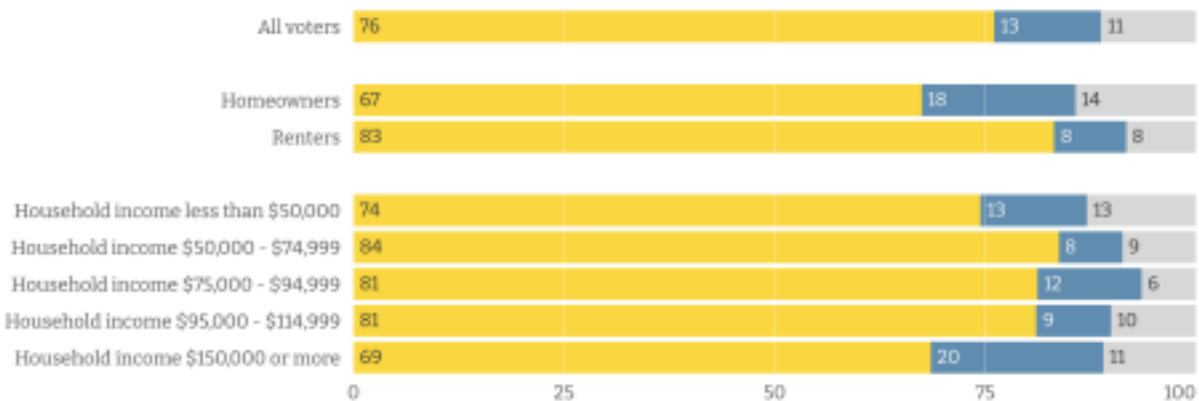
Concern about housing affordability in the city is widespread and intense. Nearly three in four residents (74%) are 'extremely' or 'very' concerned about housing affordability in Salt Lake City, and 92% express at least some degree of concern. This concern spans demographics, including homeowners (63% extremely or very concerned) and households earning over \$115,000 a year (69%), with young residents (84%) and renters (85%) the most concerned.

Behind this concern is a shared belief that the city does not have enough housing options. A clear majority of residents (76%) say Salt Lake City does not have enough housing options to meet the needs of residents across income levels, compared to just 13% who say the city has sufficient housing options for all residents. This belief is shared across homeowner status and income levels.

EMBOLD research

Generally speaking, do you think Salt Lake City has enough housing options to meet needs across income levels or not enough?

● Not enough ● Enough ● Not sure



¹Polling was conducted online from March 30 - April 7, 2026. Using Dynamic Online Sampling to attain a representative sample, Embold Research polled 616 registered voters in Salt Lake City, UT. Post-stratification was performed on age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, and 2024 presidential vote. The margin of error is 4.1%. You can see a full methodology statement [here](#).



The shortage of affordable housing is hitting close to home for many Salt Lake City residents. More than eight in ten residents (84%) say they either personally have been impacted (42%) or know a friend or family member who has been impacted (42%) by the lack of affordable housing options in the city. For a majority of residents, this shortage raises questions about their future in the city: 57% say the lack of affordable housing options has made it difficult to envision a long-term future in Salt Lake City. This unease about their future in the city is especially pronounced among renters (77%) and younger residents (74%).

Faced with these challenges, residents believe the city has not done enough. Nearly three in four (72%) say Salt Lake City’s government has not done enough to create more housing options that people can afford, compared to just 10% who say it has done enough and 8% who say it has done too much.

Residents Prioritize Building More Housing and Support Zoning Reforms

There is broad agreement among residents that the city should prioritize creating more housing rather than protecting existing neighborhoods’ character. When asked to choose, three in five residents

(62%) say the city should prioritize creating more housing options that more people can afford, compared to just 26% who prefer limiting new housing to protect neighborhood character, with 12% unsure. Notably, a majority of current homeowners (52%), residents 65 and older (56%), and households earning more than \$115,000 annually (62%) also prioritize creating more housing.

EMBOLD research

When it comes to creating new housing in Salt Lake City, what do you think the city should prioritize more?



Respondents who answered "Not sure" (12%) not shown.



Residents support a variety of zoning reforms to increase the city’s housing supply. This included allowing homes to be built on smaller lots (72% support), allowing duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes in *all* residential neighborhoods (63%), and increasing the allowable height of buildings to three stories (56%). Even among homeowners, who were among the most sympathetic to protecting neighborhood character, majorities back smaller lots (69%) and allowing duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes in *all* residential neighborhoods (56%). Residents also support creating more flexibility for property owners to determine the amount of parking to provide for homes (53% support vs. 32% oppose).

Support for Zoning Reforms

EMBOLD research



Full question wording available in linked methodology statement.

In Their Own Words: How the Housing Shortage Affects Salt Lake Residents

When asked to describe how the affordable housing shortage has impacted them or someone they know, residents shared a range of experiences.

“My retired mother has needed financial support from her children to continue paying for her apartment, and has been unable to move closer to family because her current apartment is the least expensive rent she could find.”

“Family member has moved back in with parents because she and her husband could not afford their mortgage. They are both college graduates.”

“A coworker had to move to a new state to afford a house.”

“I moved last year, and if not for my partner's parents offering to let us rent their house at an affordable rate, we would have had to pay a lot more for worse housing.”

“I have been unable to find a small apartment for one person that I can afford. I rent a room in a basement of a house.”

“We wanted to move into a bigger home for our growing family and found that we would have spent 3x what we currently are.”

“I am a law school graduate and a practicing attorney and can't afford to buy a house...”

EMBOLD research EmboldResearch.com | 3



WALC | Salt Lake City, UT | April 2026

616 Interviews with registered voters in Salt Lake City, Utah from March 30 - April 7, 2026
Margin of error = +/- 4.1%

Q1. Do you own or rent the place where you live?

- 48% Own
- 44 Rent
- 8 Staying with friends or family

Q2. What is closest to your annual gross household income (before taxes)?

- 20% Under \$50,000
- 19 Between \$50,000 and \$75,000
- 16 Between \$75,000 and and \$95,000
- 13 Between \$95,000 and \$115,000
- 25 Above \$115,000
- 8 Prefer not to say

Q3. Generally speaking, do you think Salt Lake City has enough housing options to meet needs across income levels or not enough?

- 13% Enough
- 76 Not enough
- 11 Not sure

Q4. How concerned are you about housing affordability in Salt Lake City today?

- 42% Extremely concerned
- 32 Very concerned
- 17 Somewhat concerned
- 6 Not too concerned
- 3 Not at all concerned

Q5. Has a shortage of affordable and available housing impacted you in recent years?

- 42% Yes, I have personally been impacted by a shortage of affordable housing options in Salt Lake City
- 42 I have not been personally impacted by a shortage of affordable housing options in Salt Lake City, but a family member or friend has
- 16 Nobody I know has been impacted by a shortage of housing in Salt Lake City

Q6. [IF PERSONALLY IMPACTED OR FAMILY/FRIEND IMPACTED] Please tell us about a time when a shortage of affordable housing in Richmond has significantly impacted you or someone you know. Please share as many details as you can—we read every response! [See individual responses here.](#)

Polling was conducted online from March 30 - April 7, 2026. Using Dynamic Online Sampling to attain a representative sample, Embold Research polled 616 registered voters in Salt Lake City, UT. Post-stratification was performed on age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, and 2024 presidential vote. You can see a full methodology statement [here](#), which complies with the requirements of AAPOR's Transparency Initiative. Members of the Transparency Initiative disclose all relevant details about our research, with the principle that the public should be able to evaluate and understand research-based findings, in order to instill and restore public confidence in survey results.

Q7. Has the availability of housing you can afford made it difficult for you to envision a long-term future in Salt Lake City?

- 57% Yes, it has made it hard for me to envision staying long-term
- 43 No, it has not made it hard for me to envision staying long-term

Q8. When it comes to creating new housing in Salt Lake City, what do you think the city should prioritize more?

- 62% Creating more housing options that more people can afford
- 26 Limiting the creation of new housing to protect neighborhood character
- 12 Not sure

Q9. Salt Lake City currently limits duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes to a few neighborhoods, while banning them in others. Do you support or oppose allowing duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes in all residential neighborhoods in Salt Lake City?

- 35% Strongly support
- 28 Somewhat support
- 10 Somewhat oppose
- 16 Strongly oppose
- 11 Not sure

63% Total Support
26 Total Oppose

Q10. Do you support or oppose allowing homes to be built on smaller lots to save on land costs?

- 36% Strongly support
- 36 Somewhat support
- 10 Somewhat oppose
- 9 Strongly oppose
- 9 Not sure

72% Total Support
19 Total Oppose

Q11. Research estimates that over 70% of the cost of a house in Salt Lake City is the cost of the land. Knowing this, do you support or oppose allowing homes to be built on smaller lots to save on land costs?

- 39% Strongly support
- 32 Somewhat support
- 11 Somewhat oppose
- 8 Strongly oppose
- 9 Not sure

71% Total Support
20 Total Oppose

Q12. Currently, Salt Lake City limits the height a building can be built. Do you support or oppose increasing the allowable height to three stories, allowing builders to create more homes on a property?

30% Strongly support
26 Somewhat support
15 Somewhat oppose
21 Strongly oppose
8 Not sure

56% Total Support

36 Total Oppose

Q13. Salt Lake City government currently requires the same predetermined number of parking spots per home throughout the city. Do you support or oppose creating flexibility for property owners to determine the amount of parking to provide for homes near high-frequency public transit corridors?

26% Strongly support
26 Somewhat support
15 Somewhat oppose
17 Strongly oppose
15 Not sure

53% Total Support

32 Total Oppose

Q14. Which comes closest to your view, even if none is exactly right?

72% Salt Lake City's government has **not done enough** to create more housing options more people can afford
10 Salt Lake City's government has **already done enough** to create more housing options more people can afford
8 Salt Lake City's government has **done too much** to create more housing options more people can afford
11 Not sure

D1. Are you:

49% A man
48 A woman
3 Another identity

D2. Age

38% 18 to 34
24 35 to 49
17 50 to 64
20 65+

D3. What is your race?

72% White / Caucasian
14 Hispanic or Latino/a
8 Asian / Pacific Islander
3 Black or African American
1 American Indian or Alaska Native
2 Other

D4 What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- 9% High school diploma or less
- 25 Some college, but no degree
- 11 Associate's degree, or two-year college degree
- 32 Bachelor's degree, or four-year college degree
- 23 Graduate degree

D5. How did you vote in the 2024 election for President, or for some reason were you unable to vote?

- 63% Kamala Harris, the Democrat
- 27 Donald Trump, the Republican
- 4 A third party candidate
- 0 Not registered/Too young/Ineligible
- 5 Did not vote

D6. Party Identification

- 31% Strong Democrats
 - 15 Weak Democrats
 - 15 Independent lean Democrats
 - 12 Pure independents
 - 5 Independent lean Republicans
 - 6 Weak Republicans
 - 15 Strong Republicans
-
- 46% Base Democrats
 - 32 Independents + Leanners
 - 22 Base Republicans
-
- 61% Democrats
 - 12 Pure independents
 - 26 Republicans



March 10, 2026

Salt Lake City Planning Commission
Salt Lake City Council
451 South State Street
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

Dear Chair, Commissioners, and Council Members:

On behalf of Wasatch Advocates for Livable Communities (WALC), we write in strong support of the Expanding Housing Options proposal, and to urge you to go a step further, based on additional evidence from Houston, Durham, Portland, and Seattle that demonstrates how minimum lot size reform, coupled with other dimensional changes, can produce affordable homeownership opportunities for Salt Lakers.

Salt Lake City's housing challenges are structural. Dimensional standards — minimum lot size, setbacks, and parking requirements — function as barriers to attainable homes, reducing the buildable area of parcels and making modest housing types infeasible. The result favors larger, more expensive homes over the smaller, more attainable ones our city needs.

Expanding Housing Options begins to correct these structural limitations by recalibrating the standards that shape what can realistically be built on residential land. WALC encourages the following refinements to the City's proposal:

- **Reduce minimum lot size to 1,400 sq ft to lower land costs and expand entry-level homeownership opportunities across all neighborhoods.**
- **Remove maximum building size limits and set height at 30–33 feet to allow family-sized homes at a range of price points.**
- **Adopt consistent 4-foot side setbacks and eliminate lot coverage percentages for predictable, buildable parcels.**
- **Waive parking requirements near high-frequency transit corridors, consistent with the city's existing ADU policy; and reduce the staging area on driveways.**
- **Establish legislative intent to streamline permitting, reducing barriers for smaller, local builders.**

With Salt Lake City School District losing hundreds of students each year ([Salt Lake Tribune 2025](#)) and first-time homebuyers priced out of established neighborhoods, targeted zoning reform is the most direct tool the city has to expand equitable homeownership opportunities, bring families back, and support the long-term vitality of the city's public schools.



Expanding Housing Options, coupled with the suggested changes we propose here, can be a meaningful step toward that vision, and with targeted refinements, it can truly deliver new choices for every resident of Salt Lake City.

Evidence from Houston: Ownership, Production, and Affordability

In 1998, Houston reduced minimum lot sizes and moved to by-right subdivision standards, and the results were significant. Additional research ([Gray and Millsap 2020](#)) found a substantial increase in small-lot home construction – detached, fee-simple¹, and built within existing neighborhoods rather than at the metropolitan fringe. What had previously required discretionary variances became predictable and scalable, unlocking thousands of smaller, more affordable homes across the city.

Further research ([Hamilton 2024](#)) found that Houston’s reform reduced the size of new homes and delivered an estimated \$18,000 benefit per household in lower homeownership costs. Importantly, this windfall benefited lower-income households more than higher-income households. [The Pew Charitable Trusts](#) similarly concluded that Houston’s small-lot reform facilitated tens of thousands of new homes and contributed to the city’s relative affordability among similar metro areas.

The cumulative lesson from these studies is clear: reducing minimum lot sizes increases housing production, expands ownership pathways, and moderates price pressure by allowing the housing supply to respond more effectively to demand. When builders can pair smaller homes with smaller parcels of land, the result is a broader range of attainable housing options that better match the needs of first-time buyers and working families.

Evidence from Durham, North Carolina: The Role of Parking Reform

Durham’s Expanding Housing Choices (the model Salt Lake City planners used to shape this proposal) legalized duplexes and small-scale housing types in single-family zones and reduced or eliminated off-street parking minimums in many contexts.

Further analyses ([U.S. HUD 2021](#)) and reporting ([Strong Towns 2024](#); [The News & Observer 2023](#)) found that legalizing new housing types alone was not enough to deliver more homes. The turning point was parking reform. These studies highlight several important outcomes:

1. Reducing parking minimums lowered per-unit development costs and improved infill feasibility.

¹ Fee-simple housing expands access to traditional homeownership, wealth-building, and long-term neighborhood stability because it allows homeowners to fully own both the home and the land it sits on indefinitely, without expiration. This is a key component of creating generational wealth.



2. Small projects—duplexes, lot splits, and incremental infill—became financially viable when land was not consumed by mandatory parking.
3. Reform expanded new ownership and small-scale housing opportunities within established neighborhoods.

Parking requirements often function as hidden density caps. Even when zoning permits additional units, mandatory off-street parking consumes buildable area and increases construction costs, sometimes by tens of thousands of dollars per unit. For small lots, especially near transit, parking mandates can render otherwise viable projects infeasible.

Durham’s experience demonstrates that parking reform can play a crucial role in unlocking incremental housing production. By allowing builders to devote more land to homes rather than vehicle storage, cities can improve the feasibility of small-scale infill while still maintaining neighborhood character. These lessons are particularly relevant in Salt Lake City, where many residential neighborhoods already benefit from transit access, alleyways, and walkable street networks.

Evidence from Portland and Seattle: Missing Middle is Key to Affordability and Creates Local Wealth

Portland and Seattle further demonstrate that allowing modest increases in housing options within traditionally single-dwelling neighborhoods can increase housing supply, expand homeownership opportunities, and support local economic development.

Portland’s Residential Infill Project (RIP) legalized duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and cottage clusters in neighborhoods previously limited to detached houses. Since implementation, the city has permitted more than 1,400 middle housing and accessory dwelling units in areas historically zoned for single-dwelling housing ([City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability 2025](#)). These homes have been significantly more attainable than newly built detached houses, with new middle housing units selling for roughly \$250,000 less on average than new single-family homes. The lower prices largely reflect smaller home sizes and more efficient use of land—demonstrating how zoning reform can produce more affordable homeownership opportunities ([City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability 2025](#)).

Seattle offers another example of how incremental zoning reforms can expand housing supply while supporting the local economy. Over the past two decades, Seattle has allowed “light-touch density” in many residential zones, permitting townhomes, duplexes, and other small multifamily housing types. These changes helped support the construction of approximately 18,000 homes since 2000 ([Peter 2024](#)).



Importantly, this development was not dominated by large national development firms. Instead, nearly 1,000 unique builders and developers participated in redevelopment projects, demonstrating how zoning that allows smaller-scale housing types can create opportunities for local builders, contractors, and community lenders to participate in the growth of their own neighborhood ([Peter 2024](#)).

Together, the experiences of Portland and Seattle illustrate how modest zoning reforms can unlock housing production while strengthening local economic ecosystems. Allowing small-scale housing types enables incremental development that can be undertaken by smaller builders and property owners rather than requiring large-scale redevelopment projects.

These lessons are directly relevant to Salt Lake City. By allowing smaller homes, modest multi-unit buildings, and clearer dimensional standards, the Expanding Housing Options proposal could similarly enable small-scale infill development across the city. Doing so would not only increase the supply of homes and expand ownership opportunities, but also support local builders and businesses that want to participate in the growth of their own communities.

Implications for Salt Lake City

Salt Lake City's housing market increasingly excludes first-time buyers, moderate-income households, and essential workers, in part because large minimum lot sizes and strict parking mandates reduce the availability of entry-level homes. The result is a housing market that increasingly produces larger and more expensive homes while limiting opportunities for households seeking smaller, more attainable options.

Expanding Housing Options, if calibrated correctly, can:

- Allow homes to be created in established neighborhoods that have amenities and resources to support them.
- Enable smaller, family-friendly homes at lower price points.
- Expand ownership opportunities for young families, teachers, healthcare workers, and other essential members of Salt Lake City's workforce who increasingly struggle to purchase homes within the communities they serve.
- Grow Salt Lake City's tax base by increasing the productive value of land.
- Increase total housing supply and reduce upward price pressure.

Recent evidence from cities that have adopted similar zoning reforms shows that allowing modest increases in housing density can strengthen municipal tax bases by increasing the productive value of residential land. In Seattle and Portland, redevelopment of single-family parcels into townhomes and middle housing increased the total assessed value generated per



parcel while expanding housing supply ([Peter 2024; City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability 2025](#)). Durham’s housing reforms similarly enabled incremental infill development that increased the economic productivity of residential land ([HUD User 2021](#)).

These benefits are particularly relevant for Salt Lake City as local officials have warned that the city will likely face property tax increases in the coming years to maintain essential services ([Building Salt Lake 2026](#)). Expanding housing options can help broaden the city’s tax base by allowing more homes, and therefore more taxable value, to be created on existing residential land.

The experience of Houston provides particularly strong evidence that zoning reform can simultaneously improve affordability and strengthen local tax bases. Research on Houston’s subdivision reforms shows that allowing smaller lots increased land values and taxable property value per parcel by enabling more housing units on the same land ([Hamilton 2024; Gray & Millsap 2020](#)). At the same time, these reforms made it possible to build smaller homes on smaller parcels, creating more attainable entry-level homeownership opportunities while increasing the overall value generated by residential land.

Our Recommendations

WALC supports the Expanding Housing Options proposal and urges the following refinements to ensure it delivers for Salt Lake families:

Set Minimum Lot Size at 1,400 Square Feet

The proposal’s current 2,000 square foot minimum lot size is a good start, but the Houston evidence supports going further. A 1,400 square foot minimum would allow builders to produce homes at lower price points because less land cost is embedded in each home—the kind of starter home that can genuinely open the door to homeownership.

Additionally, reducing minimum lot sizes helps distribute development opportunities more equitably across the city. Larger lot size requirements often concentrate redevelopment pressure in neighborhoods with historically larger parcels, while neighborhoods with smaller lots remain effectively unchanged. Allowing smaller lot sizes ensures that the benefits and impacts of housing growth are more evenly shared across the city.

Suggested Action: Recommend a minimum lot size of 1,400 square feet.

Remove Maximum Building Size and Increase Height to 30–33 Feet

To bring families back to Salt Lake City’s neighborhoods, homes need to be large enough to



accommodate families. In order to accomplish this without direct financial investment from the city, the council should give builders the flexibility to build a variety of homes in neighborhoods throughout the city. Coupled with the affordable housing incentives, evidence from other cities suggests that both market rate and affordable units will be created throughout the city.

WALC recommends increasing allowable building coverage, modestly adjusting height limits to approximately 30–33 feet, and removing maximum building size limits to ensure that homes are created to meet neighborhood needs.

These changes would make it possible to build family-sized starter homes with multiple bedrooms—homes that already exist in many highly desirable neighborhoods in Salt Lake City such as The Avenues. When dimensional standards prevent homes from being large enough to accommodate families, builders are less likely to pursue small-lot development.

Suggested Action: Remove maximum building size limits and set height limits at 33 feet for pitched roofs and 30 feet for flat roofs.

Establish Consistent 4-Foot Side Setbacks and Eliminate Lot Coverage Percentages

Predictability in zoning standards is essential for enabling incremental housing development. WALC supports replacing complex or discretionary dimensional rules with clear, consistent standards that allow property owners and builders to understand what can be built.

In particular, eliminating setback averaging and establishing consistent setbacks would allow builders to fully realize the potential of each parcel while maintaining appropriate spacing between homes. Setback averaging can unintentionally shrink the buildable area of a lot when surrounding homes are set far back from the street, even when the zoning district would otherwise allow a closer setback.

WALC recommends setbacks of approximately 4 feet on each side, 10 feet in the rear, and 5 feet in the front. These setbacks are consistent with International Fire Code requirements and are commonly used in cities throughout the country. Clear and predictable setback standards can significantly improve the feasibility of small-lot homes while maintaining appropriate spacing between buildings.

Suggested Action: Adopt consistent 4-foot side setbacks, eliminate lot coverage percentages, and remove setback averaging requirements.

Relax Parking Requirements and Reduce Driveway Staging

Allowing parking requirements to be waived near high-frequency transit corridors would align



Salt Lake City's approach with Durham's experience and help ensure that parking mandates do not unintentionally undermine the goals of Expanding Housing Options. The council's own action in relaxing parking requirements for ADUs are proof that arbitrary parking requirements are a barrier to new homes.

Suggested Action: Allow parking requirements to be waived for new homes located near high-frequency transit corridors, consistent with the approach already adopted for ADUs.

Reducing the required driveway staging area to 14 feet—the approximate length of a typical sedan—would make residential lots more usable while maintaining practical access for everyday vehicles. Current staging requirements often exceed the space actually needed for a passenger vehicle to safely stop before entering a garage or driveway, unnecessarily consuming buildable area on residential parcels. On smaller lots in particular, oversized staging requirements can reduce the available space for building and make modest infill housing more difficult to build. Aligning the staging requirement with the length of a standard sedan would still accommodate the most common vehicles used by residents while allowing property owners and builders to use land more efficiently. In practice, this adjustment would help ensure that dimensional standards do not unintentionally undermine the goals of Expanding Housing Options by limiting the feasibility of smaller homes on smaller lots.

Suggested Action: Reduce the driveway staging area to 14 feet to give more parking flexibility to builders.

Establish Legislative Intent to Simplify the Permitting Process

Even the best zoning reform can be undermined by a slow or opaque permitting process. The current multi-stage process can disadvantage smaller local builders, limiting competition and preventing Salt Lake residents from participating directly in the development of their own neighborhoods. Therefore, the Council should initiate a legislative action to evaluate the complexity and difficulty of navigating the permitting process for building homes in Salt Lake City.

Suggested Action: Establish council legislative intent to study Salt Lake City's homebuilding permitting process and identify opportunities to streamline it, with particular attention to reducing barriers for smaller, local builders.

Conclusion

Salt Lake City has a genuine opportunity to adopt a thoughtful, incremental reform that restores housing options historically common in our neighborhoods while addressing today's affordability crisis.



The combined evidence from Durham, Houston, Portland and Seattle demonstrates that dimensional reform—especially minimum lot size reform, parking reform, and clear development standards—can expand homeownership opportunities, increase housing production, and improve affordability without destabilizing neighborhoods.

WALC strongly urges the Planning Commission and City Council to advance the Expanding Housing Options proposal and incorporate the recommended refinements.

We appreciate your leadership and stand ready to provide additional analysis as you continue your deliberations.

Respectfully submitted,

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May 4, 2026

Salt Lake City Planning Commission
Salt Lake City Council
451 South State Street
Salt Lake City, Utah 84111

Dear Chair, Commissioners, and Council Members:

On behalf of Wasatch Advocates for Livable Communities (WALC), we write to supplement our March 10, 2026 letter in support of the Expanding Housing Options proposal with two important additions: first, [new polling data](#) demonstrating the broad public support for these specific reforms in Salt Lake City; and second, a caution drawn from [Raleigh, North Carolina's experience](#), showing that even well-designed zoning reforms can fall short when the underlying permitting and subdivision processes are not calibrated to match them.

New Survey Data Confirms Strong Resident Support for Expanding Housing Options

A [new survey commissioned by WALC and conducted by Embold Research](#) between March 30 and April 7, 2026 confirms what we have long heard from residents: housing affordability is Salt Lake City's defining challenge, and residents want their city government to act decisively. The survey polled 616 registered voters, with a margin of error of 4.1%.

Nearly three in four Salt Lake City residents (74%) say they are "extremely" or "very" concerned about housing affordability, and 92% express at least some degree of concern. This is not a concern limited to renters or lower-income households: among homeowners, 63% are extremely or very concerned; among households earning more than \$115,000 per year, that figure is 69%. Young residents (84%) and renters (85%) register the highest levels of concern.

The shortage is also personally felt. More than eight in ten residents (84%) report that either they personally have been affected by the lack of affordable housing, or they know a friend or family member who has been. For a majority of residents (57%), the shortage has made it difficult to envision a long-term future in Salt Lake City, a sentiment especially pronounced among renters (77%) and younger residents (74%).

Residents are also clear that Salt Lake City could be doing more to bend the housing cost curve: 72% say Salt Lake City's government has not done enough to create more housing options that people can afford. Only 10% say it has done enough.

Residents Support Housing Production Over Neighborhood Preservation

When asked to choose between prioritizing new, affordable housing options and protecting existing neighborhood character, residents chose housing by a margin of more than two to one: 62% favor prioritizing housing creation, compared to just 26% who favor protecting neighborhood character. Importantly, this priority is shared even among groups traditionally more sympathetic to caution: a majority of homeowners (52%), residents age 65 and older



(56%), and households earning more than \$115,000 annually (62%) all say they want the city to prioritize creating more housing.

Residents Support the Specific Reforms Proposed in Expanding Housing Options

The survey tested several of the specific reforms discussed in the Expanding Housing Options proposal. Resident support for each is substantial:

- Allowing homes to be built on smaller lots: 72% support
- Allowing duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes in all residential neighborhoods: 63% support
- Increasing the allowable height of buildings to three stories: 56% support
- Creating more flexibility for property owners to determine the amount of parking to provide for homes: 53% support

Even among homeowners, majorities support smaller lots (69%) and allowing duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes in all residential neighborhoods (56%). **This is a broad, cross-demographic mandate for the kind of thoughtful reform WALC has urged the Commission and Council to adopt.**

The human dimension of this data is powerful. Survey respondents described situations familiar to many Salt Lakers: adult children moving back in with parents because they cannot afford mortgages, coworkers leaving the state to find more attainable housing, retirees on fixed incomes unable to move closer to family, and professionals with advanced degrees priced out of homeownership entirely. These are not abstract problems. They are the daily reality of Salt Lake City's housing shortage, and the survey confirms that residents are looking to this body to help address them.

Zoning Reform Alone Is Not Enough: A Caution from Raleigh, North Carolina

The survey data reinforces the urgency of passing Expanding Housing Options. But WALC also wants to draw the Commission and Council's attention to an equally important lesson from Raleigh, North Carolina: that getting zoning reform right is a necessary but not sufficient condition for producing more homes. **If Salt Lake City's permitting and subdivision processes are not also calibrated to support incremental development, the goals of Expanding Housing Options may be substantially undermined before a single new home is built.**

Raleigh enacted significant missing middle housing reforms in 2021 and 2022 through two major amendments to its Unified Development Ordinance ([dubbed Missing Middle 1.0 and 2.0](#)). Together, these changes legalized two homes per lot in nearly all residential districts, allowed townhomes in more of the city, eliminated density caps in exchange for lot standards, permitted tiny homes on flag lots, and introduced high-frequency transit overlay districts, among other reforms. On paper, Raleigh had a progressive, by-right housing code that should be producing large amounts of incremental housing and generating new homeownership opportunities.



In some ways, [that is precisely what is happening](#). Since the reforms passed, hundreds of homes have been permitted under the updated rules. Duplexes, townhomes, and small multi-unit buildings are appearing in neighborhoods that previously only allowed single-family houses. Townhomes in particular have become a common pathway for adding housing under the new rules, often on sites that were already platted or assembled for development. But **Raleigh is not seeing much production of the smallest forms of incremental housing: developments where a homeowner splits a large lot in two, creates a flag lot behind an existing house, or adds a small new parcel that allows another home to be built.**

Why not?

A [recent account](#) from a local builder and small developer in Raleigh illustrates how the process can swallow reform. This builder sought to do exactly what missing middle reform is designed to enable: subdivide a large lot to create a flag lot behind an existing home, allowing one additional dwelling to be built. The project involved a single existing parcel, one new lot, and infrastructure already in place.

That simple two-lot subdivision took 598 days from start to finish. **Nearly two years.**

A process that slow effectively excludes the very actors that incremental housing reform is intended to empower. Only large developers with significant capital, professional teams, and the ability to absorb lengthy carrying costs can navigate such delays. Homeowners who want to add a home to their backyard, and small local builders who want to participate in their own neighborhoods, cannot.

Raleigh's experience is a stark illustration of a principle that should guide Salt Lake City's implementation: **you can get the zoning exactly right and still fail to produce housing if the administrative process for creating new lots is not designed to match.**

Even the best zoning reform can be undermined by a slow or opaque permitting process. The current multi-stage process can disadvantage smaller local builders, limiting competition and preventing Salt Lake residents from participating directly in the development of their own neighborhoods. **Therefore, after passing Expanding Housing Options, the Council should initiate a legislative action to evaluate the complexity and difficulty of navigating the permitting and subdivision processes for building homes in Salt Lake City.**

Durham: The Benchmark Salt Lake City Should Aim For

Just as Durham's Expanding Housing Choices provided the model that Salt Lake City planners used to shape the Expanding Housing Options proposal, Durham also offers the right model for the administrative process that should accompany it.

In the last six months of 2025 alone, Durham approved 168 exempt plats, including 65 flag lot subdivisions, with an average review time of **approximately one month**. That is the benchmark Salt Lake City should aim for: a predictable, administrative process that resolves simple residential lot splits within 30 to 45 days for complete applications.

Durham's results demonstrate that speed and rigor are not mutually exclusive. A well-designed administrative track with clear eligibility criteria—limited to simple two- or three-lot residential



splits, without the need for public hearings or discretionary review—can process applications efficiently while still ensuring that basic infrastructure and fire code standards are met. The result is a process that homeowners and small builders can actually use.

Recommended Actions for Salt Lake City

WALC respectfully urges the Commission and Council to ensure that Expanding Housing Options is accompanied by a parallel commitment to process reform. **WALC recommends the City include subdivision and platting process reform in the scope of the legislative intent to study Salt Lake City's permitting process that WALC recommended in our March letter.** The goal of that study should not be limited to building permits, it should encompass the full path from lot split to certificate of occupancy.

Specifically, we recommend:

- Evaluating whether Salt Lake City's current subdivision and platting review timelines are calibrated to support the incremental development that Expanding Housing Options intends to enable. If a simple two-lot residential split takes six months or more to approve, the goals of the proposal will be significantly undermined.
- Establishing an administrative approval track for simple two- and three-lot residential splits, modeled on Durham's exempt plat process. This track should be available by right for applications that meet clear, objective criteria, without requiring discretionary hearings or commission approval.
- Setting a target review timeline of 30 to 45 days for administratively complete applications on the new administrative track. Publishing that target, and measuring performance against it, will create accountability and signal to small builders and homeowners that the city is serious about enabling incremental development.

All of these issues could be addressed through either action by the Planning Commission or legislative intent established by the City Council.

Conclusion

The Embold Research survey makes clear that Salt Lake City residents are ready for the kind of reform that Expanding Housing Options represents. The question now is whether the city will rise to meet that mandate.

Additionally, Raleigh's experience is a reminder that good intentions embedded in zoning text can be quietly defeated by a process that was never redesigned to support them. Durham's example shows what is possible when both the rules and the process are aligned around a common goal. Salt Lake City has the opportunity to do both: to pass a meaningful zoning reform and to ensure that the systems needed to implement it are ready to deliver.

Before modern zoning codes and complex subdivision regulations, cities grew gradually through many small actions. Large parcels were divided. Backyards became homes. Duplexes and small apartment buildings filled in gaps. Neighborhoods evolved slowly as demand changed and families made modest investments in their property. Over time,



these incremental additions created the walkable neighborhoods we now consider historic and desirable. Ironically, many of those same idyllic neighborhoods would be impossible to replicate under today’s standards.

Expanding Housing Options is an attempt to reopen the door to these small and mid-sized housing types. But legalizing housing forms is only part of the work; the process required to build them matters just as much.

WALC remains committed to working with the Commission, the Council, and City staff to help Salt Lake City realize that opportunity. We stand ready to provide additional analysis or to assist in identifying peer city models as you continue your deliberations.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Cole
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Turner Bitton
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WALC | Salt Lake City, UT | April 2026

616 Interviews with registered voters in Salt Lake City, Utah from March 30 - April 7, 2026

Margin of error = +/- 4.1%

Q1. Do you own or rent the place where you live?

- 48% Own
- 44 Rent
- 8 Staying with friends or family

Q2. What is closest to your annual gross household income (before taxes)?

- 20% Under \$50,000
- 19 Between \$50,000 and \$75,000
- 16 Between \$75,000 and and \$95,000
- 13 Between \$95,000 and \$115,000
- 25 Above \$115,000
- 8 Prefer not to say

Q3. Generally speaking, do you think Salt Lake City has enough housing options to meet needs across income levels or not enough?

- 13% Enough
- 76 Not enough
- 11 Not sure

Q4. How concerned are you about housing affordability in Salt Lake City today?

- 42% Extremely concerned
- 32 Very concerned
- 17 Somewhat concerned
- 6 Not too concerned
- 3 Not at all concerned

Q5. Has a shortage of affordable and available housing impacted you in recent years?

- 42% Yes, I have personally been impacted by a shortage of affordable housing options in Salt Lake City
- 42 I have not been personally impacted by a shortage of affordable housing options in Salt Lake City, but a family member or friend has
- 16 Nobody I know has been impacted by a shortage of housing in Salt Lake City

Q6. [IF PERSONALLY IMPACTED OR FAMILY/FRIEND IMPACTED] Please tell us about a time when a shortage of affordable housing in Richmond has significantly impacted you or someone you know. Please share as many details as you can—we read every response! [See individual responses here.](#)



Q7. Has the availability of housing you can afford made it difficult for you to envision a long-term future in Salt Lake City?

- 57% Yes, it has made it hard for me to envision staying long-term
- 43 No, it has not made it hard for me to envision staying long-term

Q8. When it comes to creating new housing in Salt Lake City, what do you think the city should prioritize more?

- 62% Creating more housing options that more people can afford
- 26 Limiting the creation of new housing to protect neighborhood character
- 12 Not sure

Q9. Salt Lake City currently limits duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes to a few neighborhoods, while banning them in others. Do you support or oppose allowing duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes in all residential neighborhoods in Salt Lake City?

- 35% Strongly support
- 28 Somewhat support
- 10 Somewhat oppose
- 16 Strongly oppose
- 11 Not sure

63% Total Support
26 Total Oppose

Q10. Do you support or oppose allowing homes to be built on smaller lots to save on land costs?

- 36% Strongly support
- 36 Somewhat support
- 10 Somewhat oppose
- 9 Strongly oppose
- 9 Not sure

72% Total Support
19 Total Oppose

Q11. Research estimates that over 70% of the cost of a house in Salt Lake City is the cost of the land. Knowing this, do you support or oppose allowing homes to be built on smaller lots to save on land costs?

- 39% Strongly support
- 32 Somewhat support
- 11 Somewhat oppose
- 8 Strongly oppose
- 9 Not sure

71% Total Support
20 Total Oppose



Q12. Currently, Salt Lake City limits the height a building can be built. Do you support or oppose increasing the allowable height to three stories, allowing builders to create more homes on a property?

- 30% Strongly support
- 26 Somewhat support
- 15 Somewhat oppose
- 21 Strongly oppose
- 8 Not sure

56% Total Support
36 Total Oppose

Q13. Salt Lake City government currently requires the same predetermined number of parking spots per home throughout the city. Do you support or oppose creating flexibility for property owners to determine the amount of parking to provide for homes near high-frequency public transit corridors?

- 26% Strongly support
- 26 Somewhat support
- 15 Somewhat oppose
- 17 Strongly oppose
- 15 Not sure

53% Total Support
32 Total Oppose

Q14. Which comes closest to your view, even if none is exactly right?

- 72% Salt Lake City’s government has **not done enough** to create more housing options more people can afford
- 10 Salt Lake City’s government has **already done enough** to create more housing options more people can afford
- 8 Salt Lake City’s government has **done too much** to create more housing options more people can afford
- 11 Not sure

D1. Are you:

- 49% A man
- 48 A woman
- 3 Another identity

D2. Age

- 38% 18 to 34
- 24 35 to 49
- 17 50 to 64
- 20 65+



D3. What is your race?

- 72% White / Caucasian
- 14 Hispanic or Latino/a
- 8 Asian / Pacific Islander
- 3 Black or African American
- 1 American Indian or Alaska Native
- 2 Other

D4 What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- 9% High school diploma or less
- 25 Some college, but no degree
- 11 Associate's degree, or two-year college degree
- 32 Bachelor's degree, or four-year college degree
- 23 Graduate degree

D5. How did you vote in the 2024 election for President, or for some reason were you unable to vote?

- 63% Kamala Harris, the Democrat
- 27 Donald Trump, the Republican
- 4 A third party candidate
- 0 Not registered/Too young/Ineligible
- 5 Did not vote

D6. Party Identification

- 31% Strong Democrats
 - 15 Weak Democrats
 - 15 Independent lean Democrats
 - 12 Pure independents
 - 5 Independent lean Republicans
 - 6 Weak Republicans
 - 15 Strong Republicans
-
- 46% Base Democrats
 - 32 Independents + Leaners
 - 22 Base Republicans
-
- 61% Democrats
 - 12 Pure independents
 - 26 Republicans



April 13, 2026

TO:	Interested Parties
FROM:	Trenton Marlar, PhD, Embold Research
RE:	Salt Lake City Housing & Affordability Poll Results

A new survey¹ by Embold Research shows deep concern among Salt Lake City residents about housing affordability and a widespread belief that the city is not doing enough. Residents believe the city should prioritize creating more housing options that more people can afford, and they support proposals to allow denser housing in residential neighborhoods and building homes on smaller lots, among other reforms.

Salt Lake City Residents Are Feeling the Housing Affordability Crisis

Concern about housing affordability in the city is widespread and intense. Nearly three in four residents (74%) are ‘extremely’ or ‘very’ concerned about housing affordability in Salt Lake City, and 92% express at least some degree of concern. This concern spans demographics, including homeowners (63% extremely or very concerned) and households earning over \$115,000 a year (69%), with young residents (84%) and renters (85%) the most concerned.

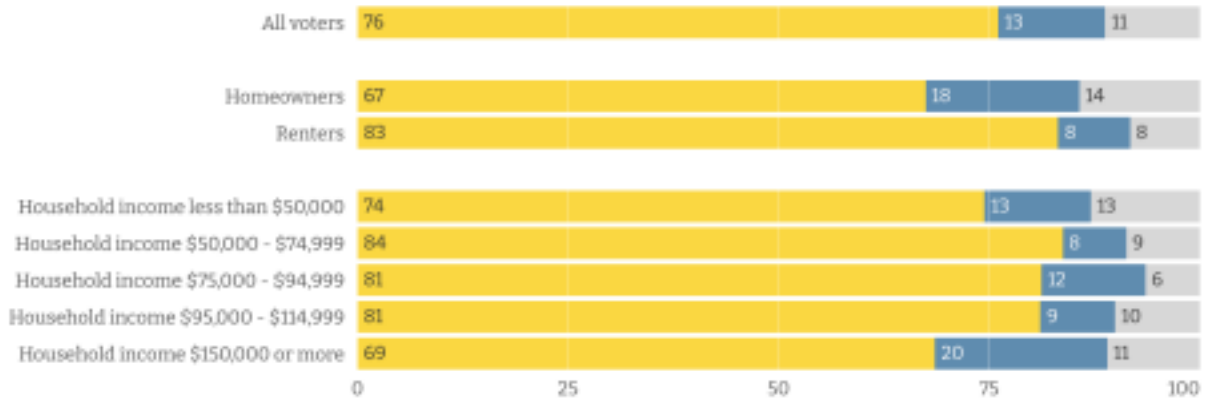
Behind this concern is a shared belief that the city does not have enough housing options. A clear majority of residents (76%) say Salt Lake City does not have enough housing options to meet the needs of residents across income levels, compared to just 13% who say the city has sufficient housing options for all residents. This belief is shared across homeowner status and income levels.



EMBOLDresearch

Generally speaking, do you think Salt Lake City has enough housing options to meet needs across income levels or not enough?

● Not enough ● Enough ● Not sure



¹Polling was conducted online from March 30 - April 7, 2026. Using Dynamic Online Sampling to attain a representative sample, Embold Research polled 616 registered voters in Salt Lake City, UT. Post-stratification was performed on age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, and 2024 presidential vote. The margin of error is 4.1%. You can see a full methodology statement [here](#).



The shortage of affordable housing is hitting close to home for many Salt Lake City residents. More than eight in ten residents (84%) say they either personally have been impacted (42%) or know a friend or family member who has been impacted (42%) by the lack of affordable housing options in the city. For a majority of residents, this shortage raises questions about their future in the city: 57% say the lack of affordable housing options has made it difficult to envision a long-term future in Salt Lake City. This unease about their future in the city is especially pronounced among renters (77%) and younger residents (74%).

Faced with these challenges, residents believe the city has not done enough.

Nearly three in four (72%) say Salt Lake City’s government has not done enough to create more housing options that people can afford, compared to just 10% who say it has done enough and 8% who say it has done too much.

Residents Prioritize Building More Housing and Support Zoning Reforms

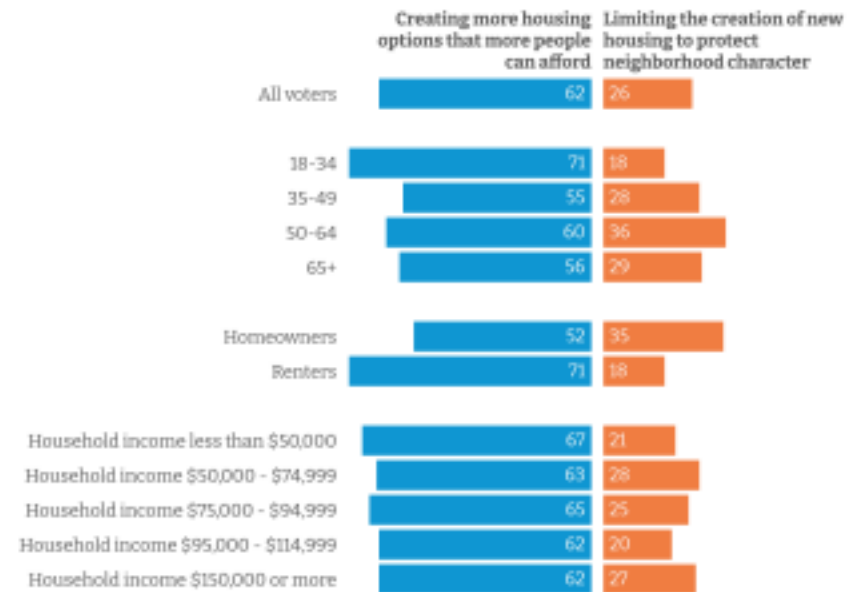


There is broad agreement among residents that the city should prioritize creating more housing rather than protecting existing neighborhoods' character. When

asked to choose, three in five residents (62%) say the city should prioritize creating more housing options that more people can afford, compared to just 26% who prefer limiting new housing to protect neighborhood character, with 12% unsure. Notably, a majority of current homeowners (52%), residents 65 and older (56%), and households earning more than \$115,000 annually (62%) also prioritize creating more housing.

EMBOLD

When it comes to creating new housing in Salt Lake City, what do you think the city should prioritize more?



Respondents who answered "Not sure" (12%) not shown.



Residents support a variety of zoning reforms to increase the city's housing supply.

This included allowing homes to be built on smaller lots (72% support), allowing duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes in *all* residential neighborhoods (63%), and increasing the allowable height of buildings to three stories (56%). Even among homeowners, who were among the most sympathetic to protecting neighborhood character, majorities back smaller lots (69%) and allowing duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes in *all* residential neighborhoods (56%). Residents also support creating more flexibility for property owners to determine the amount of parking to provide for homes (53% support vs. 32% oppose).



Support for Zoning Reforms

EMBOLDresearch

● Strongly support ● Somewhat support ● Somewhat oppose ● Strongly oppose ● Not sure

Allowing homes to be built on smaller lots



Allowing duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes in all residential neighborhoods



Increasing the allowable height to three stories



Creating flexibility for property owners to determine the amount of parking to provide for homes



Full question wording available in linked methodology statement.

In Their Own Words: How the Housing Shortage Affects Salt Lake Residents

When asked to describe how the affordable housing shortage has impacted them or someone they know, residents shared a range of experiences.

“My retired mother has needed financial support from her children to continue paying for her apartment, and has been unable to move closer to family because her current apartment is the least expensive rent she could find.”

“Family member has moved back in with parents because she and her husband could not afford their mortgage. They are both college graduates.”

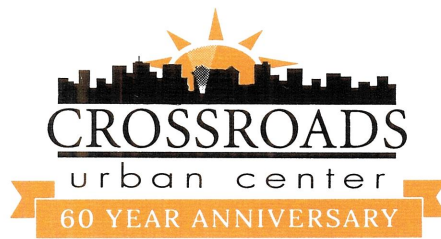
“A coworker had to move to a new state to afford a house.”

“I moved last year, and if not for my partner's parents offering to let us rent their house at an affordable rate, we would have had to pay a lot more for worse housing.”

“I have been unable to find a small apartment for one person that I can afford. I rent a room in a basement of a house.”

“We wanted to move into a bigger home for our growing family and found that we would have spent 3x what we currently are.”

“I am a law school graduate and a practicing attorney and can't afford to buy a house...”



Date: March 26, 2026

To: Salt Lake City Planning Commission

Re: Enhanced Housing Options

Dear Commissioners:

Crossroads Urban Center submits the following comments and suggestions regarding the proposed amendments to the Enhanced Housing Options plan and ordinance.

We are generally supportive of this plan, as it continues the efforts of the City over the past several years to expand housing supply and opportunity. We favor planning and zoning that encourages, where appropriate, smaller lots and set-backs, higher densities, mixed uses and vibrant community development, while avoiding, minimizing and mitigating displacement and gentrification.

We think this plan can be improved by enabling and incentivizing additional affordable units to be included in the higher density developments to be allowed, both as a way of reducing the risks of displacement and gentrification and the potential for unintended consequences or abuses.

We are sure City staff are familiar with Portland, Oregon's upzoning ordinances, which include a density bonus (additional FAR) if one or more units are subsidized or deed restricted to remain attainable or affordable.

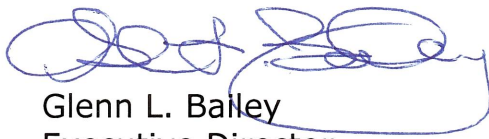
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2026/03/18/portland-housing-infill-ratio-duplexes/>

We encourage staff and Planning Commissioners to consider how this could apply to both new for-sale and rental homes that would be built under this policy.

Given the bipartisan efforts in Washington DC to prevent large corporations from buying up the single-family home market and converting it into rental property, it is important that zoning changes intended to create missing middle home ownership options do not instead lead to "build to rent" single family homes being developed by private equity firms. One thing the City can do to ensure that projects created through the Expanding Housing Options changes to city code create home ownership options is placing affordability requirements on units built for rent under those changes.

Thank you for your consideration of these suggestions.

Respectfully,



Glenn L. Bailey
Executive Director
Crossroads Urban Center

From: [REDACTED]
To: [housingoptions](#); [Norris, Nick](#)
Subject: (EXTERNAL) Expanding Housing Options (EHO) Proposal
Date: Friday, January 16, 2026 11:45:43 AM

Caution: This is an external email. Please be cautious when clicking links or opening attachments.

These comments are my own and not a position of the EBCC board.

Dear Planning Staff,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the *Expanding Housing Options* (EHO) proposal currently under consideration by Salt Lake City. After reviewing the official proposal, including the EHO Overview document and associated planning materials, I would like to express several concerns, particularly regarding the proposed **maximum home size of 1,200 sq. ft. under the Small Lot Development ordinance**. I respectfully request that the City reconsider this cap due to the implications for family housing, neighborhood character, and long-term affordability.

1. The 1,200 sq. ft. maximum home size conflicts with existing neighborhood patterns

The EHO Overview outlines that Small Lot Dwellings would allow “**small homes (up to 1,200 sq. ft.) on small lots (as small as 2,000 sq. ft.)**”.

While I understand the City’s goal of expanding attainable housing, this size limitation does **not** align with actual conditions in many R-1 neighborhoods, particularly on the east bench. In St. Mary’s and similar areas, single-family homes routinely range from **3,000–5,000 sq. ft.** The introduction of multiple 1,200 sq. ft. structures on large lots would represent a significant departure from the established built environment and could create a “string of ADUs” effect behind existing homes.

For example, on my own lot of over **20,000 sq. ft.**, the proposal would theoretically allow four (4) tiny homes, each roughly a quarter the size of the surrounding homes, resulting in an outcome that looks and feels inconsistent with neighborhood norms. This directly contradicts the stated goal that new housing should “**fit the scale of the neighborhood**”.

2. The proposal does not adequately consider the needs of families with children

The City notes an ongoing **decline in households with children**, with only **17.8% of SLC households having kids in 2023**, down from 24.8% in 2010. Salt lake city has less children in the public school system than we did in the 1960s .The EHO Overview highlights this statistic as part of the rationale for expanding housing options.

However, the proposed 1,200 sq. ft. maximum does *not* support the needs of growing families who require more space. Many families, including my own, seek larger homes when planning for children. My friends with young children who currently live in 1,500–1,800 sq. ft. bungalows are actively trying to upsize, not downsize.

If Salt Lake City wants to retain families, it must provide *both* smaller attainable homes *and*

larger family-friendly options. Imposing a blanket 1,200 sq. ft. cap on new small-lot homes inadvertently:

- reduces the supply of appropriately sized family housing,
 - pushes families to demolish older homes on full-size lots to build larger replacements,
 - and accelerates the trend of families leaving the city for surrounding suburbs where larger homes are available.
-

3. Larger homes on subdivided lots can *protect* existing small homes, not eliminate them

The City emphasizes that missing-middle housing and small homes tend to cost less and therefore increase attainability, noting examples where small-lot and missing-middle units sell for **\$150,000–\$300,000 less** than typical single-family homes.

While this could be true citywide, the east bench’s teardown trend demonstrates that **demand for larger homes is not going away**. Allowing only tiny homes in these neighborhoods may unintentionally create the *opposite* of the intended effect:

Scenario A — Under the proposed rules:

A large lot (like mine) can only host 1,200 sq. ft. homes → families who want 2,500–4,000 sq. ft. homes must instead buy **older bungalows on standard lots**, demolish them, and rebuild much larger homes.

Scenario B — If larger homes were allowed on subdivided parcels:

Those same families could instead buy **larger new homes built on appropriately subdivided large parcels**, reducing pressure on smaller existing homes and limiting demolitions in established neighborhoods.

A real-life example exists on **1700 S between 1800–1900 E and between 2100–2300 E**, where cul-de-sac developments added roughly 15 family-sized homes on 2 parcels. These developments successfully introduced more families *without* requiring the demolition of 15 individual bungalows. This is a model worth preserving.

4. The proposed approach may unintentionally decrease affordability for families

The EHO Overview highlights that **median home prices have increased more than 83% since 2005** and that **72.6% of households cannot afford the median home**.

While increasing unit count can help affordability in the aggregate, limiting new construction in high-demand neighborhoods to only 1,200 sq. ft. homes may make *larger* homes even scarcer, and therefore even more expensive.

Scarcity of family-sized homes leads to:

- higher prices for the few that exist,
- more aggressive competition,
- increased displacement of smaller homes through teardown activity,
- and more families leaving the city altogether.

This runs counter to the City’s goal of providing “more housing options for families at all stages of life”.

5. A more flexible framework would better serve the City’s goals

I strongly support the City’s desire to diversify housing types and provide attainable options. However, a **one-size-fits-all 1,200 sq. ft. cap** is too restrictive.

I encourage the City to consider:

Recommended Adjustments

- Allow a *range* of unit sizes on subdivided lots rather than a single maximum.
- Permit larger homes on large lots where doing so aligns with existing neighborhood character.
- Implement design standards to ensure compatibility without restricting size so severely.
- Limit total units per parcel based on size and access—but not individual unit size.
- Provide pathways for creating multi-home subdivisions similar to the 1700 S examples, which successfully expanded family housing stock.

This balanced approach would allow:

- more attainable small homes,
 - more appropriately sized family homes,
 - fewer teardowns,
 - more stability for existing neighborhoods, and
 - more families choosing (and affording) to stay within Salt Lake City.
-

Conclusion

Salt Lake City’s EHO initiative has admirable goals and many thoughtful components. However, the 1,200 sq. ft. maximum home size is too restrictive and could undermine the City’s ambitions to support families, maintain neighborhood character, and provide a range of attainable housing choices.

I respectfully request that the City reconsider this limit and adopt a more flexible, context-sensitive approach that reflects the diversity of Salt Lake’s neighborhoods and housing needs.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,
Anthony Wright

From: [Norris, Nick](#)
To: [Hulka, Andrew](#); [Buckley, Benjamin](#)
Subject: FW: (EXTERNAL) Council comments to planning
Date: Tuesday, June 3, 2025 1:59:51 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

FYI, mostly the same things we have already received.



NICK NORRIS
Planning Director
COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBORHOODS | SALT LAKE CITY CORPORATION
Office: 801-535-6173 | Cell: 801-641-1728
Email: nick.norris@slc.gov
WWW.SLC.GOV

From: Anthony Wright [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 3, 2025 11:05 AM
To: Norris, Nick <nick.norris@slc.gov>
Subject: (EXTERNAL) Council comments to planning

Caution: This is an external email. Please be cautious when clicking links or opening attachments.

Nick,

Darin has asked me to share my comment with you regarding the r1 study.

I was watching the feb 19 working meeting around the much needed R1 update.

I have a few comments:

1: family sized housing- as someone with small kids at home, 1200 square feet is really tight and not going to cut it. While I know it's possible to configure a floor plan with 3 bed 2 bath in 1200 square feet, it's very tight. I think allowing larger homes still helps with the cities goals as I will try and explain. I think basement space being subterranean has no impact on adjacent properties and should not be included in the gross floor area. I don't like this cap as I think it leaves out the opportunity to build right sized family housing in an existing neighborhood. I think this specifically will have the greatest impact in r1-12000 zone. As I break down in point 2 below.

2: will it be restricted to 4 density units per r1? I have a 20000 square foot r1-12000 lot, could i do the 2000 square foot minimum lot size and do 10 units, or would i only be able to add 3 additional houses each capped at 1200 square feet? I feel like building 3 1200 square foot houses in the back yard in my neighborhood would be super weird and out of place. It's more

like allowing me to build 3 adus. Neighboring houses are between 4000-12000 square feet. While I understand the spirit of your comments capping the home sizes, I think it's not exactly a one size fits all. Smaller houses make sense on my properties in central city, sugar house, and west side, but not as much on my r1-12000 property.

I believe for this parcel, 3 or 4 larger family sized houses would make sense and be a real asset to the neighborhood in very close proximity to an elementary school. Yes they would be more expensive than a 1200 square foot home, but my thinking is that the people who buy these 3-4 larger homes at a higher price point would be 3-4 people who do not go buy an individual lower priced r1-5000 home. I think good examples can be found on 1700 south between 2100e and 2300 e. There are 2 cul-de-sac developments with 15 larger nicer single family homes. This used to be 2 homes with large yards. This allowed 15 families to have homes in east Sugar House, have larger homes, and didn't require them to buy one of the traditional bungalows and tear it down as we are seeing all through sugar house and Yalecrest area.

3: tie the ahi together with the small lot developments with max floor area- While the proposal says 4 units per r1 parcel, encourage the use of ahi and deed restrictions by allowing more density with ahi. For example, market rate r1 infill can have 3 units, but with ahi you can have 4 or 5 but ahi homes will be capped out at the max square footage figure. You could also make the lot mins with ahi be 1500 instead of 2000. You noted that there is no max size with ahi, but there kind of is. Deed restricted units need to be the same as market rate units. I don't see people building a million dollar+ market rate home and then selling the identical deed restricted unit to someone for 400k.

4: while there was a lot of talk about the ahi during the meeting and its potential loss of applicability, I think the RMF-30 was completely overlooked. The city just created a brand new zone that is extremely similar to this proposal. I just spent 10 months doing an R1 rezone to rmf-30 to basically accomplish a small lot development. Why not just make it to r1 and rmf 30 are tied together. My idea is that rmf-30 should basically be treated as a conditional use for all R1 properties and should be able to be quickly done with either an administrative review or just a planning commission vote.

I appreciate what you do and hope to hear back from you. I think each zone can contribute to the cities goals and consolidation can make sense if done correctly. My main point is that my r1-5000 properties probably lend themselves better to smaller structures as that's often the natural form of the area, where slightly larger r1-7000 or 12000 could have larger structures and still help the current housing issues by creating diversity. If we only add smaller houses, larger homes continue to pull away from attainability for many families as they become more scarce. I think we need to build all housing kinds.

Thank you,
Anthony Wright

From: [Norris, Nick](#)
To: [Hulka, Andrew](#); [Buckley, Benjamin](#)
Subject: FW: (EXTERNAL) R1 ideas
Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2025 3:51:54 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)



NICK NORRIS
Planning Director
COMMUNITY AND NEIGHBORHOODS | SALT LAKE CITY CORPORATION
Office: 801-535-6173 | Cell: 801-641-1728
Email: nick.norris@slc.gov
WWW.SLC.GOV

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 19, 2025 3:43 PM
To: Norris, Nick <nick.norris@slc.gov>
Subject: (EXTERNAL) R1 ideas

Caution: This is an external email. Please be cautious when clicking links or opening attachments.

Hey Nick,

Exciting stuff here. I have a few comments from yesterday's meeting.

1: family sized housing- as someone with small kids at home, 1200 square feet is not going to cut it. While I know it's possible to configure a floor plan with 3 bed 2 bath in 1200 square feet, it's very tight. I think allowing larger homes still helps with the cities goals. I think basement space as it is subterranean and has no impact on adjacent properties should not be included in the gross floor area. I don't like this cap as I think it leaves out the opportunity to build right sized family housing in an existing neighborhood.

2: tie the ahi together with the small lot developments with max floor area- While the proposal says 4 units per r1 parcel, encourage the use of ahi and deed restrictions by allowing more density with ahi. For example, market rate r1 infill can have 3 units, but with ahi you can have 4 or 5 but they all will be capped out at the max square footage figure. You could also make the lot mins with ahi be 1500 instead of 2000.

3: while there was a lot of talk about the ahi yesterday and its potential loss of applicability, I

think the RMF-30 was completely overlooked. We basically just created a brand new zone that is extremely similar to this proposal. I just spent 10 months doing an R1 rezone to rmf-30 to basically accomplish a small lot development. Why not just make it to r1 and rmf 30 are tied together. My idea is that rmf-30 should basically be treated as a conditional use for all R1 properties and should be able to be quickly done with either an administrative review or just a planning commission vote.

4: will it be restricted to 4 density units per r1? I have like a 20000 square foot lot, could i do the 2000 square foot minimum lot size and do 10, or would i only be able to add 3 additional houses each capped at 1200 square feet? I feel like building 3 1200 square foot houses in the back yard in my neighborhood would be super weird and out of place. It's more like allowing me to build 3 adus. Where 3 2100 square foot family sized houses would make sense and be a real asset to the neighborhood in very close proximity to the elementary school.

Sorry for the word vomit of an email. Just ideas

From: [REDACTED]
To: [housingoptions](#); [Young, Sarah](#)
Subject: (EXTERNAL) Expanding Housing Options — Feedback
Date: Tuesday, April 14, 2026 3:28:07 PM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

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I've reviewed the city's "Expanding Housing Options" initiative, and I understand the intent behind increasing housing supply.

To be fair, there is evidence that adding inventory has helped stabilize rents. That is a positive outcome, and it suggests that increasing supply does have an impact.

However, that does not mean the current approach is working holistically, nor does it justify how aggressively and loosely these policies are being implemented.

What residents are seeing on the ground is a wave of large, high-density apartment developments that are expensive, often out of scale with their surroundings, and primarily driven by investor returns. These projects may contribute to overall supply, but they are not meaningfully improving access to homeownership or long-term affordability for many people.

At the same time, the city is expanding ADU allowances by removing approval hurdles, increasing allowable size, and reducing certain requirements. While this may further increase unit count, it also introduces very real impacts on existing neighborhoods:

- Reduced privacy from larger, closer, and sometimes multi-story structures
- Increased noise and activity in traditionally low-density areas
- Additional strain on parking and already congested streets
- Erosion of neighborhood character due to inconsistent scale and design

There is also a broader concern that should not be overlooked. Increasing the number of rentable units per property creates strong financial incentives for investors to acquire single-family homes and convert them into income-producing assets. Over time, this risks shifting neighborhoods away from owner-occupied stability toward investor-driven turnover.

If the goal is to increase housing supply while maintaining livability, then the current approach needs more discipline and better safeguards.

At a minimum, the city should be addressing:

- Enforceable owner-occupancy requirements
- Height, setback, and privacy protections between properties
- Parking and infrastructure requirements aligned with actual demand
- Design standards that ensure compatibility with existing neighborhoods
- Consideration of concentration limits to prevent over-saturation in specific areas

Growth is not the issue. Poorly managed growth is.

Salt Lake City can increase housing supply without sacrificing the quality, privacy, and character of its neighborhoods. Right now, it feels like that balance is missing.

I encourage the city to take a more measured and disciplined approach before the long-term impacts of these policies become difficult to reverse.

Thank you.

— Dave Amirault, Salt Lake City Resident



David Amirault

[Redacted]
[Redacted]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Zoning; Hulka, Andrew](#)
Subject: Re: (EXTERNAL) Re: SLC Planning Division - Expanding Housing Options
Date: Monday, March 30, 2026 2:09:56 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

as i continue say over and over again is that building more adus is not going to increase really address affordability as the cost of construction and materials hardly makes cap sense when we can earn more income on savings acct at the bank (blackrock for instance).

further i have two properties where an adu would provide greenspace but i am a resident of arizona and there will not build additional units as i am old and actuarially will die in less than 4 years if i did live on property.

the key is not relying on neighbors to report illegal air b and bs.

im a landlord with ability to utilize these changes but as far as i know lenders discount value of adu if for resale purposes

i have a window installer who was going to build adu but recognize if he sold property to the multiple wall street buyers which we all detest the value of adu would be non existent unless a multigenerational buyer existed .

i moved to salt salt lake as people at my income level could afford to buy a house in salt lake city (let san francisco) so i am very emphatetic and try never to raise rent on my units unless taxes or other expenses go up.

this is a nation wide problem and was brought up at the arizona legislature but failed to reduce the number of properties the big boys could purchase in each city.

good for planning for ensuring there is parking required for adus

i will look at the flag lot development idea but new construction is tough for an 80 yr old but will consider it as my neighbors want to rezone to multiple units and i hold up the development.

bless the planning department for attempting to keep families here in salt lake unfortunately the legislature has defunded public schools which is a far more serious problem to society.

thank you so much for your response and also for attempting to make housing more affordable affordable.
cazrolwicks

On Monday, March 30, 2026 at 08:47:08 AM MST, Hulka, Andrew <andy.hulka@slc.gov> wrote:

Thank you for reaching out with questions about Expanding Housing Options! I'm happy to provide some additional information about the proposal.

- Setbacks
 - Some setbacks are proposed to change, depending on the zoning district. You can find more information about these changes on the info sheets for each zone: [R-1](#), [R-2](#), or [SR-1/A](#).
 - If you would like to check a specific address, please let me know and I can help review any potential changes that might impact your property.
- Flag Lot Changes
 - The full version of the proposed changes to flag lots can be found [here](#).
 - This is the full version of the proposed changes, with proposed language to be deleted in red with strikethroughs and new language to be added with green underlines. This can sometimes be difficult to interpret, so please let us know if you have any questions.
- Owner Occupancy for ADUs
 - No changes to the ADU ordinance are being considered with this proposal, so the rules for ADU occupancy will remain the same.
 - It's important to note that this proposal would allow new buildings, called [Small Lot Dwellings](#), to be built in single- and two-family zones. Similar to ADUs, the Small Lot Dwellings could be built behind existing homes, but they would have different rules to follow for things like setbacks, size, and owner occupancy. Currently, the Small Lot Dwellings would not have an owner occupancy requirement. If you would like to share a comment about owner occupancy for Small Lot Dwellings, please share your written comments by email or leave a comment online by clicking "Learn More & Engage" on the project page.

If you have more specific questions, please feel free to reach out to me directly or send an email to housingoptions@slc.gov. You can also leave written comments about each section of the proposal by clicking the "Learn More & Engage" button on the [project website](#).

Thank you,



ANDY HULKA, AICP | (He/Him)
Senior Planner
PLANNING DIVISION | SALT LAKE CITY CORPORATION
Office: (801) 535-6608
Email: andy.hulka@slc.gov
WWW.SLC.GOV

Disclaimer: The Planning Division strives to give the best customer service possible and to respond to questions as accurately as possible based upon the information provided. However, answers given at the counter and/or prior to application are not binding and they are not a substitute for formal Final Action, which may only occur in response to a complete application to the Planning Division. Those relying on verbal input or preliminary written feedback do so at their own risk and do not vest any property with development rights.

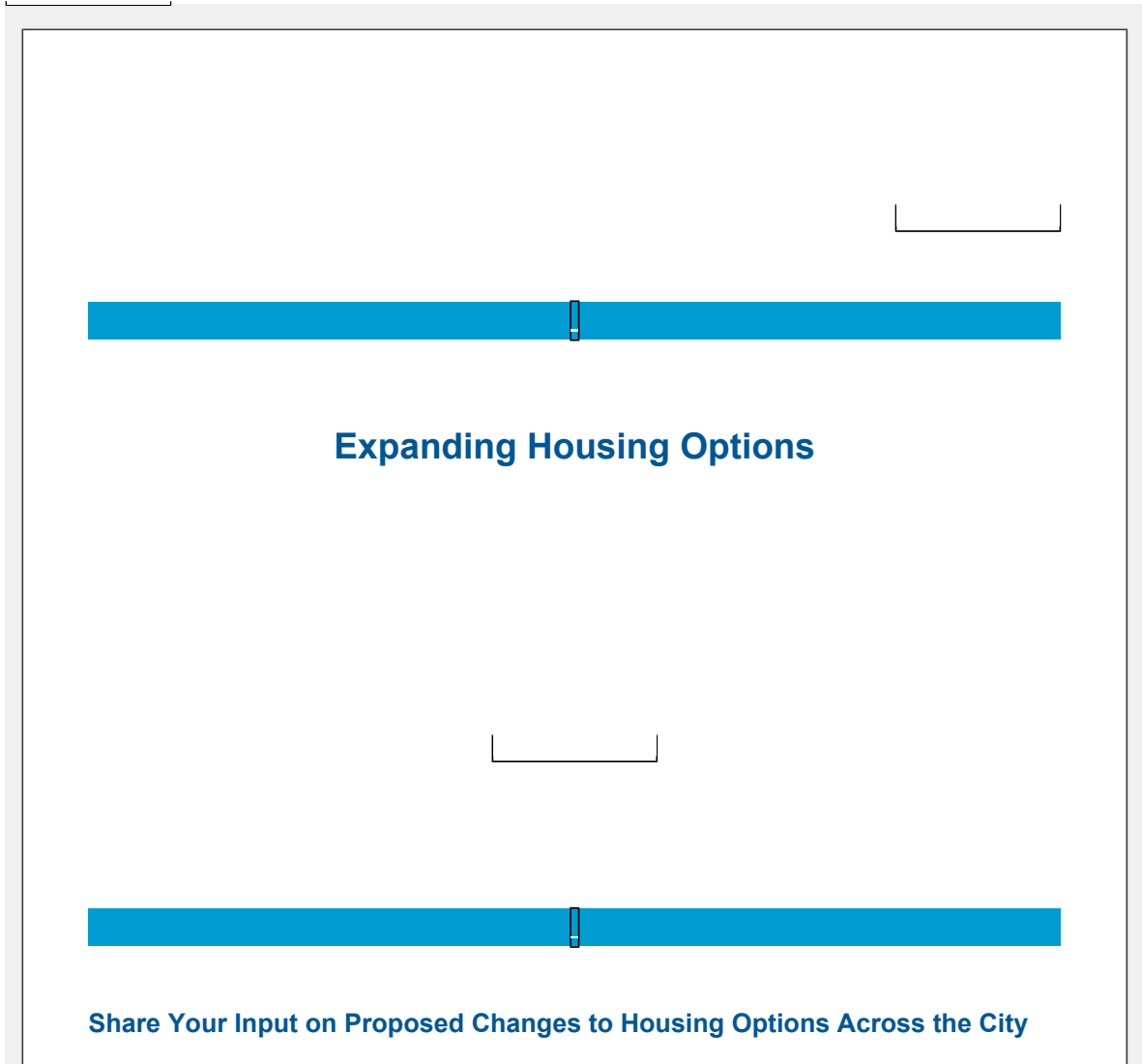
From: ixizb@aol.com <ixizb@aol.com>

Sent: Sunday, March 29, 2026 3:22 PM
To: Zoning <zoning@slcgov.com>
Subject: (EXTERNAL) Re: SLC Planning Division - Expanding Housing Options

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there are no details about changes in set backs flag lot changes and whether or not a property must be still be owner occupied i an adu is built. please clarify i am out of state and have medical appt for last meeting for input please advise how i may comment in writitng by email

On Tuesday, March 24, 2026 at 12:44:18 PM MST, Salt Lake City Planning Division <planningdivision@slcgov.ccsend.com> wrote:



Expanding Housing Options

Share Your Input on Proposed Changes to Housing Options Across the City

The Salt Lake City Planning Division is reviewing a proposal called **Expanding Housing Options**. **The proposal would change zoning rules to give property owners in lower-density neighborhoods more options for how they use their property.** The changes would make it possible to build more types of housing, like smaller homes and townhomes, while still preserving the character, scale, and unique qualities of each neighborhood.

Please join us at the following events to share your feedback about the proposed changes to encourage housing options across the city!

Thursday, March 25, 2026

District 5 Town Hall with Council member Carlsen
6:00 PM – 7:30 PM
Horizonte Instructional Learning Center
1234 S Main Street

Tuesday, March 31, 2026

Public Open House (Central Neighborhoods)
6:00 PM – 7:30 PM
Salt Lake City Main Library
210 E 400 S

Monday, April 13, 2025

Public Open House (Eastside Neighborhoods)
6:30 PM – 8:00 PM
The Neighborhood Hive
2065 E 2100 S

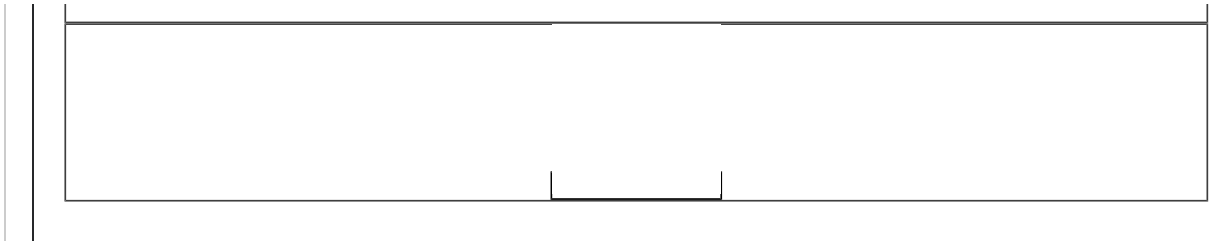
[Learn more about the project](#)

Salt Lake City | Planning Division
451 South State Street - Room 406
Salt Lake City, UT 84111
PO Box 145480

(801) 535-7700 | zoning@slc.gov
slc.gov/planning

Salt Lake City Planning Division | 451 S State Street, Room 406 | Salt Lake City, UT 84114 US

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Buckley, Benjamin

From: Jim Jenkin [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2026 4:20 PM
To: Planning Public Comments
Cc: Norris, Nick; Olivia Erickson
Subject: (EXTERNAL) Expanding Housing Options:

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Expanding Housing Options comments, Jim Jenkin

Having been unable, in two attempts, to submit comments through the online Project, I submit the following by email:

Specific concerns:

- 1.
- 2.
3. Set-back incompatible with development patterns will be allowed by special consideration to new multiple structures.
- 4.
- 5.

- 2.
- 3.
4. The method for establishing front set-back is too arbitrary to identify the development pattern. Block face average may be contentious,
5. but one adjoining property is arbitrary and meaningless.
- 6.

- 3.
- 4.
5. The proposal is incompatible with Historic Districts in that it will disrupt the established character and development pattern of neighborhoods,
6. primarily by set-back aberrations.
- 7.

- 4.
- 5.
6. Missing-middle (family) housing will not be supplied by small structures, and larger structures will be prohibitively expensive due to
7. construction and land costs.

8.

5.

6.

7. Parking issues will arise in built-out residential areas. In my experience reduced lot size and town home/minimal lot line construction

8. only works where off-street parking is available.

9.

Basic flaws:

The proposal bypasses established process:

Effecting change in multiple in Zones should be handled on a zone by zone basis, as is the established process. The development pattern has been historically protected and citizens expect continuity in this practice. In particular, creating new permitted multi-family housing types in a single-family zone and then giving them preferential set-back inconsistent with the zone and the development pattern requires full and specific review.

The proposal is unjust:

Allowing preferential set-back for certain types of new construction is unjust. The rules should be the same for all residents of a Zone.

The proposal is too complex:

1.

2.

3. Trying to solve a complex civic/sociological issue with land use tools has not worked: land and construction costs are not going away

4. until environmental factors make development less attractive.

5.

6.

7.

8. The proposal has nuanced neighborhood / community/ Zone level complexities which are not being discussed in the too-broad format.

9.

Respectfully submitted,
27 April 2026

Jim Jenkin

██████████
Salt Lake City Utah

From: [REDACTED]
To: [housingoptions](#)
Subject: (EXTERNAL) Housing "Menu"
Date: Friday, April 10, 2026 11:17:19 AM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello! I had a really good conversation with a couple of planners who presented the new "Expanding Housing Options" plan for small lots across the city at Erika Carlson's D5 town hall recently. We discussed implementing something like the pre-approved housing designs that Fayetteville AR is trialing here in Salt Lake. I think it would go with the small lot zoning like peas and carrots.

As I mentioned, I first heard of the idea in relation to Fayetteville, AR. The program is only in a pilot phase in a limited area, which may be a way we could expand upon it since the small lot rezone aims at standardization on appropriate lot sizes across all the residential zones. Just to reiterate, the idea is to have a portfolio of housing designs that:

- are available for download by anyone
- have complete plans that already meet code and are drawn by local architects
- have been reviewed and approved by any required authorities
- encompass a variety of local housing types (ie: townhouses, single family, duplexes, etc)
- blend in with the local styles

Here's the webpage for the program from the city of Fayetteville: <https://www.fayetteville-ar.gov/4294/Permit-Ready-Building-Design-Program>

I think you certainly see how this sort of program would be very helpful for streamlining building the "missing middle" housing stock we really need. I think it could also help foster a healthy business ecosystem of smaller developers that could help democratize our housing supply. Further, we could provide a stepping stone for young architects interested in contributing to the look and feel of the city. Please let me know if there are any questions you have that I can help run down. I'd love to help make something like this a reality here in Salt Lake in any way I can. Thank you!

Matt Sadauckas

Buckley, Benjamin

From: Michelle Howard [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2026 2:44 PM
To: housingoptions
Subject: (EXTERNAL) Expanding Housing Options timeline?

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Dear City Council,

As an architect, and as a parent of young adult children who are especially affected by the high cost and limited availability of housing in our community, I am encouraged by the opportunities presented through the “Expanding Housing Options” proposal.

I would appreciate any update you can share regarding the current status of the proposal, as well as the anticipated timeline for implementation if it is approved.

Thank you for your time and for your efforts to address housing needs in our community.

Sincerely,
Michelle

Michelle Howard, AIA
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [housingoptions](#)
Cc: [Buckley, Benjamin](#)
Subject: RE: (EXTERNAL) Comments on Proposed Expanding Housing Options
Date: Sunday, April 19, 2026 2:48:50 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

You don't often get email from [REDACTED] [Learn why this is important](#)

Below are additional comments to the **Expanding Housing Options Proposal** I offered in an April 15 email to housingoptions@slc.gov. Items 5 and 6 contain edits to items 11 and 12 from the April 15 email; these comments are completely restated for context.

I have the following comments on how the April 13 (and other) Expanding Housing Options information sessions have been structured and how the Planning Division staff arrived at their conclusions:

1. The information sessions I've attended to date have presented a central planning approach to addressing an "unprecedented" issue. And while the top-down approach is at the forefront of the presentation, no voice has been given to historical perspectives on citizen private property rights - that our elected officials are oathbound to defend - and markets that have been shown ultimately to be self-correcting. 2008 – 2012 is a recent example of such a market correction.

The forums have discouraged open Q&A in favor of one-on-one Q&A following the presentation. That said, during the April 13 event, at the insistence of some attendees, an open, but limited, Q&A did ensue. It took the intervention of Council member Young to "take the stage" and get the program back on the intended (one-on-one Q&A) track. Such an approach in a public forum stifles essential political discourse.

2. As I understand it, the Expanding Housing Options effort came about through a March 4, 2025 Legislative Action in which the City Council tasked the Planning Division staff to study and make recommendations to ***eliminate barriers to home ownership and increase home ownership opportunities for family-sized housing in Salt Lake City***. In acting on the Legislative Action, a more representative approach, it seems, would be to task competing entities, with different philosophies, and of different disciplines, to study and make recommendations.

3. Tasking an internal city department, in this case, Planning, would seem a good use of in-house resource and expertise. My concern, though, is that if one looks at similar proposals around the United States (for example, see this Denver link: https://www.denvergov.org/files/assets/public/v/1/community-planning-and-development/documents/zoning/text-amendments/unlocking-housing-choices/uhc_pub_mtgs_spring2026_slide_presentation.pdf), the proposals look very much the same. I'm guessing this is because the city planning departments attend the same national conferences where they are exposed to the same "solutions". It seems the country, following the lead of city planning departments, and in some cases, state legislatures (TX, AZ, CA, others) is, with absence of critical thought, heading in the same top-down, one-size-fits-all direction to "fix the problem".

Based on language in the 10th amendment to the United States Constitution, our country is formed in the federalist structure where co-sovereign state (and local) governments ideally act as “experimental laboratories” allowing controlled testing of new ideas before broader implementation. Given this exceptional legacy, I question why Salt Lake City, and perhaps Utah, are choosing to follow the rest of the country off the same cliff.

4. During the April 13 session the Planning Division staff presenter stated more than once his “hope” that the proposed changes would achieve the city goals (of ownership, affordability, walkability, water conservation). Prior to making truly unprecedented changes to the SLC zoning ordinance affecting 77% of all residentially zoned land that will irreversibly alter the city fabric, there must be certainty, not hope the city goals will be achieved. Perhaps the stated goals are not achievable under any proposal. This undertaking calls for a degree of humility, not qualified hubris.
5. Referencing an exchange between the City Council and the Planning Division staff during the February 17 City Council working session, the importance of ensuring the citizens are aware of the proposed changes was discussed. In reply, the Planning Division staff offered that social media, email and other notifications had been initiated, but that a city-wide mailer had not been undertaken due to lack of funding.

Citizens must be notified through a multi-media undertaking, i.e. – social media, email, USPS (mail), local publications, broadcast news, etc.

After such a multi-media effort, additional information sessions should be scheduled with equal time allotted for historical perspectives on property rights and markets. These presentations should be followed by (time) limited public comment / Q&A.

6. Also referencing an exchange between the City Council and the Planning Division staff during the February 17 City Council working session, Councilman Alejandro Puy asked that the Planning Division staff provide a count of how many individuals attended the information sessions and report back to the City Council. This information should be in the public record. Likely, Councilman Puy had the same Concern about making sure the citizens are informed.

The Expanding Housing Options proposal and in particular the Small Lot Development element is a significant proffer. The outreach to the citizens as measured in the information session attendance (and I am guessing by the quantity of comments submitted through the city web portal <https://shape.slcc.gov/en/projects/housing-options>) has been anemic. This issue requires more:

- Public input
- Deliberation
- Diversity of proposed solutions, and
- Open public debate

Best regards,

Peter Wetzel


[REDACTED]

From: Buckley, Benjamin <Benjamin.Buckley@slc.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2026 9:55 AM
To: [REDACTED]housingoptions <housingoptions@slc.gov>
Subject: RE: (EXTERNAL) Comments on Proposed Expanding Housing Options

Peter,

Thank you for your comments. Staff will consider all public comments received and will be included in the staff report and public record.

Best,



BEN BUCKLEY | (He/Him/His)
Principal Planner
PLANNING DIVISION | SALT LAKE CITY CORPORATION
Office: 801-535-7142
Email: benjamin.buckley@slc.gov
WWW.SLC.GOV www.slc.gov/planning

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Disclaimer: The Planning Division strives to give the best customer service possible and to respond to questions as accurately as possible based upon the information provided. However, answers given at the counter and/or prior to application are not binding and they are not a substitute for formal Final Action, which may only occur in response to a complete application to the Planning Division. Those relying on verbal input or preliminary written feedback do so at their own risk and do not vest any property with development rights.

From: Peter Wetzel [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2026 9:18 AM
To: housingoptions <housingoptions@slc.gov>
Subject: (EXTERNAL) Comments on Proposed Expanding Housing Options

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I recently read in Building Salt Lake and other publications about the Salt Lake City **Expanding Housing Options Proposal**. Reading these articles prompted me to:

1. Visit the SLC Planning Division website on the subject and study the information offered.
2. View the video of the February 17, 2026, City Council Working Session in which the Planning Division made a presentation on the proposed ordinance modification.
3. Attend a Planning Division information session Thursday, March 12 at the Sorenson Unity Center where I was able to ask SLC Planning Manager John Anderson questions. I also attended Planning Division Information sessions March 25 and April 13.

The proposal includes multiple elements, some worthy of consideration. The **Small Lot Development** element, however, I oppose. My initial (and still developing) reasons are as follows:

1. Increased density and loads on infrastructure capacity will have unknown and unstudied consequences to storm, sanitary, water, electrical, natural gas, and telecommunications systems.
2. With the potential for a property to grow from one household to three or four households, property values will drop, as the tranquility attribute of the neighborhood will be diminished. An academic argument is made for the loss of property value, or "Welfare Loss" by Joseph Gyourko and Sean E. McCulloch in their 2024 paper ["The Distaste for Housing Density," NBER Working Paper.](#)
3. Once developers determine the "formula" for profiting from the ordinance, tear downs will become the norm and despite the ordinance provision that provides a bonus dwelling for retaining the existing dwelling, construction of the allowed higher-density structures will follow.
4. The new structures will have a natural inclination to become rentals, and since non-owners lack a long view (for the neighborhood), the neighborhood will lose its existing character and property values will decline further as documented by Gyourko and McCulloch in the above referenced report.
5. Despite the one off-street parking place per dwelling requirement, street parking, already a problem, will increase as will infractions against SLC Municipal (street parking) codes.
6. SLC currently has a problem with nuisance properties (discussed during the February 17 City Council meeting). This proposal will expand that problem with infractions against SLC Municipal codes (noise, outdoor storage, improper use, etc).
7. Despite the city literature stating that the **character and unique qualities of each neighborhood will be preserved**, changes that will increase density and building height, reduce front yard setbacks, without regulating (aesthetic) design and material selections (which would be a difficult undertaking), the construction of a single triplex on a block where a 70 to 100 year old existing home once stood will irreversibly compromise the character and unique qualities of a block. Allowed to be implemented city-wide, it will leave the city's fabric incongruous and aesthetically marred.
8. Although the city staff report cites that a similar approach (constructing smaller homes) in Durham, NC and Portland, OR yielded a 40% lower purchase price than that of larger homes (obviously), the staff reports no statistics on the long term effects (existing home values, parking, civil code infractions, crime, or the difficult to measure element of quality of life) of this approach on the established neighborhoods in which it was implemented.
9. There are 703 R-1-7000 properties which represents 30% of the overall affected properties.

Because the R-1-7000 square footage maximizes the number of Small Lot Dwellings allowed to be built, i.e. - 1 dwelling per 2,000 sf, the R-1-7000 properties, disproportionately to the other zoning classifications will be identified by developers as optimum for redevelopment (with triplexes).

10. Why is Salt Lake City pursuing a central planning solution for a perceived problem that will ultimately be corrected by market forces? See the following:

a. **SLC apartment vacancy rates**

- i. 2021 – 2%
- ii. Current – 7-8%
- iii. Context
 1. Low (rate) - < 3%
 2. Optimum (rate) – 5–8%

b. **Salt Lake Housing Market Has Cooled Considerably**

- SLC has fallen from top 5 (of 127 markets) in 2019 and 2020 to 35 in 2022 and 88 in 2026

Ref: Deseret News, April 10, 2026 (Source: Construction Coverage – a Construction Industry Research entity, 1111 Sixth Ave, San Diego, CA 92101)

11. Referencing an exchange between the City Council and the Planning Division staff during the February 17 City Council working session, the importance of ensuring the citizens are aware of the proposed changes was discussed. In reply, the Planning Division staff offered that social media, email and other notifications had been initiated, but that a city-wide mailer had not been undertaken due to lack of funding.

I suggest the City Council find the funding for such a mailer. In the interest of a balanced message, I also suggest that individuals with views on the proposal different from the Planning Division be allowed to provide input on the mailer content.

After the mailer has been distributed, additional information sessions should be scheduled with equal time allotted for historical perspectives on property rights and markets. These presentations should be followed by (time) limited public comment / Q&A.

The information sessions to date have presented one perspective and discouraged open Q&A in favor of one-on-one Q&A following the presentation. Such an approach stifles essential political discourse.

12. Also referencing an exchange between the City Council and the Planning Division staff during the February 17 City Council working session, Councilman Alejandro Puy asked that the Planning Division staff provide a count of how many individuals attended the information sessions and report back to the City Council. This information should be in the public record.

In closing, I offer the following for the SLC Planning Division and City Council to consider:

When property is purchased by citizens, the decision to do so is based partly on what the citizen expects the neighborhood to be like for years to come. Zoning rules have traditionally provided some predictability about what could be built nearby. Should the **Small Lot Development** ordinance pass, the city fabric will be irreversibly changed – not for the better. Affected property owners with means will have the luxury to sell their property at a loss and relocate where their neighborhood tranquility will be restored. Those without means will be trapped.

Best regards,

Peter Wetzel



From: [REDACTED]
To: [housingoptions](#)
Subject: (EXTERNAL) Suggestions For Code Changes
Date: Monday, March 9, 2026 7:14:26 PM
Attachments: [Work Session Transmittal \(revised\).pdf](#)

Caution: This is an external email. Please be cautious when clicking links or opening attachments.

My name is Erik Sansom and I'm a builder located here in Salt Lake City. I've written a document that is attached to this email with some suggestions for code changes that would greatly benefit the buildability of our city. I've met with several staff members, city council members and even the mayor's office to see some of these changes implemented. I hope that you consider some of these options and take the time to read through them. I'm extremely open to answering questions and having an open dialogue. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns at [REDACTED] or my email at [REDACTED]. Andy I'm also more than willing to come in and have an in person meeting at any time.

Erik Sansom

Work Session Transmittal

1. R-1 Amendments

-Consolidating Into 1 Section

I think the idea of consolidation of the current code makes a lot of sense. It will be easier to navigate for builders and home owners alike and also create a more uniform approach to building standards. While consolidation is a great plan, a general overhaul of the existing code is needed in order to provide more flexibility with building and better cohesion between exercising property rights and government over reach.

-Front Setback Averaging

The averaging rule of front yard setbacks is and has been a significant issue. Much of our neighborhoods are very old and vary in setback lengths greatly. Some being very close and others being towards the rear of lots causing a huge problem of skewing an average in a single block face. Which then reduces the usability of a lot if a homeowner is required to significantly move the front wall of their home rearward if some of the properties on the block face have huge differences in setbacks. I think the idea of setting a standard rather than an average eliminates this disparity and also allows for a uniform use case from a building perspective. Also allowing the homeowner/builder to match an existing abutting property will keep the block face in a similar aesthetic from the curb viewing perspective while also following the letter of the law. As I do agree with a standard over an average I would argue that a ten foot set back from the property line would be more appropriate due to the fact that most residential properties in salt lake do not have a property line that coincides with the side walk and or gutter. Most property lines fall 5 feet within this line which when coupled with a 20' setback would make the visual appearance of the front yard be at 25'. If the standard was changed to 10' from the property line and or 15' from the sidewalk or gutter the visual representation of a front yard would more closely match what is existing in the majority of our neighborhoods today.

-Building Height Averaging

Again setting an average vs a standard causes undo hardship for homeowners/builders because certain properties may skew an average due to them being grandfathered into the current code as a legal non complying lot. Setting a standard maximum height across the R-1 codes is the most logical and practical route to an amendment.

-Increasing Building Height and Eliminating Wall Height

I agree that the maximum building height should be addressed. The current 28' standard barely allows for a short 2 story structure to be built. In order to accommodate the 28' standard some things would have to be forgone in height to meet that standard. Such as ceiling heights or attic space. If the height was increased to 33' all forms of a 2 story home

would be accommodated and coincide with new building trends. I have provided a chart below to illustrate why 33' would accommodate any and all 2 story pitched roof structures and be a logical choice.

Pitched Roof Heights

	1 Story 8' Ceiling Height	2 Story 8' Ceiling Heights	1 Story 10' Ceiling Height	2 Story 10' Ceiling Heights
Foundation Above Grade	6"	6"	6"	6"
1st Floor System	13 1/2"	13 1/2"	13 1/2"	13 1/2"
1st Floor Ceiling Height	8'	8'	10'	10'
2nd Floor System	N/A	1'	N/A	1'
2nd Story Ceiling Height	N/A	8'	N/A	10'
Rafter Tie System	6"	6"	6"	6"
Attic Space	7'	7'	7'	7'
Collar Ties and Roof Peak	3'	3'	3'	3'
Total Height	20' 1 1/2"	29' 1 1/2"	22' 1 1/2"	32' 1 1/2"

Increasing the maximum pitched roof height to 33' would also put us in the same realm as neighboring municipalities and allow our residents to enjoy the same property rights as others in the valley. Along with increasing the maximum pitched roof height to 33' I agree with the transmittal notes that a maximum wall height standard should be eliminated from the code. If a height standard is set that will dictate what a wall height can or will be. There is no need to dictate that to a homeowner. Along the lines of roof heights I believe the maximum height standard for a flat roof structure should also be changed to accommodate more structures. If the standard for a flat roof structure was changed to 24' 6" that would allow for any 2 story flat roof structure to be built. The chart below displays why 24' 6" would accommodate any new 2 story structure.

Flat Roof Heights

	1 Story 8' Ceiling Height	2 Story 8' Ceiling Heights	1 Story 10' Ceiling Height	2 Story 10' Ceiling Heights
Foundation Above Grade	6"	6"	6"	6"
1st Floor System	13 1/2"	13 1/2"	13 1/2"	13 1/2"
1st Floor Ceiling Height	8'	8'	10'	10'
2nd Floor System	N/A	1'	N/A	1'
2nd Story Ceiling Height	N/A	8'	N/A	10'
Flat Roof System	18"	18"	18"	18"
Total Height	11' 1 1/2"	20' 1 1/2"	13' 1 1/2"	24' 1 1/2"

To address the suggested chart presented on the transmittal I think a few changes should be made.

	R-1/12,000	R-1/7,000	R-1/5,000
Building height - Pitched roof	30 feet		
Building height - Flat roof	24 feet		
Front yard	20 feet or equal to one abutting front yard		
Corner side yard	20 feet	10 feet	
Interior side - corner lot	6 feet		
Interior side yard 1	6 feet		
Interior side yard 2	10 feet		
Rear yard	25 feet	20 feet	
Building coverage	35%	40%	
Maximum lot size	18,000 square feet	10,500 square feet	7,500 square feet

Caption

Aside from the already addressed points of pitched and flat roof heights and front yard setbacks. Side yard and rear yard setbacks should follow the same trend of leniency especially when pertaining to the R-1/5,000 district. An increase of any amount as illustrated on the above chart would be absolutely devastating to the usability and ease of building structures on smaller lots. Especially lots with frontages less than the current minimum of 50'. A 16' loss of usable space on these smaller lots some with only 25' of frontage would render them useless leaving only 9' of width to build on. These legal non complying lots in the R-1/5,000 district with frontages less than 50' either need to be addressed separately with a new section of code (which I have written and proposed) or the amendments to the current R-1/5,000 district need to reflect enough leniency to accommodate new buildings on these very tiny lots. The governing bodies over building cannot impose new laws or ordinance's that take away a citizens right to enjoy their property or take away from an existing structure that has been "grandfathered" in. The

dissenting argument will be “just remodel the existing house” which some may find to be a viable option but the code should not prevent a person from building a new structure to enjoy all of the modern amenities and comforts afforded to a new construction home. With this in mind I would suggest that for side yard setbacks in the R-1/5,000 district for interior lots without an existing structure the minimum side yard setback on both sides should be 4’. This is in an effort to allow the person with for example a 25’ wide lot to have 17’ of buildable width rather than 9’. If the existing legal non complying lot has an existing structure the standard should be to retain the existing setbacks if less than the new standard of 4’ on both sides. As for corner side yard setbacks the standard should be 6’ from the side walk or gutter or 4’ from the property line whichever is greater also maintaining the 4’ standard on the interior side of a corner lot. These standards of side yard setbacks in the R-1/5,000 district would allow owners of lots with varying widths to maximize the usability of their space and also not cause them to diminish the size of their current home if they are out of compliance with current standards. As for the R-1/7,000 and 12,000 I think it would be practical to scale respectively. 7,000 side yard setbacks scaling up to 4’ on one side and 10’ on the other and 12,000 scaling to 6’ on one side and 10’ on the other. Both measurements being the same for corner lots with the larger measurement being on the outside setback. Continuing with setbacks the rear yard setback for all districts should be uniform and be equal to the front yard setback for principle structures. With my before mentioned measurements that would be 10’ from the property line. For accessory buildings this setback would follow the provisions in section 21A.40.050 of the code for rear yard and property line setbacks. As for the maximum building coverage of a lot I would suggest to scale the allowable coverage in a descending pattern with R-1/5,000 being the largest at 60% surface coverage of all principal and accessory buildings. This again is in an effort to address the concerns of a large number of non complying under sized lots. This R-1/5,000 district contains the vast majority of lots at almost 17,000 and would greatly increase the buildable potential of the vast majority of R-1 lots. The R-1/7,000 would decrease to 55% surface coverage of all principal and accessory buildings. With the R— 1/12,000 staying the same at 55% surface coverage of all principal and accessory buildings. To sum up I created the below chart to reference the suggested changes I have made for consideration.

||

Table 1

	R-1/5,000	R-1/7,000	R-1/12,000
Building Height Pitched Roof	33 Feet		
Building Height Flat Roof	24' 6"		
Front Yard Setback	The minimum depth of the front yard for all principal buildings shall be equal to or greater than fifteen feet (15') from the adjacent sidewalk or ten feet (10') from the property line, whichever is greater. Where there are existing buildings within the block face the setback can be equal to one of the abutting front yard setbacks on the block face.		
Rear Yard Setback	The minimum depth of the rear yard for all principal buildings shall be equal to or greater than fifteen feet (15') from the property line. Where there are existing buildings within the block face the setback can be equal to one of the abutting rear yard setbacks on the block face.		
Interior Side Yard 1 Setback	4'	4'	6'
Interior Side Yard 2 Setback	4'	10'	10'
Corner Side Yard Setback	Six feet (6') from adjacent sidewalk or gutter or four feet (4') from property line, whichever is greater.	10'	10'
Interior Corner Side Yard Setback	4'	4'	6'
Maximum Building Coverage	60%	55%	55%
Maximum Lot Size	7,000 Square Feet	12,000 Square Feet	18,000 Square Feet

2. Reducing Flag Lot Restrictions

-Permitted Use & Reduced Lot Size

Flag lots could be a good practical use for increasing density in the R-1 districts and lessening some of the barriers to create them would be beneficial. The suggested change from a conditional use to permitted use will reduce the planning commissions work load and give more control back to the property owners to exercise their rights. Which I believe will reduce some frustrations with having to work with the city in order to build residential properties. Also reducing the minimum lot size to coincide with the minimum lot size of that district makes a lot of sense. Again reducing barriers to property use. With this required lot size amendment the setbacks for the new flag lot should also coincide with the lot setbacks for every lot within that district. Doing this will create an equal opportunity to build a structure with the same minimum square

footage as any other lot within the district. Included in the setback changes, another beneficial amendment would be to change from requiring a 4' landscaped strip along both side property lines from the front to rear lot lines to only requiring a partition fence at the maximum allowable height of the pertaining district. This would allow a flag lot access to 4' of usable width on a presumably diminished lot size due to the fact that a side yard setback would start at the property line and not 4' inside the property line. Another change that could be beneficial and facilitate the creation of more flag lots would be to reduce the frontage size required for access to the flag lot from 24' to 16'. Along with this also only requiring one side of the hardscape driveway to be lined with a maintained 4' landscape strip. Specifically the side abutting the existing lot used to create the flag lot. Which would facilitate a 12' driveway with a 4' landscaped strip. With the reduction of width to the driveway I believe that a provision needs to be added to the flag lot section of code that requires enough hardscape driveway space in front of the home for an average mid size 4 door sedan (14' in length) to perform a 3 point turn. Using this car length that would require a hardscape area of 26' by 26' or a total square footage of 676 square feet. The 26' dimension derives from the 12' of hardscaped driveway plus a minimum 14' staging area for the car equalling 26' thus allowing for a 3 point turn. Another consideration with revamping the flag lot section of code is within what districts should flag lots be allowed. I would propose that flag lot allowance pertain exclusively to the R-1/7,000 and R-1/12,000 districts. The reason being that if for example an R-1/7,000 lot that has a minimum lot requirement of 7,000 square feet decided to create a flag lot and splits the lot evenly front to back each lot would now only have 3,500 square feet of lot space which would then require each lot to be beholden to the R-1/5,000 districts rules. This is beneficial for a flag lot if the more lenient set back codes and lot coverages proposed above were adopted. If we attempted to allow flag lots in the R-1/5,000 district their just simply would not be enough space to accommodate all of the necessary proposed requirements to create a flag lot. Which in turn would diminish the curb appeal of the neighborhood and create an overcrowded feeling. I believe that we can increase density without having to sacrifice the appeal of living in a neighborhood if executed correctly. Hence why I believe an accommodation for flag lots should be exclusive to the R-1/7,000 and R-1/12,000 districts.

3. Expanding Housing Options

-Regulating Lot & Building Size

In regards to creating a new land use category to allow small lot dwellings I believe that the R-1/5,000 standards should be all encompassing and allow for this kind of use case without having to create an entirely new section of code and or choose between the two. With the above suggested amendments to setbacks, maximum height restrictions and lot coverage this is in an attempt to allow for the complete diversification of

all districts within the R-1 zoning. Especially when it pertains to allowable lot coverage. For example an increase to 60% lot coverage within the R-1/5,000 district would allow for 3,000 square feet of usable space. Which would provide a myriad of options when it comes to building multi unit dwellings whether that's row housing, split level apartment with an ADU, duplex or even a fourplex. With allowing this kind of flexibility within each district it eliminates the need for providing additional sets of code and streamlines the process not only for a homeowner/builder but for the planning department as well. I believe that all the goals of the city can be met with an efficient and all encompassing R-1 code section while also maintaining the spirit of our neighborhoods. Without the downside of allowing the neighborhoods to be cut up into micro lots. To address the concern of what I label as micro lots I think allowing this sort of lot with as little as 2,000 square feet, would benefit the investor type the most and not current or future residents. As an example one could purchase a 5,000 square foot lot for \$500,000 and using the currently proposed numbers could cut the lot in half creating two 2,500 square foot lots. Then place a split level apartment with 2 bed 2 bath in each unit on both lots creating four 2 bed 2 bath apartments. Which then would set the value of each new "micro lot" around \$350,000 dollars netting an investor \$200,000 in equity and also roughly \$5,500 (after expenses) in monthly income if the property is retained. This would be detrimental to our neighborhoods because it removes the essence of what a neighborhood is and can become. The city and community councils have aired concerns about diminishing school attendance and the need to attract more families to our communities. Heavy infill of small apartments has the exact opposite effect of what the city claims to want to address. Small unit apartment and or houses attract a specific demographic to these living situations. Examples are college aged roommate situations, middle aged single career men and women, newly married couples with maybe 1 small child, older retired couples and anyone looking for a low maintenance lifestyle. This demographic does not contain families of 4-8 with school aged children. The demographic of small to large families are looking for things like bedrooms for all their kids, safe parks and amenities within walking distance, yards to have family activities in with friends and family, quiet uncrowded streets and schools that provide a safe and effective learning environment. This is why we're seeing a massive influx of families to places like Herriman, Eagle Mountain, Saratoga Springs and Mapleton. These municipalities are offering precisely what families with children are looking for. They're looking for homes with a comfortable amount of space and family friendly amenities, not units. If the city council decides to allow this kind of creation of "micro lots" we will destroy what's left of our communities especially on the westside and it will be done at the will of greedy investors who have been enabled to cut up as much as they can get their hands on for as much profit as possible with no care as to how it affects the long time residents

of these neighborhoods. Now to also address the other side of the coin. I do believe that there can be a place within our communities to allow for some additional units and infill with the right kind of regulations in place. In order to address this I would suggest a couple codes that would allow for this sort of smaller infill and also help retain the spirit of the neighborhood and create more opportunities for families to want to come to salt lake. One way to accomplish this would be to make the minimum lot size of the R-1/5,000 district be 3,500 square feet with a minimum frontage of 35'. In doing this it would allow lots within the R-1/7,000 and 12,000 district to be split up and accommodate a greater amount of infill and still retain the spirit of the neighborhood. The look and feel of the neighborhoods would still remain the same because many of the older lots currently are under minimum lots requirements, almost 5,000 in the R-1/5,000 district alone. If we were to allow 3,500 square foot lots with a frontage of 35' this would create the infill the city desires and keep the feel of our neighborhoods that the residents want, being a solid compromise in my opinion. This can only be practical if a more lenient approach to building requirements like the ones suggested above are adopted into the new consolidated R-1 code section. With this suggestion of minimum lot size and frontage addressed in the R-1/5,000 district the same should be addressed in the 7,000 and 12,000 districts as well. For new lots being created in these districts the minimum square footage for R-1/7,000 should be 7,001 with a minimum frontage of 70' and 12,001 and 105' for R-1/12,000. These dimensions would allow for minimum R-1/7,000 lot to be split into two minimum R-1/5,000 lots and an R-1/12,000 lot to be split into 3 R-1/5,000 lots or 2 R-1/7,000 lots depending on size and frontage. With making these changes salt lake city could potentially create an additional 18,529 lots without adding a single square foot of land and create a potential 82,948 units all while retaining our neighborhood by not cutting up any lots that reside within the current R-1/5,000 district. Reducing the minimum lot size of the R-1/5,000 district also brings a potential 4,450 lots into compliance which is something the city has expressed a desire to do. With these stats and suggested amendments I believe that the city can accomplish their goal of addressing the missing middle with infill and keep the residents desires satisfied with keeping their neighborhoods livable for families. Also to address infill I think we should put a cap on the number of units allowed in each district. If we were to set the square footage of each unit to be between 900 and 1,000 square feet that would allow 3 units on an R-1/5,000 lot, 5 units on an R-1/7,000 lot and 7 units on an R-1/12,000 lot considering the minimum lot square footage as the base number. Units should not be differentiated by type whether attached or detached the number can not exceed the established limit or lot coverage. To consolidate these amendments I've created a chart below to illustrate how these amendments might be portrayed in the code.

Table 2

	R-1/5,000	R-1/7,000	R-1/12,000
Building Height Pitched Roof	33 Feet		
Building Height Flat Roof	24' 6"		
Front Yard Setback	The minimum depth of the front yard for all principal buildings shall be equal to or greater than fifteen feet (15') from the adjacent sidewalk or ten feet (10') from the property line, whichever is greater. Where there are existing buildings within the block face the setback can be equal to one of the abutting front yard setbacks on the block face.		
Rear Yard Setback	The minimum depth of the rear yard for all principal buildings shall be equal to or greater than fifteen feet (15') from the property line. Where there are existing buildings within the block face the setback can be equal to one of the abutting rear yard setbacks on the block face.		
Interior Side Yard 1 Setback	4'	4'	6'
Interior Side Yard 2 Setback	4'	10'	10'
Corner Side Yard Setback	Six feet (6') from adjacent sidewalk or gutter or four feet (4') from property line, whichever is greater.	10'	10'
Interior Corner Side Yard Setback	4'	4'	6'
Maximum Building Coverage	60%	55%	55%
Maximum Lot Size	7,000 Square Feet	12,000 Square Feet	18,000 Square Feet
Minimum Lot Size	3,500 Square Feet	7,001 Square Feet	12,001 Square Feet
Minimum Frontage	35'	70'	105'
Allowable Units	3	5	7

4. Additional Suggested Amendments

-Standards For Attached Garages

With maximizing buildable space and decreasing the allowable lot width and square footage within the R-1/5,000 district it would be practical to also increase the allowable width of an attached garage facing the street. If the allowable attached garage width was increased to 67% of the width of the principle structure that would allow for a 27' wide house to have an attached 2 car garage with a width of 18'. This would barely accommodate a 14' wide garage door which is the smallest 2 car garage door built. This would then allow for an entryway along the side of the garage with a width of 9'. This additional increase would only pertain to the R-1/5,000 district in order to accommodate a 2 car garage on the smallest allowable lot width of 35'. 7,000 and 12,000 will have enough frontage and can remain at the current standard of 50% coverage.

-Garage Doors and Vehicle Staging

Currently the code requires a vehicle staging area of 17' 6" for any driveway providing access to a garage. In order to keep within the proposed front yard setback and side yard setback on corner lots I would suggest reducing this standard to 14' which is the average car length of a mid sized 4 door sedan. This would accomplish two things. One being that it would coincide with the proposed front yard setback and facilitate access to a front facing garage without requiring pushing the principle structure further into the yard than necessary; and two it would allow maximizing the depth of a detached garage on a corner lot facing towards the street. Both of these points would continue the theme of more buildable space on a smaller lot.

-Accessory Building Coverage

Currently building code allows for accessory buildings to cover up to 50% of the principle structures footprint. I would suggest increasing that specifically within the R-1/5,000 district to 60% to better facilitate an accessory building that may be able to be used as an ADU. Again this keeps in line with allowing more buildable space on a smaller lot.

-Accessory Building Heights

In order to encourage or facilitate an accessory building that contains a dwelling unit either above a garage or another unit I would propose raising the maximum height of pitched roof and flat roofed structures to match the newly suggested building heights. This allows a greater range of freedom for a property owner to choose how they navigate creating greater density or usability on their property especially when pertaining to the R-1/5,000 lots.

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5. Summary

-More Buildable Space on Smaller Lots

The title of this section sums up very well what my intent is with all of my amendment suggestions. Along with more usability I think the consolidation opportunity is great with my approach to the code. In essence I believe it would not be impractical or a poor choice to attempt to not only consolidate the R-1 districts of code but also to integrate the other residential sections of code together into one all encompassing residential document that grants more freedom to property owners to utilize their property rights how they seem fit. These amendments grant the ability and encouragement to create higher density living models if desired. This in an effort to appease the city's desire to address the missing middle issue within Salt Lake. All while simultaneously enabling the ability for traditional families to obtain and create a space they can be proud to call home and raise a family in. I believe both of these goals can be achieved with a comprehensive overhaul of our residential districts that work to find the middle ground of property rights and government problem solving.

-Example of Section of Code/Building

I have taken the time to re-write the R-1/5,000 section of code to reflect the suggested changes of code above. It was originally written with the intent to petition the city council to add a new section of code to address problems with legal non complying lots with a frontage of less than 50'. Coincidentally the timing of that endeavor happened to line up with the council looking into making some changes to the code. I think working together with some open dialogue can create something that will benefit the city as a whole. The red highlighted portions are the proposed amendments.

Legal Non-Complying Lots

Code Number??: R-1/5,000 SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL **EXISTING LEGAL NON-COMPLYING** DISTRICT:

- A. Purpose Statement: The purpose of the R-1/5,000 Single-Family Residential **Existing Legal Non-Complying District** is to provide for single-family residential dwellings and affordable housing incentives developments with up to four units on lots not less than five thousand (5,000) square feet in size **and with a property frontage less than 50 feet**. This district is appropriate in areas of the city as identified in the applicable community master plan. Uses are intended to be compatible with the existing scale and intensity of the neighborhood. The standards for the district are intended to provide for safe and comfortable places to live and play, promote sustainable and compatible development patterns and to preserve the existing character of the neighborhood.
- B. Uses: Uses in the R-1/5,000 Single-Family Residential **Existing Legal Non-Complying District**, as specified in section [21A.33.020](#), "Table Of Permitted And Conditional Uses For Residential Districts", of this title, are permitted subject to the general provisions set forth in section [21A.24.010](#) of this chapter and this section.

C. Minimum Lot Area And Lot Width: The minimum lot areas and lot widths required in this district are as follows:

Land Use	Minimum Lot Area	Minimum Lot Width
Municipal service uses, including City utility uses and police and fire stations	No minimum	No minimum
Natural open space and conservation areas, public and private	No minimum	No minimum
Places of worship less than 4 acres in size	12,000 square feet	80 feet
Public pedestrian pathways, trails and greenways	No minimum	No minimum
Public/private utility transmission wires, lines, pipes and poles	No minimum	No minimum
Single-family detached dwellings	5,000 square feet	20 feet
Utility substations and buildings	5,000 square feet	20 feet
Other permitted or conditional uses as listed in section 21A.33.020 of this title	5,000 square feet	20 feet

D. Maximum Building Height:

1. The maximum height of buildings with pitched roofs, as measured from the established grade, shall be:

a. **Thirty three feet (33') measured to the ridge of the roof**

2. **The maximum height of a flat roof building, as measured from the established grade, shall be twenty four feet six inches (24' 6").**

3. **Maximum exterior wall height adjacent to interior side yards shall be twenty two feet six inches (22' 6") for exterior walls placed at the building setback established by the minimum required yard.** Exterior wall height may increase one foot (1') (or fraction thereof) in height for each foot (or fraction thereof) of increased setback beyond the minimum required interior side yard. If an exterior wall is approved with a reduced setback through a special exception, variance or other process, the maximum allowable exterior wall height decreases by one foot (1') (or fraction thereof) for each foot (or fraction thereof) that the wall is located closer to the property line than the required side yard setback.

a. Lots with cross slopes where the topography slopes, the downhill exterior wall height may be increased by one-half foot (0.5') for each one foot (1') difference between the elevation of the average grades on the uphill and downhill faces of the building.

b. Exceptions:

(1) Gable Walls: Walls at the end of a pitched roof may extend to a height necessary to support the roof structure except that the height of the top of the widest portion of the gable wall must conform to the maximum wall height limitation described in this section.

(2) Dormer Walls: Dormer walls are exempt from the maximum exterior wall height if:

(A) The width of a dormer is ten feet (10') or less; and

(B) The total combined width of dormers is less than or equal to fifty percent (50%) of the length of the building facade facing the interior side yard; and

(C) Dormers are spaced at least eighteen inches (18") apart.

4. Building height for initial construction of a building shall be measured as the vertical distance between the top of the roof and the established grade at any given point of building coverage. Building height for any subsequent structural modification or addition to a building shall be measured from finished grade existing at the time a building permit is requested. Building height for the R-1 districts, R-2 District and SR districts is defined and illustrated in [chapter 21A.62](#) of this title.

5. Where buildings are stepped to accommodate the slope of terrain, each step shall have a horizontal dimension of at least twelve feet (12').

6. Additional Principal Building Height: Requests for additional building height for properties located in an H Historic Preservation Overlay District shall be reviewed by the historic landmark commission which may grant such requests subject to the provisions of section [21A.34.020](#) of this title.

E. Minimum Yard Requirements:

1. **Front Yard:** The minimum depth of the front yard for all principal buildings shall be equal to or greater than fifteen feet (15') from the adjacent sidewalk or ten feet (10') from the property line, whichever is greater. Where there are existing buildings within the block face the setback can be equal to one of the abutting front yard setbacks on the block face. Where the minimum front yard is specified in the recorded subdivision plat, the requirement specified on the plat shall prevail. For buildings legally existing on April 12, 1995, the required front yard shall be no greater than the established setback line of the existing building.

2. **Corner Side Yard:** Six feet (6') from adjacent sidewalk or four feet (4') from property line, whichever is greater. For buildings legally existing on April 12, 1995, the required corner side yard shall be no greater than the established setback line of the existing building when non-complying.

3. **Interior Side Yard:**

- a. Corner lots: Four feet (4').
- b. Interior lots: Four feet (4') on both sides of principle structure.

4. Rear Yard: The minimum depth of the rear yard for all principal buildings shall be equal to or greater than fifteen feet (15') from the property line. Where there are existing buildings within the block face the setback can be equal to one of the abutting rear yard setbacks on the block face.

5. Accessory Buildings And Structures In Yards: Accessory buildings and structures may be located in a required yard subject to section I of this title.

F. Maximum Building Coverage: The surface coverage of all principal and accessory buildings shall not exceed sixty percent (60%) of the lot.

G. Maximum Lot Size: With the exception of lots created by a subdivision or subdivision amendment recorded in the Office of the Salt Lake County Recorder, no new non-complying R-1/5000 lots shall be created with a property frontage of less than fifty feet (50').

H. Standards for Attached Garages:

1. Width of an Attached Garage: The width of an attached garage facing the street may not exceed sixty seven percent (67%) of the width of the front facade of the house. The width of the garage is equal to the width of the garage door, or in the case of multiple garage doors, the sum of the widths of each garage door plus the width of any intervening wall elements between garage doors.

2. Located Behind or In Line with the Front Line of the Building: No attached garage shall be constructed forward of the "front line of the building" (as defined in section [21A.62.040](#) of this title), unless:

a. A new garage is constructed to replace an existing garage that is forward of the "front line of the building". In this case, the new garage shall be constructed in a similar location as the garage being replaced with dimensions that do not increase the degree of noncompliance; or

b. At least fifty percent (50%) of the existing garages on the block face are located forward of the "front line of the building". (Ord. 29-24, 2024; Ord. 10-24, 2024; Ord. 74-2023, 2023; Ord. 64-21, 2021; Ord. 46-17, 2017; Ord. 59-16, 2016; Ord. 7-14, 2014; Ord. 66-13, 2013; Ord. 73-11, 2011; Ord. 12-11, 2011; Ord. 90-05 § 2 (Exh. B), 2005; Ord. 26-95 § 2(12-6), 1995)

I. Standards for Accessory Building Structures:

A. Location of Accessory Buildings:

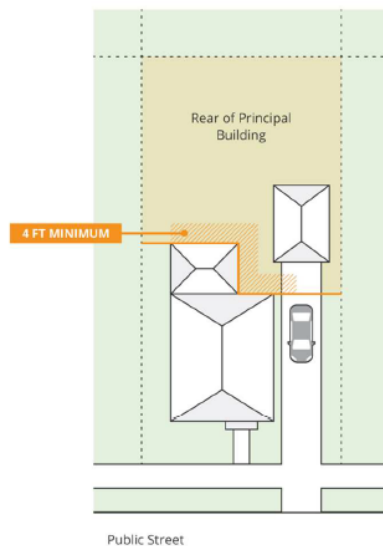
1. Front Yards: Accessory buildings are prohibited in any required front yard and shall be set back at least as far as the principal building when the principal building exceeds the required

front yard setback. Notwithstanding the foregoing, hoop houses and cold frame structures up to twenty four inches (24") in height may be placed in a front yard.

2. Corner Lots: No accessory building on a corner lot shall be closer to the street than the distance required for corner side yards. **At no time, however, shall an accessory building be closer than fourteen feet (14') to a public sidewalk or public pedestrian way and the accessory building shall be set back at least as far as the principal building.** Notwithstanding the foregoing, hoop houses and cold frame structures up to twenty four inches (24") in height may be placed in a corner side yard.

3. Side Yards: Hoop houses, greenhouses, and cold frame structures associated solely with growing food and/or plants are allowed in any interior side yard. Other accessory buildings are permitted in a required interior side yard when located a minimum of four feet (4') from any portion of the principal building and behind the rear wall of the principal building as shown in the illustration below:

ACCESSORY BUILDING STRUCTURES IN SIDE YARDS



○ Rear of Principal Building | ○ Minimum of 4 ft from any portion of the Principal Building

4. Rear Yards: Accessory buildings shall be built a minimum of four feet (4') from any portion of the principal building; however, pedestrian connections, such as breezeways, that do not exceed five feet (5') in width may be allowed. The minimum distance requirement does not apply to cold frames associated solely with growing food and/or plants.

5. Distance from lot lines: In residential districts, accessory buildings shall be built at least one foot (1') from sides and rear lot lines except when sharing a common wall with an accessory building on an adjacent lot.

6. Distance from residential buildings: Accessory buildings shall be a minimum of ten feet (10') from any portion of a principal residential building on an adjacent lot when that adjacent lot is in a residential zoning district; excluding hoop houses, greenhouses, and cold frames associated solely with growing food and/or plants. This provision shall not be construed to limit the construction or expansion of a principal building.

7. Double Frontage Lots: On properties where two opposite ends of the lot have frontage on a street, accessory structures and buildings may be located in a front yard provided the accessory building or structure:

- a. Is located in a provided yard that is directly opposite to the front yard where the primary entrance to the principal building is located;
- b. Is in a location that is consistent with other accessory building locations on the block;
- c. Complies with any sight distance triangle requirements of this title; and
- d. Complies with all other accessory building and structure requirements of this title.

B. Maximum Coverage:

1. Yard Coverage:

a. In residential districts, any portion of an accessory building, excluding hoop houses, greenhouses, and cold frames associated solely with growing food and/or plants, shall occupy not more than fifty percent (50%) of the total area located between the rear facade of the principal building and the rear lot line.

b. The combined coverage for all hoop houses, greenhouses, and cold frames shall not exceed ten percent (10%) when located on vacant lots or, when located on a lot with a principal building, shall not exceed fifteen percent (15%) of the total area located between the rear facade of the principal building and the rear lot line plus the side yard area between the front and rear facades of the principal building.

2. Building Coverage:

a. In the FR, R-1, R-2 and SR non-complying residential districts the maximum footprint of any accessory building, shall not exceed 60% of the building footprint of the principal structure except as follows:

(1) Notwithstanding the size of the footprint of the principal building, at least 480 square feet of accessory building coverage shall be allowed subject to compliance with all other requirements in Section [21A.40.050](#).

(2) Accessory buildings constructed within the buildable area that are located between the rear façade of the principal building and the rear yard setback may exceed 720 square feet provided the building is located entirely within the buildable area and the property complies with the maximum building coverage requirements of the underlying zoning district.

(3) The building coverage for a detached accessory dwelling unit shall be subject to the standards in [21A.40.200](#), regardless of the building coverage requirement in this section.

(4) An accessory building that contains an accessory dwelling unit on the second level may exceed the maximum coverage up to the footprint of the accessory dwelling unit.

b. The combined coverage for all hoop houses, greenhouses, and cold frames shall not exceed thirty five percent (35%) of the building footprint of the principal structure.

C. Maximum Height of Accessory Buildings/Structures:

1. Accessory to Residential Uses in the FP District, RMF Districts, RB, R-MU Districts, SNB and the RO District: The height of accessory buildings/structures in residential districts are measured from established grade to the highest point of the accessory building and shall conform to the following:

a. The height of accessory structures with flat roofs shall not exceed twenty four feet six inches (24' 6") from established grade.

b. The height of accessory structures with pitched roofs shall not exceed thirty three feet (33') measured to the midpoint of the roof.

D. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Code, all structures shall comply with the Sight Distance Triangle Requirements as defined and illustrated in [Chapter 21A.62](#) of this title. The planning director, in consultation with the transportation director, may approve alternative design solutions that result in similar visual clearance and effectively mitigate safety concerns. (Ord. 29-24, 2024; Ord. 10-24, 2024; Ord. 46-23, 2023; Ord. 17-23, 2023; Ord. 64-21, 2021; Ord. 82-12, 2012; Ord. 59-12, 2012; Ord. 51-11, 2011; Ord. 20-11, 2011)

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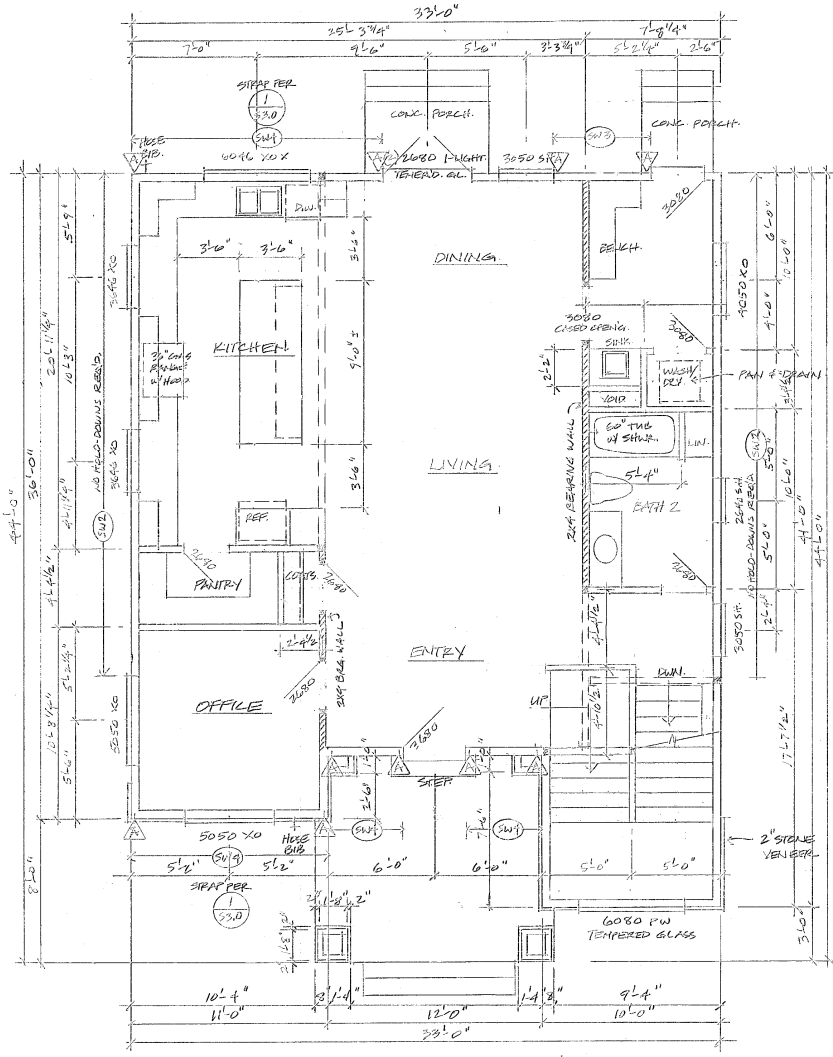
NO.	DESCRIPTION	BY

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t.k.boss.
 residential design

Date 4/26/21
 Scale 1/4"
 Drawn T.Bohn
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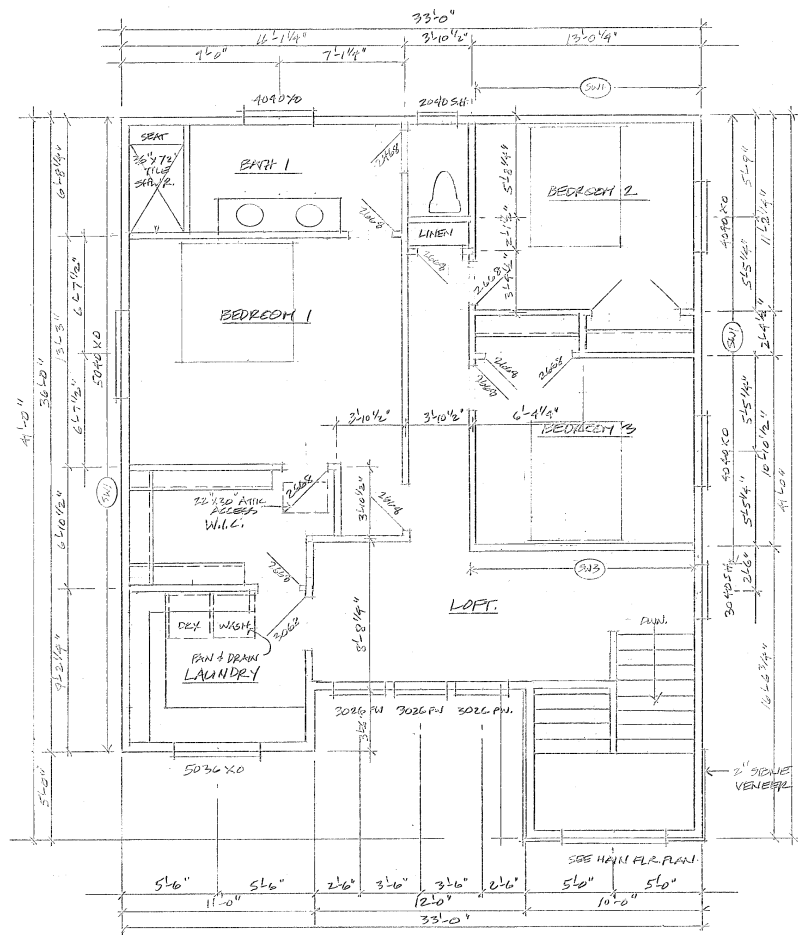
SHEAR WALL & HOLD-DOWN NOTES:

- STRDRIA HOLD-DOWN.
- SHEAR WALLS PER SCHEDULE ON SHEET 50.0

MAIN FLOOR PLAN 1186 SQ. FT. 1/4" = 1'-0"

Main Floor Layout

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NOTE: - SEE SHEET WALL SCHEDULE ON SHEET 50.0

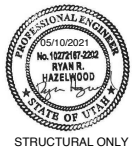
UPPER FLOOR PLAN 1186 SQ. FT. 1/4" = 1'-0"

1. This U.S. Professional Engineer, Architect, or Surveyor is responsible for the design and construction of the building shown on these plans. These plans are not to be interpreted as a warranty of any kind. The engineer, architect, or surveyor is not responsible for the construction of the building shown on these plans. The engineer, architect, or surveyor is not responsible for the construction of the building shown on these plans. The engineer, architect, or surveyor is not responsible for the construction of the building shown on these plans.

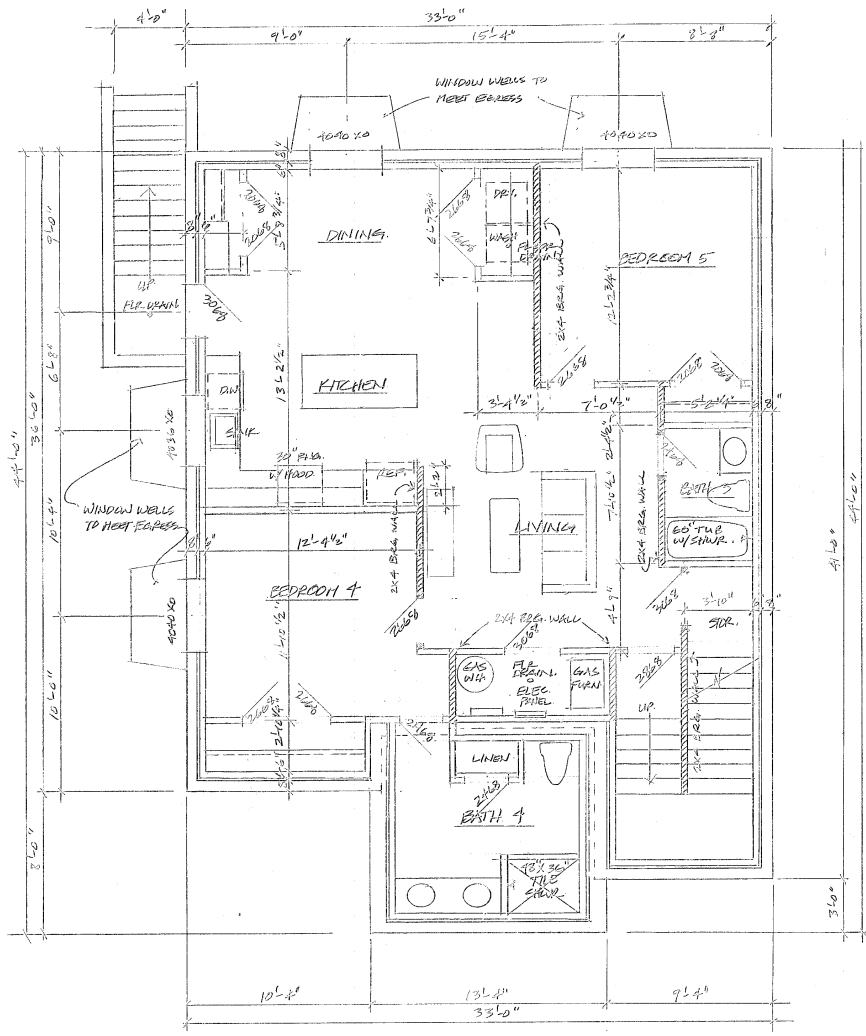
989 West 4330 North
 Pleasant Grove, Utah 84062
 Phone: 801-338-5413
 Email: rboosidsg@t.k.boss.com

t.k.boss.
 residential design

Date: 1/26/21
 Scale: 1/4"
 Drawn: JBO
 Job: SHN2021
 Sheet: 3
 Of: 3 Sheets



STRUCTURAL ONLY



BASEMENT PLAN 1324 SQ. FT. 1/4" = 1'-0"

REVISIONS	BY

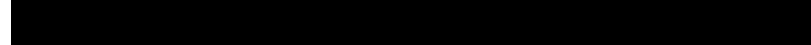
989 West 4212 North
 Pleasant Grove, Utah 84062
 Phone: 801.338.5412
 Email: tkbossdesign@gmail.com

tkboss
 residential design

Date	4/26/21
Scale	1/4"
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Of	Sheets

Basement Layout

In closing I've created a table comparing the differences of the 3 different proposals to change the current residential code that were addressed in the original transmittal document. If you've made it this far I'm very grateful and am highly invested in this process and would like to see if there is anyway to participate further. I have a fairly great knowledge of the code being a builder myself and feel like I could add some useful ideas and commentary to the discussion. Please feel free to contact me at anytime through email, call or text.



Again thank you for your considerations

Erik Sansom

Table 3

	Erik Sansom Proposals	Starter Homes SLC	Staff Suggestions
Zones	All R-1 Districts, R-2, SR-1/1A, SR-2, SR-3	R-1/5,000, R-1/7,000, SR-1A, & SR-3	All R-1 Districts, R-2, SR-1/1A, SR-2, SR-3
New Building Forms Permitted	Any building form only regulated by number of allowable units	Two-family dwellings, single-family attached dwellings	Two-family dwellings, multi-family residential, row house, sideways row house
Minimum Lot Size	R-1/5,000 = 3,500 Sq. Ft R-1/7,000 = 7,001 Sq. Ft R-1/12,000=12,001 Sq. Ft	1,400 square feet per unit	2,000 square feet per unit (all unit types) via small lot development
Maximum Lot Size	Dependent on the prevailing District		
Minimum Lot Width	R-1/5,000 = 35' R-1/7,000 = 70' R-1/12,000 = 105'	Single Family = 20' Single family attached/ twin home = Interior 20' Corner 30' Two-family = Interior 30' Corner 40'	Not Regulated

	Erik Sansom Proposals	Starter Homes SLC	Staff Suggestions
Front Yard Setback	The minimum depth of the front yard for all principal buildings shall be equal to or greater than fifteen feet (15') from the adjacent sidewalk or ten feet (10') from the property line, whichever is greater. Where there are existing buildings within the block face the setback can be equal to one of the abutting front yard setbacks on the block face.	10'	10' or equal to abutting
Rear Yard Setback	The minimum depth of the rear yard for all principal buildings shall be equal to or greater than fifteen feet (15') from the property line. Where there are existing buildings within the block face the setback can be equal to one of the abutting rear yard setbacks on the block face.	10'	10' or equal to abutting
Interior Side Yard Setback 1	R-1/5,000 = 4' R-1/7,000 = 4' R-1/12,0000 = 6'	3'	4-10 feet (depends on unit type)
Interior Side Yard Setback 2	R-1/5,000 = 4' R-1/7,000 = 10' R-1/12,0000 = 10'	3'	4-10 feet (depends on unit type)
Interior Corner Side Yard Setback	R-1/5,000 = 4' R-1/7,000 = 4' R-1/12,0000 = 6'	3'	4-10 feet (depends on unit type)
Corner Side Yard Setback	R-1/5,000 = Six feet (6') from adjacent sidewalk or gutter or four feet (4') from property line, whichever is greater. R-1/7,000 = 10' R-1/12,000 = 10'	No change	5'
Maximum Building Height Pitched	33'	32'	District Maximum

	Erik Sansom Proposals	Starter Homes SLC	Staff Suggestions
Maximum Building Height Flat	24' 6"	30'	District Maximum
Maximum Building Coverage	R-1/5,000 = 60% R-1/7,000 = 55% R-1/12,000 = 55%	70%	60%
Allowable Units	R-1/5,000 = 3 R-1/7,000 = 5 R-1/12,000 = 7	5 units in R-1/7,000 4 units in R-1/5,000	4 units for multi-family, row house, cottage developments 2 units for two-family or urban house 1 unit for single-family dwelling
Maximum Primary Building Footprint	Not Regulated	Not Regulated	800 Square Feet
Maximum Gross Square Footage	Not Regulated	Not Regulated	1,600 square feet (Maximum height: 17ft) 1,200 square feet (Maximum height: district maximum)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [housingoptions](#)
Cc: [Buckley, Benjamin](#)
Subject: RE: (EXTERNAL) Comments on Proposed Expanding Housing Options
Date: Sunday, April 19, 2026 2:48:50 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

Below are additional comments to the **Expanding Housing Options Proposal** I offered in an April 15 email to housingoptions@slc.gov. Items 5 and 6 contain edits to items 11 and 12 from the April 15 email; these comments are completely restated for context.

I have the following comments on how the April 13 (and other) Expanding Housing Options information sessions have been structured and how the Planning Division staff arrived at their conclusions:

1. The information sessions I've attended to date have presented a central planning approach to addressing an "unprecedented" issue. And while the top-down approach is at the forefront of the presentation, no voice has been given to historical perspectives on citizen private property rights - that our elected officials are oathbound to defend - and markets that have been shown ultimately to be self-correcting. 2008 – 2012 is a recent example of such a market correction.

The forums have discouraged open Q&A in favor of one-on-one Q&A following the presentation. That said, during the April 13 event, at the insistence of some attendees, an open, but limited, Q&A did ensue. It took the intervention of Council member Young to "take the stage" and get the program back on the intended (one-on-one Q&A) track. Such an approach in a public forum stifles essential political discourse.

2. As I understand it, the Expanding Housing Options effort came about through a March 4, 2025 Legislative Action in which the City Council tasked the Planning Division staff to study and make recommendations to ***eliminate barriers to home ownership and increase home ownership opportunities for family-sized housing in Salt Lake City***. In acting on the Legislative Action, a more representative approach, it seems, would be to task competing entities, with different philosophies, and of different disciplines, to study and make recommendations.

3. Tasking an internal city department, in this case, Planning, would seem a good use of in-house resource and expertise. My concern, though, is that if one looks at similar proposals around the United States (for example, see this Denver link: https://www.denvergov.org/files/assets/public/v/1/community-planning-and-development/documents/zoning/text-amendments/unlocking-housing-choices/uhc_pub_mtgs_spring2026_slide_presentation.pdf), the proposals look very much the same. I'm guessing this is because the city planning departments attend the same national conferences where they are exposed to the same "solutions". It seems the country, following the lead of city planning departments, and in some cases, state legislatures (TX, AZ, CA, others) is, with absence of critical thought, heading in the same top-down, one-size-fits-all direction to "fix the problem".

Based on language in the 10th amendment to the United States Constitution, our country is formed in the federalist structure where co-sovereign state (and local) governments ideally act as “experimental laboratories” allowing controlled testing of new ideas before broader implementation. Given this exceptional legacy, I question why Salt Lake City, and perhaps Utah, are choosing to follow the rest of the country off the same cliff.

4. During the April 13 session the Planning Division staff presenter stated more than once his “hope” that the proposed changes would achieve the city goals (of ownership, affordability, walkability, water conservation). Prior to making truly unprecedented changes to the SLC zoning ordinance affecting 77% of all residentially zoned land that will irreversibly alter the city fabric, there must be certainty, not hope the city goals will be achieved. Perhaps the stated goals are not achievable under any proposal. This undertaking calls for a degree of humility, not qualified hubris.
5. Referencing an exchange between the City Council and the Planning Division staff during the February 17 City Council working session, the importance of ensuring the citizens are aware of the proposed changes was discussed. In reply, the Planning Division staff offered that social media, email and other notifications had been initiated, but that a city-wide mailer had not been undertaken due to lack of funding.

Citizens must be notified through a multi-media undertaking, i.e. – social media, email, USPS (mail), local publications, broadcast news, etc.

After such a multi-media effort, additional information sessions should be scheduled with equal time allotted for historical perspectives on property rights and markets. These presentations should be followed by (time) limited public comment / Q&A.

6. Also referencing an exchange between the City Council and the Planning Division staff during the February 17 City Council working session, Councilman Alejandro Puy asked that the Planning Division staff provide a count of how many individuals attended the information sessions and report back to the City Council. This information should be in the public record. Likely, Councilman Puy had the same Concern about making sure the citizens are informed.

The Expanding Housing Options proposal and in particular the Small Lot Development element is a significant proffer. The outreach to the citizens as measured in the information session attendance (and I am guessing by the quantity of comments submitted through the city web portal <https://shape.sl.gov/en/projects/housing-options>) has been anemic. This issue requires more:

- Public input
- Deliberation
- Diversity of proposed solutions, and
- Open public debate

Best regards,



[REDACTED]

From: Buckley, Benjamin <Benjamin.Buckley@slc.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2026 9:55 AM
To: [REDACTED]; housingoptions <housingoptions@slc.gov>
Subject: RE: (EXTERNAL) Comments on Proposed Expanding Housing Options

Peter,

Thank you for your comments. Staff will consider all public comments received and will be included in the staff report and public record.

Best,



BEN BUCKLEY | (He/Him/His)
Principal Planner
PLANNING DIVISION | SALT LAKE CITY CORPORATION
Office: 801-535-7142
Email: benjamin.buckley@slc.gov
WWW.SLC.GOV www.slc.gov/planning

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From: Peter Wetzel [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2026 9:18 AM
To: housingoptions <housingoptions@slc.gov>
Subject: (EXTERNAL) Comments on Proposed Expanding Housing Options

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I recently read in Building Salt Lake and other publications about the Salt Lake City **Expanding Housing Options Proposal**. Reading these articles prompted me to:

1. Visit the SLC Planning Division website on the subject and study the information offered.
2. View the video of the February 17, 2026, City Council Working Session in which the Planning Division made a presentation on the proposed ordinance modification.
3. Attend a Planning Division information session Thursday, March 12 at the Sorenson Unity Center where I was able to ask SLC Planning Manager John Anderson questions. I also attended Planning Division Information sessions March 25 and April 13.

The proposal includes multiple elements, some worthy of consideration. The **Small Lot Development** element, however, I oppose. My initial (and still developing) reasons are as follows:

1. Increased density and loads on infrastructure capacity will have unknown and unstudied consequences to storm, sanitary, water, electrical, natural gas, and telecommunications systems.
2. With the potential for a property to grow from one household to three or four households, property values will drop, as the tranquility attribute of the neighborhood will be diminished. An academic argument is made for the loss of property value, or "Welfare Loss" by Joseph Gyourko and Sean E. McCulloch in their 2024 paper ["The Distaste for Housing Density," NBER Working Paper.](#)
3. Once developers determine the "formula" for profiting from the ordinance, tear downs will become the norm and despite the ordinance provision that provides a bonus dwelling for retaining the existing dwelling, construction of the allowed higher-density structures will follow.
4. The new structures will have a natural inclination to become rentals, and since non-owners lack a long view (for the neighborhood), the neighborhood will lose its existing character and property values will decline further as documented by Gyourko and McCulloch in the above referenced report.
5. Despite the one off-street parking place per dwelling requirement, street parking, already a problem, will increase as will infractions against SLC Municipal (street parking) codes.
6. SLC currently has a problem with nuisance properties (discussed during the February 17 City Council meeting). This proposal will expand that problem with infractions against SLC Municipal codes (noise, outdoor storage, improper use, etc).
7. Despite the city literature stating that the ***character and unique qualities of each neighborhood will be preserved***, changes that will increase density and building height, reduce front yard setbacks, without regulating (aesthetic) design and material selections (which would be a difficult undertaking), the construction of a single triplex on a block where a 70 to 100 year old existing home once stood will irreversibly compromise the character and unique qualities of a block. Allowed to be implemented city-wide, it will leave the city's fabric incongruous and aesthetically marred.
8. Although the city staff report cites that a similar approach (constructing smaller homes) in Durham, NC and Portland, OR yielded a 40% lower purchase price than that of larger homes (obviously), the staff reports no statistics on the long term effects (existing home values, parking, civil code infractions, crime, or the difficult to measure element of quality of life) of this approach on the established neighborhoods in which it was implemented.
9. There are 703 R-1-7000 properties which represents 30% of the overall affected properties.

Because the R-1-7000 square footage maximizes the number of Small Lot Dwellings allowed to be built, i.e. - 1 dwelling per 2,000 sf, the R-1-7000 properties, disproportionately to the other zoning classifications will be identified by developers as optimum for redevelopment (with triplexes).

10. Why is Salt Lake City pursuing a central planning solution for a perceived problem that will ultimately be corrected by market forces? See the following:

a. **SLC apartment vacancy rates**

- i. 2021 – 2%
- ii. Current – 7-8%
- iii. Context
 1. Low (rate) - < 3%
 2. Optimum (rate) – 5–8%

b. **Salt Lake Housing Market Has Cooled Considerably**

- SLC has fallen from top 5 (of 127 markets) in 2019 and 2020 to 35 in 2022 and 88 in 2026

Ref: Deseret News, April 10, 2026 (Source: Construction Coverage – a Construction Industry Research entity, 1111 Sixth Ave, San Diego, CA 92101)

11. Referencing an exchange between the City Council and the Planning Division staff during the February 17 City Council working session, the importance of ensuring the citizens are aware of the proposed changes was discussed. In reply, the Planning Division staff offered that social media, email and other notifications had been initiated, but that a city-wide mailer had not been undertaken due to lack of funding.

I suggest the City Council find the funding for such a mailer. In the interest of a balanced message, I also suggest that individuals with views on the proposal different from the Planning Division be allowed to provide input on the mailer content.

After the mailer has been distributed, additional information sessions should be scheduled with equal time allotted for historical perspectives on property rights and markets. These presentations should be followed by (time) limited public comment / Q&A.

The information sessions to date have presented one perspective and discouraged open Q&A in favor of one-on-one Q&A following the presentation. Such an approach stifles essential political discourse.

12. Also referencing an exchange between the City Council and the Planning Division staff during the February 17 City Council working session, Councilman Alejandro Puy asked that the Planning Division staff provide a count of how many individuals attended the information sessions and report back to the City Council. This information should be in the public record.

In closing, I offer the following for the SLC Planning Division and City Council to consider:

When property is purchased by citizens, the decision to do so is based partly on what the citizen expects the neighborhood to be like for years to come. Zoning rules have traditionally provided some predictability about what could be built nearby. Should the **Small Lot Development** ordinance pass, the city fabric will be irreversibly changed – not for the better. Affected property owners with means will have the luxury to sell their property at a loss and relocate where their neighborhood tranquility will be restored. Those without means will be trapped.

Best regards,

Peter Wetzel



From: [REDACTED]
To: [housingoptions](#)
Subject: (EXTERNAL) My Comments on Expanding Housing Options
Date: Wednesday, April 22, 2026 12:38:30 PM

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Caution: This is an external email. Please be cautious when clicking links or opening attachments.

I own my home at [REDACTED] and have lived here for almost 38 years. I am opposed to the proposed Expanded Housing Options.

Reducing the driveway width for a flag lot from 24' to 20' is a fire safety issue. The lots on my street don't have street or alley access that would provide access to multiple dwellings on our lots, except for one flag lot that has a driveway access from 1600 East that is 19.6 feet in width, not 20 feet. The proposal for driveway width for flag lots to be reduced from 24 feet to 20 feet is a safety hazard. The fire trucks need sufficient width to maneuver to access burning buildings on flag lots to keep the fire from spreading to neighboring houses. If the neighboring lots now have multiple dwellings built on them, the potential losses from a fire increase dramatically.

The houses on my street are eight to 10 feet apart, which doesn't allow access for construction equipment to get between the houses to build more homes behind the existing homes. To build varied dwellings on our lots, existing homes must be demolished. The loss of these homes will absolutely change the character of our street.

Parking requirements will be a problem on our street. Our current homes have driveways that are wide enough for two cars to park side by side. Because our backyards don't have street access, the front yards of our property will have to be adjusted to accommodate parking spots for the multiple dwellings on our property. That will also negatively impact the character of the neighborhood.

The reduction of setbacks and increases in height allowances means that taller homes will be built closer to existing homes. As homes are sold by current owners, there is a strong possibility lots will be bought by investors wanting to maximize profits by building as many homes as possible on lots as close to the property lines as possible. It's likely the new dwellings will be rental units rather than owner occupied because there are no deed restrictions to require owner occupancy. The thought of multiple, tall dwellings being built on the lots next door to me, close to my property line, is very upsetting to me. My lot is a little more than 1/2 acre. I will lose the peace and quiet in my yard that I currently enjoy.

This proposal will increase density but there is no guarantee that it will increase affordability or owner occupancy. If investors buy up the properties this will drive up the

prices of the new homes. The members of our community that this plan is supposed to help won't be able to afford the new homes.

Rebecca W Davis

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [housingoptions](#)
Subject: (EXTERNAL) Expanding Housing Options
Date: Sunday, April 26, 2026 5:59:37 PM

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To: The Planning Commission & City Council

The goals of Expanding Housing Options, as stated on your website are, in brief:

To ease the housing shortage

To generate infill housing that is **Compatible with existing neighborhoods, and Attainable to buy or rent.**

The changes to residential zoning rules turn **low-density** zoning districts (R-1, R-2, SR-1, and SR-1A) into **high-density** zoning districts.

At the recent public meeting at the Neighborhood Hive in Sugarhouse, we were told that, depending on the size of your lot, you could have up to four buildings. While this will create more housing, it will not be compatible with the neighborhood, as stated in your first main goal. The existing zoning ordinances have requirements in regard to standard set-backs, lot coverage and height of structures. Reducing set-backs, increasing lot coverage, and increasing height allowance is not in keeping with your stated goal of compatibility. This is not to mention aesthetics; current zoning allows property owners to build in whatever style they desire, which may or may not be compatible with the neighborhood.

Attainability does not equate to affordability of the new units. It only means they exist. Affordability will happen when property values drop and/or wages go up. Rents in Sugarhouse will remain high indefinitely except among developers who meet AHJ requirements. In terms of possible home-ownership, you create very few opportunities for people to buy these new units unless you create a mechanism for dividing the lots and creating access, which would further adversely impact compatibility.

The added infill housing proposal requires only one off-street parking space per unit. Parking is an issue throughout the city. The average number of cars per household is two. Our current system of mass transit does not meet the needs of residents. The proposal does not address this problem adequately.

Infill benefits individual developers right now. The benefits to existing residents do not outweigh the costs in terms of the character of the neighborhood. As an example, a flag lot is

isolated from the community by its nature.

Infill does not serve the unhoused.

We are opposed to any of the proposed changes to the residential zoning rules. The Expanding Housing Options is nothing more than an effort to spot-zone every residential neighborhood in Salt Lake City. We are not Portland, Oregon. We do not like the marketing playbook that you are using. As with a lot of development and zoning issues in Salt Lake City in general, you have failed to inform the greater population of the proposed changes, and to accurately portray their impact on neighborhoods. Such dramatic changes should have been matched by a dramatic effort to communicate with every property owner.

Sincerely,
Larry and Ann Wright

From: [Berntson, Jason](#)
To: [Hulka, Andrew](#)
Subject: Fw: (EXTERNAL) Text zoning amendment.
Date: Tuesday, March 10, 2026 1:13:45 PM



Jason Berntson | (He/Him)
Associate Planner
PLANNING DIVISION | SALT LAKE CITY CORPORATION
Office: 801-535-6247
Email: jason.berntson@slc.gov
WWW.SLC.GOV

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2026 10:17 AM
To: Berntson, Jason <jason.berntson@slc.gov>
Subject: (EXTERNAL) Text zoning amendment.

[You don't often get email from sheilakodriscoll@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Caution: This is an external email. Please be cautious when clicking links or opening attachments.

Sent from my iPhone

Mr. Berntson:

I'm grateful for the opportunity to respond to you regarding the proposed zoning text amendments. I attended the SHCC LUZ meeting in February to hear issues and concerns and opinions from those more up to date than I on this issue.

Sarah Young, Judi Short among other SHCC trustees and Soren Simonson and I were in attendance. In total about 10 people.

I attended the open house the next night at HHS.

I want to thank the staff for their preparation. The maps and handouts were very helpful. It was disappointing that the AV equipment was not available to add to the discussion. The staff was kind and hospitable.

My personal concerns now do not differ from what they were at the LUZ sub committee meeting. They are as follows:

1. Many of my neighbors and I purchased residential property in a well established neighborhood that had an established sense of community and lifestyle.

That's what many I speak to want to maintain.

Concerns include:

- a. Added traffic and parking issues.
- b. How will the city actually be able to monitor and keep potential landlords renting to too many people in a single family home or apt.?
- c. How will the city be able to make sure that new construction meets zoning requirements.
- d. What potential negatives to residential property values be?

(instead of living next to another single family home with a nominal amount of people, the potential for college kid renters and parties that are noisy , late and often littered with debris afterwards). Disrupting the established peace and quiet that has existed for decades?... this has happened a number of times up my street as single family homes have become rentals.)

e. Safety: there is hardly room for a large emergency vehicle to pass safely on our residential streets in my neighborhood hood with vehicles parked legally on both sides of the street.

It is already virtually impossible for two small vehicles to pass safely each other with legally parked vehicles on the street, let alone an SUV, large truck or a delivery van.

f. I believe adequate notice should be given to those who have to put up with new construction and the safety and disruption that construction vehicles and their supplies before the construction begins because of the negative issues that arise from it.

g. While I genuinely appreciate the open house options, the HHS effort was an epic fail. I doubt there were 50 locals there besides those who had already attended the LUZ mtg the night before. This is NOT a legitimate successful effort to inform the people who live in my neighborhood and own residential property of permanent potential options and negatives to the proposed zoning changes.

It may have completed a check on a required list of to do's required before a decision is made, but it did not reach any reasonable amount of people to get valid and reliable data on the public support or rejection of this rezone!

Notices to local public and private schools via their SCC and to local churches and on public bulletin boards at local businesses would vastly improve the public notice.

We need at least hundreds of people attending the HHS open house and to fill up the auditorium to get even a fraction of notice to the abutting community and their feelings about the proposal!

Finally, I did speak with 3 other people attending the open house. All three had reservations mostly regarding the potential negative impacts to their established neighborhoods and the lack of the city's ability to regulate the new zoning if approved.

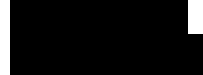
My question was: What do you know about the proposal and how do you feel about it?

I served from 1994 to 2014 as a trustee and interested resident of my neighborhood on the SHCC.

Virtually no one I speak to has any idea about this proposal. I have tried to point them to the LUZ sub committee of the SHCC for information.

Sincerely,

Sheila O'Driscoll



Share your feedback!

Name *Mark Kibball*

Email

- Keep up w/ moving toward density & transit (multi-mode)!
- Great work!



Share your feedback!

Name Jordan

Email [REDACTED]

I would love for more opportunities for young people to buy homes, especially with yards. I've been in small apartments, so size isn't an issue. I would love to be able to own and have a reasonable cost. I like the idea of cottages and rowhouses. Affordability is the most important aspect, especially equivalent to the average public servant salary.



Share your feedback!

Name *Mami*

Email



*Smaller affordable size family home
Townhome also good but no exorbitant HOA's.*



Share your feedback!

Name *Margu*

Email



I feel this is a great Idea



Share your feedback!

Name Austin Whitehead

Email

Love small lots! I live on a 4,000 sq foot lot
in a house built in 1920 - it's silly we couldn't build that
same house today.



Share your feedback!

Name *Gustav Fredrikson*

Email



I love more land use and waterwise landscaping programs. Keep keeping your people/public informed!



Share your feedback!

Name

Email

NO HOA then
all type is acceptable
if NO HOA
Dad H



Share your feedback!

Name ~~Mark~~ Mark Stern

Email



As long as the housing is done tastefully and not forced. I live in a single family house in the Acres. Thank you



COMMENT CARD



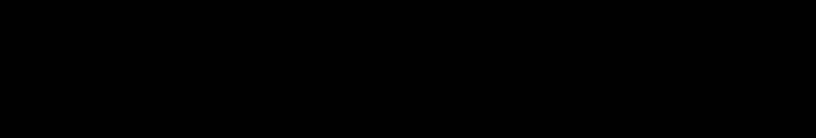
PLANNING
DIVISION

Project Expanding Housing Options

Name Cathy Free-Weeks Date 2/23/24

Email 

Would you like to receive e-mail updates? Yes No

Address 

City

Write your comments on the back of this card.

I don't want this! These are small lots in Sugarhouse and we have very little parking. I don't want additional homes going up in my neighbors' backyards. I didn't move into this neighborhood and pay a high price for my house, so that I could see new construction going up everywhere. I want privacy and quiet - not extra traffic and more people. Come up with a new plan - instead of leaving this on homeowners!

COMMENT CARD



PLANNING
DIVISION

Project Expanding Housing Options

Name Soren SIMONSEN Date 2/24/2026

Email [REDACTED]

Would you like to receive e-mail updates? Yes No

Address [REDACTED]
City [REDACTED]

Write your comments on the back of this card.

Specific suggestions —

1. Increase building height to 32'. This could allow a full attic space that could be a future loft expansion.
2. Corner side yard — 15' — 12'. We have great examples of smaller corner sides already ~~in~~ in many areas of SLC.
3. 18' front yards — these yards are mostly unused, and reduced setbacks would use land and resources more effectively without major

character changes.

COMMENT CARD



PLANNING
DIVISION

Project Expanding Housing Options

Name Soren Simonsen Date 2/24/2026

OPTIONAL
Email [REDACTED]

Would you like to receive e-mail updates? Yes No

Address [REDACTED]
City [REDACTED]

Write your comments on the back of this card.

I really like this zoning amendment proposal. I hope it is supported by the final decision makers. We need more housing and more housing options, and this is a great proposal to do that. Thank you!

COMMENT CARD



PLANNING
DIVISION

Project Expanding Housing Options

Name Jana Ward

Date 2/24/26

Email

Would you like to receive e-mail updates? Yes No

Address

City

Zip Code

Write your comments on the back of this card.

I Support the changes.
I would support a max
height of 35' to match the
architectural style of higher
ceilings. ~~We~~ could even add a
2 story max to ~~to~~ keep people
happy.

COMMENT CARD



PLANNING
DIVISION

Project Expanding Housing Options

Name Natalie Brooks Date 2/24/26

Email 

Would you like to receive e-mail updates? Yes No

Address Liberty Wells

City _____ Zip Code _____

Write your comments on the back of this card.

No slot homes. No out of place architecture. Developers need to match the surrounding style and historic charm, identity and personality of the city. I welcome housing that gives middle income people a chance to buy.

People care about the community more when they have a chance to own. Do high density housing that can be sold to people. Not rented apt/bds

* I think the block of SFH at approx 1624 S. + 400E - Blair is a perfect example of small SFH. *

- shared courtyards
- du-tri-quad plexes, cottage + bungalow style.

Thank you!

COMMENT CARD



PLANNING
DIVISION

Project Expanding Housing Options

Name JON WANG Date 2/24/26

Email [REDACTED]

Would you like to receive e-mail updates? Yes No

Address [REDACTED]

City [REDACTED] Zip Code [REDACTED]

Write your comments on the back of this card.

This is a great idea and
I hope it happens!

Would love to hear stories
about how this idea worked in NC.
and projections on how this potential
densification changes housing costs
and population distribution

COMMENT CARD



PLANNING
DIVISION

Project Expanding Housing Options

Name JINJIN CHIU Date 2/24/26

Email [REDACTED]

Would you like to receive e-mail updates? Yes No

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Write your comments on the back of this card.

I think this is a great idea and effective way to gently increase density in our single-family neighborhoods. It would be great to have "office hours" where citizens could come with potential projects and workshop what is possible in the backyards.

Thanks for all your work!
Would love to see precedents for how this worked in other cities!

COMMENT CARD



PLANNING
DIVISION

Project Expanding Housing Options

Name CHRISTOPHER CHARLES Date 03.07.2026

Email [REDACTED]

Would you like to receive e-mail updates? Yes No

Address [REDACTED]

City [REDACTED]

Write your comments on the back of this card.

REMAINING THROUGH THE FIVE FLYERS
SENT ME DOWN A 'RABBIT HOLE'....
REMAINING ALL FIVE AOCs.

ALL LOOKS GOOD.

AS STAFF POINTED OUT - ONE OF
MY INTEREST WOULD BE MAINTAINING
~~GOING~~ ISSUES - ON HEALTH -
ON STORMWATER MANAGEMENT,
WITH MORE LOT COVERAGE I
THINK THE ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINTS
SHOULD BE REDUCED (EASILY DONE)
PASSIVE INFUSE STANDARDS, ON SITE
STORM WATER MANAGEMENT, ETC.
IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO SEE
SOME EXAMPLES OF 4 UNIT PLANS
ON A SINGLE LOT. ALSO, WITH
REDUCED SIDEYARDS, GREEN BUFFER
EXAMPLES.

COMMENT CARD



PLANNING
DIVISION

Project Expanding Housing Options

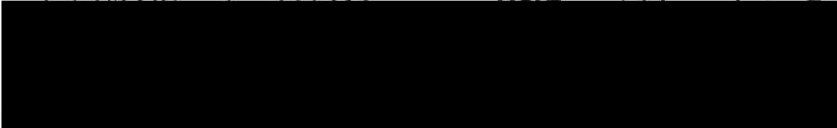
Name

Alicia Miller

Date

3/11/25

Email




Would you like to receive e-mail updates? Yes No

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Write your comments on the back of this card.

I feel that this
will de-value homes
and not improve
the  landscape
of the city. People
live here because
of the character of
the city and this
proposal will diminish
the character

COMMENT CARD



PLANNING
DIVISION

Project Expanding Housing Options

Name _____ Date 4-13-2025

OPTIONAL

Email _____

Would you like to receive e-mail updates? Yes No

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code 84105

Write your comments on the back of this card.

The city hasn't provide enough information to the public
to allow for an informed discussion on this topic
therefore stop! before you all make a mess of this
I feel as though this is in response to the state
take over of city streets & the lack of need this
within the city. As the city revenue go down
due to lack of property taxes, this seems like
a quick fix for that. Again stop to think
instead of pure head bang without a plan.
JH

ATTACHMENT C: Recognized Community Organization Comments

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31 April 2026

RE: Expanding Housing Options – ELPCO Response

Dear Salt Lake City Planning Commissioners:

This letter from ELPCO, the East Liberty Park Community Organization, is in reference to the Expanding Housing Options proposed zoning text amendments. ELPCO has been closely following the developments on this topic for several years. The text amendments, as ultimately proposed and released late last year, impact essentially every area zoned residential within the City. In ELPCO's boundaries, the current zoning is predominantly R-1-5,000, and the proposed changes have elicited considerable concern from the community. We have tried to capture the full range of these concerns in the table attached to this letter as Appendix A.

While the proposed amendments make minor changes to the existing provisions governing single-family residences, it is the small lot dwelling provisions that have created the greatest concern. The fear is that allowing the subdivision of current lots into 2000 ft² lots will encourage developers to buy up existing homes, demolish them, and replace them with two to four Small Lot Dwellings throughout the neighborhoods. If this behavior were to occur frequently, it would completely change the character of the neighborhoods within ELPCO and every area zoned R-1 within the City. If such behavior makes economic sense for developers, there is nothing in the zoning amendments to prevent it from happening on every residential lot in the City or limiting its impact in any way.

The Planning Division's overview summary states that: "The goal is to create gentle infill opportunities that fit in with the character of low-density Salt Lake City neighborhoods." Has the Planning Division done any modeling or pricing calculations to determine whether these zoning amendments are likely to produce a significant number of teardowns within the City? We hope that the Planning Division has given this some detailed consideration and analysis that it could share with the public. Our residents are much more likely to be concerned if this becomes a general practice within their neighborhoods, rather than something confined to vacant lots or run-down houses.

Many other concerns articulated by residents are highly dependent on the answer to the frequency question. Worries regarding utility capabilities, parking impacts and water impacts all turn heavily on whether this something that happens often, via teardowns, or occasionally, by means of construction on open lots or the demolition of dilapidated houses. If the Planning Division's analysis fails to provide comfort that these changes will not result in frequent

demolitions within our neighborhoods, the Commission should consider following the methodology suggested in Appendix B, attached to this letter, of running a pilot program to properly gauge the neighborhood impacts. As now drafted, these changes would amount to a radical experiment allowing what amounts to spot zoning in the bulk of the City's residential neighborhoods. If the Planning Division's assessment is wrong and wholesale teardowns ensue, the City's character will be changed forever.

We must also mention, at least in passing, that the combination of numerous teardowns and the separately proposed redefinition of the term "Family" within the zoning ordinances, raises fears that the City's currently desirable residential neighborhoods could devolve into areas overrun by numerous two-bedroom residences (unsuitable for all but the smallest families) with the remaining larger homes becoming de facto boarding houses. We would appreciate it if the Planning Division could explain why it regards this scenario as improbable.

As a general matter, ELPCO is supportive of reasonable efforts to increase density within the City. Our neighborhoods are predominantly zoned R-1-5000, but include many duplexes and a number of fourplexes on their streets, without appearing to suffer much in the way of unpleasant side effects. It should be noted that the existing duplexes and fourplexes conform to the current front yard setback requirements and so do not intrude into the pedestrian streetscape to any greater extent than other structures on the street. If such multi-family dwellings were able to be built within the existing setback requirements in the past, it raises the question as to why the front setback requirement should be reduced from 20 to 10 feet for Small Lot Dwellings. ELPCO is concerned that this change will create an unattractive "sawtooth" effect on the streetscape: not only will the new structures be of different styles and materials, but they will now extend halfway to the sidewalk. It does not strike us that this will promote "gentle infill opportunities that fit in with the character of low-density Salt Lake City neighborhoods." We believe that the Small Lot Dwelling provisions should be amended to require that they adhere to existing front setback requirements to avoid this problem.

In summary, ELPCO is prepared to support the proposed zoning changes if the Planning Division can demonstrate, with a high level of confidence, that such changes will not result in the wholesale destruction of the residential neighborhoods that have made Salt Lake City such a desirable home for many of its residents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

ELPCO (East Liberty Park Community Organization) - www.eastlibertypark.org - elpcoslc@gmail.com

East Liberty Park Community Organization:

Kristina Robb – ELPCO Chair

Jeff Larsen – ELPCO Vice-Chair

Jeanette Young – ELPCO Secretary/Treasurer

J. Alan Crittenden – ELPCO Land Use Committee Chair

Judi Short – ELPCO Land Use Advisor

Marshall Baillie – ELPCO Sustainability Coordinator

James Birchler – ELPCO Board Member

Michael Mayo – ELPCO Board Member

David Jones – ELPCO Board Member

Janet Wade – 9th and 9th Business Liaison

About ELPCO

ELPCO is the East Liberty Park Community Organization—a local, city-sanctioned community organization that represents the residents and businesses in the East Liberty Park area of Salt Lake City. The area covered by ELPCO is defined by the boundaries of Liberty Park, 700 E to 1300 E and 800 S to 1700 S. ELPCO meets online on the fourth Thursday of every month starting at 7:00 p.m..

ELPCO (East Liberty Park Community Organization) - www.eastlibertypark.org - elpcoslc@gmail.com

APPENDIX A Concerns/Issues	Potential Impacts	Community Recommendations	Questions
<p>Widespread use of the small lot dwelling provisions developers to to tear down existing homes and build multiple units in their place.</p> <p>Regarding Building Coverage: Increased density with less space for yards could create more hotspots in the city</p>	<p>Could have implications for utilities, and the general quality of the neighborhood</p>	<p>James' Lean Start Up methodology https://docs.google.com/document/d/1KFD-GIns3pP_FpW_fkxorEr0zyK4N3GUWAaFdqeCNEg/edit?tab=t.0</p>	<p>Will it be economically attractive for developers to buy houses, tear them down and build small lot dwellings.</p> <p>Have they done any modeling to indicate whether tear-downs are likely to be a problem or not? What are their new construction cost assumptions? The limitation on the size of the dwelling to either 2000 or 1700 ft², depending on the height, is explicitly intended to prevent the construction of expensive housing. There is probably a practical limit as to how much anyone is willing to pay for a 2,000 ft² house, which is significantly smaller than the current average new construction.</p>

Regarding Building Coverage: More building coverage means more impervious surface and less permeable ground. This directly contradicts two other active city initiatives: the Water Conservation Plan (which identifies supply shortfalls and calls for reduced consumption) and Climate Forward SLC (which identifies SLC as having the most intense urban heat island among 50 major cities studied, with temperatures rising roughly 2.6x faster than the national average). The R-1/12,000 jump from 35% to 50% is a 43% increase in allowable impervious surface. No cross-departmental analysis of these contradictions appears in this memo.

Whether smaller units will actually be priced affordably and who will buy them.

Without ownership mechanisms, upzoning produces market-rate units that are disproportionately acquired by investors, not first-time homebuyers.

Regarding Flag Lots: Has staff modeled how many existing lots in ELPCO become eligible for flag lot subdivision under the relaxed standards? Was anything beyond fire access (trash collection, moving trucks, daily two-way vehicle traffic) evaluated in approving the 20-foot access strip? A 20' strip with two parked cars has zero clearance for a fire truck — is parking on access strips prohibited?

Regarding Impacts on AHI: The Durham/Portland comparison compares small lot units to larger new construction — not to what current renters can actually afford. A unit that is \$250K–\$300K less than a \$615K median home is still \$315K–\$365K, which remains out of reach for most SLC renters. Has staff analyzed what price points these units would actually reach in Salt Lake City's market?

The phrase [in the memo from planning] “relatively less expensive” is doing significant work here. A unit that costs less than \$615K is not necessarily affordable. With approximately 88% of Utah renters priced out of homeownership (Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute, 2025; see also KSL, April 1, 2026, reporting that SLC estimates nearly 9 in 10 renters are priced out), “cheaper than median” does not equal “affordable.” The relevant question is: affordable to whom?

The framing that “no new building typologies are being introduced” is technically accurate but potentially misleading. Under AHJ, these building types require affordability deed restrictions. Under the Small Lot Dwelling proposal, they do not. Same building types, fundamentally different affordability outcomes.

The memo presents each change individually but does not analyze their combined effect. A flag lot fourplex at 50% coverage, 24' flat roof, 4' side setback, and no wall height limit is a built outcome that does not exist anywhere in these zones today. Has staff modeled the combined effect of all proposed changes on any specific block or neighborhood? Without cumulative impact analysis, the Planning Commission is being asked to evaluate each relaxation in isolation while the development community will apply them in combination. Additionally, the coverage increases interact directly with the city's Water Conservation Plan and Climate Forward SLC goals in ways that no cross-departmental analysis has addressed.

Regarding setbacks: Block face averaging preserves the spatial rhythm of established streetscapes. Replacing it with “equal to one abutting” means a new build only needs to match its closest neighbor, not the block’s overall pattern. In Historic Gilmer Park (National Register listed), where setback consistency is part of the documented historic character, this change could undermine the very qualities the historic overlay is meant to protect. The justification — that averaging is “difficult for staff to explain” — is an administrative convenience argument, not a planning rationale.

Using noncompliance rates to justify raising limits is an argument for legalizing existing violations rather than enforcing existing standards. If 35% of buildings exceed the current maximum, the question should be: why wasn’t this enforced? This mirrors the deferral pattern identified in the Sugar House Hotel staff report — when standards prove inconvenient, the response is to weaken the standard rather than uphold it.

The elimination of the wall height standard is arguably the most significant dimensional change in this proposal. Currently the code regulates both overall height and wall height — removing wall height means a flat-roofed building could present a full 24-foot vertical face to neighboring properties. Combined with the side setback reduction to 4 feet (down from 6–8 feet), this creates a dramatically different massing experience. The justification — again — is that it’s “difficult for staff to explain.” Administrative

convenience is not a planning rationale for eliminating a dimensional control that directly affects livability.

Regarding Removal of Restrictive Language for Duplexes: The adjacency and block face concentration limits were adopted for a reason — to prevent entire blocks from converting to duplexes and to maintain neighborhood variety. Removing them without analyzing the potential for concentrated conversion on specific blocks is another instance of presenting a change in isolation without cumulative impact analysis.

Regarding Flag Lot Modifications: These four changes compound: (1) no conditional use hearing, (2) less lot area needed, (3) narrower access, (4) multi-unit buildings now permitted. The cumulative effect is that what was a difficult, publicly reviewed process for a single-family home on a rear lot becomes a streamlined administrative path to a fourplex behind an existing home.

“Naturally occurring affordable housing” is an aspirational framing, not a guarantee. Without deed restrictions, nothing prevents a 1,200 sq ft unit on a small lot from selling at market rate to an investor. AHI limits price and guarantees affordability; Small Lot Dwellings limit size and guarantee nothing. The Council’s initiating language called for “home ownership opportunities” and “affordable missing middle housing” — the staff proposal does not deliver mechanisms to ensure either.

APPENDIX B A Note on Methodology

Lean Startup Methodology Applied to Land Use Reform

April 2026

Prepared by James Birchler, Historic Gilmer Park Representative, ELPCO Board

A proven approach to policy under uncertainty

The Expanding Housing Options proposal would change the development standards for 77% of Salt Lake City's residential land. It is an ambitious proposal with important goals. It also rests on several assumptions that have not yet been tested in Salt Lake City's specific market: Will smaller units be priced affordably? Will they be owner-occupied or investor-acquired? How will increased building coverage interact with water conservation and urban heat? These are answerable questions — and there is a well-established methodology for answering them while still moving forward.

In many fields — software development, product design, public health, organizational management — practitioners have learned that large-scale initiatives succeed more often when they are tested and refined through structured cycles of learning before being deployed at full scale. This methodology, formalized by Eric Ries as Lean Startup (Ries, 2011), offers a practical framework for making progress on complex problems where the outcomes are uncertain and the stakes are high. Land use policy fits that description precisely.

Build-Measure-Learn: continuous improvement, not one-and-done

The core of Lean Startup is the Build-Measure-Learn cycle — and critically, it is a *continuous* process, not a single test followed by a single decision. Each cycle builds on the learning from the previous one:

Build: Implement the smallest version that tests your most important assumptions. In this context, that means deploying the Small Lot Dwelling ordinance in a few willing neighborhoods, with ownership mechanisms informed by peer-reviewed research. (Urban Institute, 2023; NC State University, 2023)

Measure: Collect real-world data on the questions that matter. What price points do the units reach? Who buys them — owner-occupants or investors? (Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, 2024) What happens to permeable surface area? What do the buildings look like on real blocks?

Learn: Analyze the results and apply them. Then start the next cycle — refining the approach based on what the data revealed, testing the next set of questions, and building on what works.

This cycle repeats. With each iteration, the policy gets stronger because it is informed by real outcomes rather than projections. Early cycles might focus on pricing and buyer profiles; later cycles might examine neighborhood compatibility, infrastructure capacity, or environmental performance. The learning compounds over time, producing a policy that has been validated at every stage of its development.

At defined milestones, the City makes a conscious decision based on the accumulated learning: **persevere** (scale what's working because the evidence supports it), **pivot** (modify the approach based on what the data revealed — perhaps adjusting ownership ratios, dimensional standards, or investor protections), or **stop** a specific element (if a particular assumption was clearly disconfirmed). These are evidence-based decisions, not political ones — and that makes them more durable.

Start from what’s known, test what’s unknown

A Lean Startup approach does not mean starting from scratch. Peer-reviewed evidence already tells us a great deal about what works and what doesn’t in housing density reform: upzoning without affordability mechanisms tends to produce units at the upper end of the price spectrum (Urban Institute, 2023); builders price to market demand rather than construction cost (NC State University,

2023); and investors disproportionately acquire lower-cost homes. (Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, 2024) The city should use this evidence base to inform the design of any pilot — for example, by including ownership mechanisms from the start.

What remains are the SLC-specific questions that no national study can answer. These are the hypotheses worth testing locally:

- Hypothesis 1:** Smaller units on smaller lots will be priced affordably in SLC’s market.
- Hypothesis 2:** Small Lot Dwellings will be owner-occupied rather than investor-acquired.
- Hypothesis 3:** Increased building coverage will not materially worsen stormwater, heat island, or water conservation outcomes.
- Hypothesis 4:** The combined effect of setback, height, coverage, and flag lot changes will be compatible with existing neighborhood character.

What this looks like in practice

A pilot in 2–3 willing neighborhoods or council districts, structured as a series of Build-Measure-Learn cycles. The first cycle focuses on the highest-risk assumptions — pricing and buyer profiles. Subsequent cycles examine infrastructure, environmental performance, and neighborhood compatibility. After each cycle, the City reviews the data, refines the approach, and decides how to proceed. Over 2–3 years, this produces a well-tested policy informed by local evidence, ready for confident citywide adoption.

Salt Lake City has shown openness to this kind of structured evaluation. When the City Council updated the ADU ordinance in 2023, it built in a three-year review cycle to assess whether the changes were producing the intended outcomes. Applying that same instinct — structured evaluation with defined measurement points — to the most significant residential zoning change in decades would produce a stronger, more durable result.

The opportunity

A Lean Startup approach is a tool for proponents of housing reform, not an obstacle to it. If the policy works as intended, the pilot produces the evidence to demonstrate it — and citywide adoption becomes an evidence-based decision with broad support. If adjustments are needed, the pilot reveals them early, when they’re inexpensive to make. Either way, the City ends up with a stronger, more durable policy than one adopted on projections alone.

The question is not whether to act. It is how to act in a way that produces the best outcomes. Lean Startup methodology offers a proven path.

Applying Lean Startup to land use: important considerations

Lean Startup methodology was developed for software and product design, where iterations are fast and reversible. Land use policy operates differently in several important ways, and applying this methodology thoughtfully means acknowledging those differences.

Physical outcomes are permanent. In software, a failed feature can be rolled back in a day. In land use, a building constructed during a pilot is there for 50–100 years regardless of what subsequent data reveals. This means the pilot must be designed carefully from the start — informed by existing peer-reviewed evidence, not treated as a low-stakes experiment. The stakes for each individual building are high even if the policy is still being refined. This is precisely why starting from what’s known (rather than from scratch) matters so much in this context.

Developers need regulatory stability. A continuously shifting code would freeze investment rather than enable it — the opposite of the goal. Developers plan projects months or years in advance and need predictable rules to secure financing, design buildings, and manage risk. A well-designed pilot addresses this by establishing clear, stable rules within the pilot area for a defined period, then evaluating outcomes at a planned milestone — not by changing the rules mid-cycle.

Page 2

The methodology applies to policy design, not to the built environment. The Build-Measure-Learn cycles refine the ordinance — the dimensional standards, ownership ratios, affordability mechanisms, and investor protections — before it becomes permanent citywide policy. The goal is to get the policy right through structured learning, so that when it is adopted at scale, the rules are stable, evidence-based, and durable. The iteration happens in the policy design phase; the implementation phase that follows should be as predictable as any other zoning standard.

These considerations do not diminish the value of the approach — they sharpen it. A Lean Startup pilot in land use is not a sandbox where anything goes. It is a disciplined process that takes the permanence of physical outcomes seriously, respects developers’ need for stability, and uses structured learning to produce a stronger, more durable policy than one adopted without local evidence.

Sources

Ries, 2011: Ries, E. *The Lean Startup: How Today’s Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful Businesses.* Crown Business.

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Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, 2024: “The Roles of Single-Family Housing Investors, Big and Small, in the Fifth District.” *Econ Focus*, Q4 2024.

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ELPCO (East Liberty Park Community Organization) - www.eastlibertypark.org - elpcoslc@gmail.com



April 17, 2026

To whom it may concern,

We are submitting this written comment in response to the proposed *Expanding Housing Options* zoning code changes put forth by Salt Lake City. Our community council recognizes the need to increase housing density in our growing city and supports thoughtful approaches to meeting this demand. We believe these goals can be achieved while still preserving the unique character, walkability, and neighborhood cohesion that define our community.

Our council acknowledges that accommodating growth will require creative solutions. As outlined in a [statement published on our website](#), we support increased “Missing Middle” or gentle-density housing which the proposed code change also aims to promote. A foundational principle of Missing Middle development is that additional density should integrate seamlessly into the existing neighborhood fabric. Liberty Wells already reflects this approach, with duplexes and triplexes interspersed among single-family homes throughout our district. We do not, however, support “sideways townhomes” or slot homes that do not face the street. These designs do not promote walkability or safety and can create physical and social barriers between neighbors. We encourage the Planning Commission and City Council to consider the body of research on slot homes and to establish clear guardrails to prevent their proliferation, particularly within the interior blocks of residential neighborhoods in Salt Lake City.

While we support the overarching goals of the *Expanding Housing Options* proposal, we would also like to raise several specific concerns for consideration:

- **Housing affordability:** Although a primary objective of the rezone is to improve affordability, the proposal does not include provisions, such as requirements for owner-occupied units, that encourage the development of for-sale housing rather than rentals. This omission may limit opportunities for long-term homeownership, family friendly development, and community stability.
- **Historic districts:** The proposed language related to local historic districts does not provide sufficient clarity regarding whether nonconforming or noncontributing historic structures could be targets for demolition under the revised code.
- **Parking impacts:** We anticipate that parking challenges may arise, particularly on the narrow streets common in Liberty Wells. The proposal’s requirement of one parking space per unit does not adequately account for households with multiple drivers and vehicles.

- **Spot rezoning:** Finally, while we recognize that the proposal applies to a limited set of zones, we remain concerned about the potential for spot rezoning within the core of established residential neighborhoods. In alignment with our support for Missing Middle housing, we do not believe that high-density zoning is appropriate in areas surrounded by one-story, single-family homes.

Thank you for considering our perspective and for your continued work to balance housing needs with neighborhood character and livability.

Sincerely,

Margaret G. Coppin
Chair, Liberty Wells Community Council

cc. Liberty Wells Community Council



May 4, 2026

TO: Salt Lake City Planning Commission

FROM: Judi Short, Vice Chair and Land Use Chair
Sugar House Community Council

RE: Expanding Housing Options

This is a good idea, but if it isn't done right, it will be about as successful as accessible dwelling units have been. Finishing 15 ADU's a year for 8 years is not what we would call a success story.

If one of the goals is to build wealth among the younger generation, you must make home ownership a priority in this plan. However, it is hard to see that as a goal right now. There is nothing to keep investor developers from buying up land and building rental homes or apartments. We want to see home ownership as a priority before we can think about approving this plan. There should be a deed restriction that dwelling needs to be owner-occupied. **Not every dwelling, but a certain percent.**

Parking and transportation are big problems in our city. We know most houses with more than one bedroom have 4-6 renters, and each has a car. If we had a decent transportation plan, that would make a big difference. Looking at a transit map, it looks pretty good. But if you try to use it, you spend a lot of time waiting for the transit to get to your stop. Trying to get from A to B and then C in about the same time as driving a car is a joke. We need a transit system with good connections, so we don't have to wait 20 minutes between every transfer. If a bus or train came every 10 minutes, more people would ride. If more people ride, UTA would have more revenue to buy more buses or trains.

What about focusing on areas that have alleys, if the alleys are wide enough to meet the fire code? Maybe that is a better place to start because they can park more cars off the street and the rear homes will have a way to access the parking, rather than parking on the street, or using a lot of the buildable land filled with driveways. Everyone I talk to says that for the most part, every parking stall in a neighborhood on the street is filled up by evening. We have to put parking on the parcel to make this liveable. And then we have less land on which to build.

These homes are small. Perhaps they will attract first-time home buyers, but what happens when they want to add children to the family? One child could go in the second bedroom, if there is one, but the second child probably pushes the family to look for something larger. That means either very expensive or outside of Salt Lake City. For that reason, this project needs to have options for families with children built into the mix. Demand for larger homes will not go away, just because you don't build it. The proposal highlights the need for family housing, yet doesn't include any mechanism to make sure these new dwellings meet that need. The plan could emphasize three-bedroom units or homes with a livable basement that won't take additional land but would provide a larger unit.

The reduction of setbacks means homes will be much closer together. Maybe the only saving grace is that they must have a driveway. That might make the space between houses wider. Will they be able to maintain their house, such as painting the 28' wall between their neighbor's house? Can they get their garbage can from the back to the curb on garbage day? Can they mow their weeds?

Salt Lake City/Housing Policy/SHCC Letter to PC Expanding Housing Options #2.docx

Figure out a way to control the number of homes being torn down and newly built on a block in any given year. We don't want a massive overhaul of an entire neighborhood. Incentivize additions, rather than teardowns. Nothing in this plan prevents one block from being heavily redeveloped all at once. Eventually, this will alter the city irreversibly.

Removing green space and trees doesn't make a neighborhood more livable. This needs some written requirements. If we do away with trees and green space, the area gets hotter, which makes people not want to live there. How about tree preservation requirements, could that be incentivized?

Design review should still be a part of the approval process. We know that uses up staff time, but we don't want to end up with neighborhoods with cheap box homes that don't add any character to a neighborhood. It is pretty easy to walk around and identify the buildings with no design review.

We have talked about flag lots. The hard part is having a car go down your driveway close to your house twice a day, every day. They should be configured to avoid that, if possible. Keeping the alleys would help with that. And be careful about tall houses from the property line next door. I've seen some pretty onerous ones, because their upper windows look right down into your tiny back yard or directly in your windows. People stop using their back yard, which is a shame.

The elephant in the room is affordable housing. We haven't said a word about it, but I'm told Council members and staff are worried about that. We all spent a lot of time studying this issue when that ordinance was written. [I have attached a page that planner Andy Hulka provided that was given to the Planning Commission for their March 11, 2026, meeting,](#) which helps to explain how the two ordinances can work together.

In conclusion, there are a lot of details that have to play well together to make this a success.

- Home ownership needs to really be a priority, so that buyers can build up equity. If the property owner is renting everything, it might provide more affordable housing, but it won't provide any long-term gain to the person paying the rent.
- Public transit needs to expand. A good transit system would reduce the need for cars, which could make more available land on which to build.
- Alleys could be maintained and more usable, to provide access to back yards for parking for additional units.
- Build larger units for families. Emphasize a basement for extra bedrooms without using more land.
- Spell out the need for green space and make it a written requirement. We need trees to cool the air if the houses are so close together.
- Emphasize the Affordable Housing Initiatives, that needs to be part of this. If we don't have affordable units, we get more Air BnB's and developers building for profit, not to help the citizens.

RE: (EXTERNAL) Affordable Housing Incentives

Hulka, Andrew <Andy.Hulka@slc.gov>
To: Judi Short [REDACTED]

Mon, Apr 27, 2026 at 2:52 PM

Hi Judi,

Do you have a specific question or concern about the Affordable Housing Incentives? We've been including a discussion about the differences between the proposal and the other housing types that are already allowed (ADUs and AHJ developments) to help explain the differences. Here is an excerpt of what we provided to the Planning Commission during their March 11 meeting:

Impacts on Affordable Housing Incentives

One key concern that both Council and staff share is the potential impact the Small Lot Dwelling proposal could have on the recently adopted Affordable Housing Incentives. The Affordable Housing Incentives ordinance allows the construction of up to 4 units on a residential lot, but only if 1 or 2 of the units are sold or rented below market rate. This incentive is a good option for homebuilders who have experience with affordable housing, but the process can be complex for less experienced builders or average homeowners.

Small Lot Dwellings are an additional strategy to encourage new construction that is relatively more affordable than what is currently available. The Small Lot Dwelling proposal stipulates that new housing types must have a limited footprint and floor area. This is an effort to encourage new construction that is relatively more affordable than a larger residential building without requiring the additional complexity of a below-market-rate project. This approach is similar to what has recently been implemented in Durham, NC, and Portland, OR. These cities have demonstrated that missing middle housing types and smaller homes on smaller lots were between \$250,000-\$300,000 less expensive than larger new construction single-family homes.

The primary difference between the two options is that Affordable Housing Incentives limits price and Small Lot Dwellings limits size. Under the Affordable Housing Incentives code, new buildings and units can be any size, subject to the base zoning standards. Under the Small Lot Dwelling code, the maximum footprint and floor area regulations would limit the size of the building while no deed restriction is required to limit the price of each unit. In addition to the Affordable Housing Incentives' required deed restrictions, there are also yearly reports that the property owner must file with the Planning Division in order to verify compliance with the affordability standards. Small Lot Dwellings would not require deed restrictions or yearly reports, easing the burden on property owners and reducing the administrative resources and costs for the city.

Both ordinances are intended to increase production of affordable housing, but the ordinances differ in the route getting there. There is data that supports the claim that smaller homes on smaller lots cost less. The Small Lot Dwelling ordinance could be considered a form of naturally occurring affordable housing.

Thanks,



ANDY HULKA, AICP | (He/Him)
Senior Planner
PLANNING DIVISION | SALT LAKE CITY CORPORATION
Office: (801) 535-6608
Email: andy.hulka@slc.gov
WWW.SLC.GOV

Disclaimer: The Planning Division strives to give the best customer service possible and to respond to questions as accurately as possible based upon the information provided. However, answers given at the counter and/or prior to application are not binding and they are not a substitute for formal Final Action, which may only occur in response to a complete application to the Planning Division. Those relying on verbal input or preliminary written feedback do so at their own risk and do not vest any property with development rights.

From: Judi Short <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2026 2:05 PM
To: Hulka, Andrew <Andy.Hulka@slc.gov>
Subject: (EXTERNAL) Affordable Housing Incentives

Caution: This is an external email. Please be cautious when clicking links or opening attachments.

Why is it there is not a word about this in the EHO? Makes no sense to me?

Makes it sound like someone has to do one or the other?

Judi Short, First-Vice Chair and Land Use Chair

Sugar House Community Council

801,864.7387



RE: (EXTERNAL) Affordable Housing Incentives

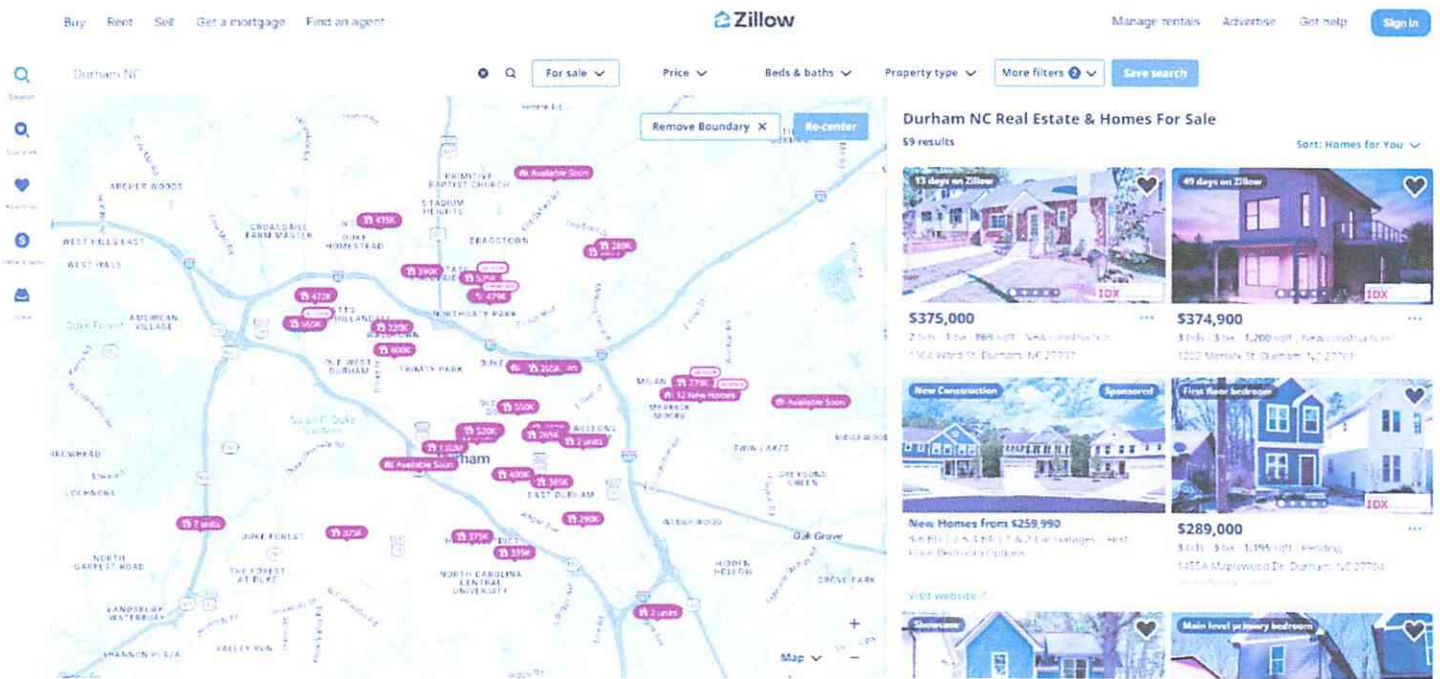
Hulka, Andrew <Andy.Hulka@slc.gov>
To: Judi Short

Wed, Apr 29, 2026 at 11:35 AM

Judi,

I think when we spoke at the open house, I may have mentioned why the Durham, NC example was so noteworthy to our team. Their city adopted similar changes to allow more units to be built, so long as the new units met certain size limits. Similar to the SLC proposal, their code aimed to achieve affordability through limiting the size rather than the price directly. They found that the new units built under this code were considerably more affordable than the average priced home in the area.

If you visit a real estate listing website like Zillow, it's possible to filter your search results to only show new construction that is under 1,250 sq. ft. What you will see is that most listings are in the \$300k or \$400k range, with a few listings above or below those price ranges.



Research out of Durham found that those small homes sold for about \$250,000 less than the median home price in the area. This relative affordability is something that we hope to replicate in Salt Lake.

[Quoted text hidden]

Thoughts on my position letter?

Anthony Wright

Fri, Jan 16, 2026 at 11:48 AM

To: Judi Short [REDACTED] Jan Hemming [REDACTED]

These comments are my own and not a position of the EBCC board.

Dear Planning Staff,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the *Expanding Housing Options* (EHO) proposal currently under consideration by Salt Lake City. After reviewing the official proposal, including the EHO Overview document and associated planning materials, I would like to express several concerns, particularly regarding the proposed **maximum home size of 1,200 sq. ft. under the Small Lot Development ordinance**. I respectfully request that the City reconsider this cap due to the implications for family housing, neighborhood character, and long-term affordability.

1. The 1,200 sq. ft. maximum home size conflicts with existing neighborhood patterns

The EHO Overview outlines that Small Lot Dwellings would allow “**small homes (up to 1,200 sq. ft.) on small lots (as small as 2,000 sq. ft.)**”.

While I understand the City’s goal of expanding attainable housing, this size limitation does **not** align with actual conditions in many R-1 neighborhoods, particularly on the east bench. In St. Mary’s and similar areas, single-family homes routinely range from **3,000–5,000 sq. ft.** The introduction of multiple 1,200 sq. ft. structures on large lots would represent a significant departure from the established built environment and could create a “string of ADUs” effect behind existing homes.

For example, on my own lot of over **20,000 sq. ft.**, the proposal would theoretically allow four (4) tiny homes, each roughly a quarter the size of the surrounding homes, resulting in an outcome that looks and feels inconsistent with neighborhood norms. This directly contradicts the stated goal that new housing should “**fit the scale of the neighborhood**”.

2. The proposal does not adequately consider the needs of families with children

The City notes an ongoing **decline in households with children**, with only **17.8% of SLC households having kids in 2023**, down from 24.8% in 2010. Salt lake city has less children in the public school system than we did in the 1960s. The EHO Overview highlights this statistic as part of the rationale for expanding housing options.

However, the proposed 1,200 sq. ft. maximum does *not* support the needs of growing families who require more space. Many families, including my own, seek larger homes when planning for children. My friends with young children who currently live in 1,500–1,800 sq. ft. bungalows are actively trying to upsize, not downsize.

If Salt Lake City wants to retain families, it must provide *both* smaller attainable homes *and* larger family-friendly options. Imposing a blanket 1,200 sq. ft. cap on new small-lot homes inadvertently:

- reduces the supply of appropriately sized family housing,
 - pushes families to demolish older homes on full-size lots to build larger replacements,
 - and accelerates the trend of families leaving the city for surrounding suburbs where larger homes are available.
-

3. Larger homes on subdivided lots can *protect* existing small homes, not eliminate them

The City emphasizes that missing-middle housing and small homes tend to cost less and therefore increase attainability, noting examples where small-lot and missing-middle units sell for **\$150,000–\$300,000 less** than typical single-family homes.

While this could be true citywide, the east bench’s teardown trend demonstrates that **demand for larger homes is not going away**. Allowing only tiny homes in these neighborhoods may unintentionally create the *opposite* of the intended effect:

Scenario A — Under the proposed rules:

A large lot (like mine) can only host 1,200 sq. ft. homes → families who want 2,500–4,000 sq. ft. homes must instead buy **older bungalows on standard lots**, demolish them, and rebuild much larger homes.

Scenario B — If larger homes were allowed on subdivided parcels:

Those same families could instead buy **larger new homes built on appropriately subdivided large parcels**, reducing pressure on smaller existing homes and limiting demolitions in established neighborhoods.

A real-life example exists on **1700 S between 1800–1900 E and between 2100–2300 E**, where cul-de-sac developments added roughly 15 family-sized homes on 2 parcels. These developments successfully introduced more families *without* requiring the demolition of 15 individual bungalows. This is a model worth preserving.

4. The proposed approach may unintentionally decrease affordability for families

The EHO Overview highlights that **median home prices have increased more than 83% since 2005** and that **72.6% of households cannot afford the median home**.

While increasing unit count can help affordability in the aggregate, limiting new construction in high-demand neighborhoods to only 1,200 sq. ft. homes may make *larger* homes even scarcer, and therefore even more expensive.

Scarcity of family-sized homes leads to:

- higher prices for the few that exist,
- more aggressive competition,
- increased displacement of smaller homes through teardown activity,

- and more families leaving the city altogether.

This runs counter to the City's goal of providing "more housing options for families at all stages of life".

5. A more flexible framework would better serve the City's goals

I strongly support the City's desire to diversify housing types and provide attainable options. However, a **one-size-fits-all 1,200 sq. ft. cap** is too restrictive.

I encourage the City to consider:

Recommended Adjustments

- Allow a *range* of unit sizes on subdivided lots rather than a single maximum.
- Permit larger homes on large lots where doing so aligns with existing neighborhood character.
- Implement design standards to ensure compatibility without restricting size so severely.
- Limit total units per parcel based on size and access—but not individual unit size.
- Provide pathways for creating multi-home subdivisions similar to the 1700 S examples, which successfully expanded family housing stock.

This balanced approach would allow:

- more attainable small homes,
 - more appropriately sized family homes,
 - fewer teardowns,
 - more stability for existing neighborhoods, and
 - more families choosing (and affording) to stay within Salt Lake City.
-

Conclusion

Salt Lake City's EHO initiative has admirable goals and many thoughtful components. However, the 1,200 sq. ft. maximum home size is too restrictive and could undermine the City's ambitions to support families, maintain neighborhood character, and provide a range of attainable housing choices.

I respectfully request that the City reconsider this limit and adopt a more flexible, context-sensitive approach that reflects the diversity of Salt Lake's neighborhoods and housing needs.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,
Anthony Wright

Fw: (EXTERNAL) Fw: EHO effort-low density zones

Message 3

cindy cromer [REDACTED]

Mon, Jan 26, 2026 at 11:17 AM

All-The planners working on the EHO effort (Expanding Housing Options) presented at the last meeting of The Network. Their presentation should be available from Jasmine's posting. At the meeting, I expressed my concern that the new proposal to increase density could undermine the incentives for less expensive housing which require deed restrictions for 30 years. I have not followed up on that comment. Meanwhile, the City has distributed 45- day notices to community organizations. In Central City, most of the zoning is multi-family, except on the interiors of blocks. Because the EHO proposal includes the SR-1 and SR-1A zones, I want to look at the potential impacts on these wonderful enclaves.

The timing on this proposal is unfortunate. We don't have water for the density that the City leaders are insisting on generating: Welcome to Utah; please bring your own water.

Please do not hit Reply All. If you have suggestions/ideas, I am willing to collect them and then forward the bundle. Relentlessly, cindy c

From: cindy cromer [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 26, 2026 10:55 AM
To: Hulka, Andrew <Andy.Hulka@slc.gov>; Benjamin.Buckley@slc.gov <Benjamin.Buckley@slc.gov>
Subject: Re: (EXTERNAL) Fw: EHO effort

Andy and Ben-Thanks for the message. I am dealing with a half dozen or so land use proposals from Northpoint to the hotel in SH. I haven't gotten to the EHO effort. I did receive an e mail from a community council chair about the 45-day notice and urged her to request a presentation.

I will look for a presentation in the Central Community and forward your message to the CCNC team. Our housing on the interiors of blocks is the most family-oriented we have and the least unapproachable in terms of price. I do not want to see it gobbled up by townhomes or bigger/more single-family houses. The interiors of these blocks are perfect as is. Back to you asap, cindy c

From: Hulka, Andrew <Andy.Hulka@slc.gov>
Sent: Monday, January 26, 2026 10:36 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Buckley, Benjamin <Benjamin.Buckley@slc.gov>
Subject: RE: (EXTERNAL) Fw: Impact fees drive up costs to build affordable housing in CA

Hi Cindy,

Ruedi passed along your message below about the Expanding Housing Options proposal. We'd be more than happy to chat with you about the project and answer any questions you might have. I know you mentioned that you wanted to take some time reviewing the project website before reaching out again, so just let us know if you'd like to set something up. I'm happy to talk over the phone or we could schedule a time to meet in-person.

We are also in the process of scheduling several open houses for the public to learn more about the project and provide feedback. We will have one somewhere in the Central City area sometime in February or March. Once that is confirmed, we will reach out to each of the community organizations so you can help spread the word.

Thank you,



ANDY HULKA, AICP | (He/Him)

Senior Planner

PLANNING DIVISION | SALT LAKE CITY CORPORATION

Office: (801) 535-6608

Email: andy.hulka@slc.gov

WWW.SLC.GOV

Disclaimer: The Planning Division strives to give the best customer service possible and to respond to questions as accurately as possible based upon the information provided. However, answers given at the counter and/or prior to application are not binding and they are not a substitute for formal Final Action, which may only occur in response to a complete application to the Planning Division. Those relying on verbal input or preliminary written feedback do so at their own risk and do not vest any property with development rights.

cindy cromer

Mon, Jan 26, 2026 at 12:15 PM

Just heard from Ben Buckley about the City's plans for multi-neighborhood meetings. See highlighting. The e mail for the project is housingoptions@slc.gov

Apologies for the clutter; please remember, "No" to Reply All. Onward, c

Benjamin<Benjamin.Buckley@slc.gov>

You; Hulka, Andrew; housingoptions

Hi Cindy,

We know that there will be interest from each of the Recognized Community Organizations, so our team is working to schedule joint open houses throughout the months of February and March that CCNC can attend. These will be combined open houses open to multiple community organizations.

We are working with the Main Library and the Leonardo to see which venue has availability to host a large community open house for the city's central neighborhoods. Once the open house dates are confirmed, we will reach out to you again so you can notify your community members. Feel free to contact us anytime for more updates.

Thanks,

Ben Buckley I (*He/Him/His*)
Principal Planner
PLANNING DIVISION | SALT LAKE CITY CORPORATION
Office: 801-535-7142
Email: benjamin.buckley@slc.gov
WWW.SLC.GOV www.slc.gov/planning

From: cindy crome [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 26, 2026 11:17 AM

Subject: Fw: (EXTERNAL) Fw: EHO effort-low density zones

feedback, expanding housing options

Keith alleman [REDACTED]
To: Judi Short [REDACTED]

Thu, Apr 23, 2026 at 12:10 PM

Judi,

I was at the Sugar House Community Council Land Use and Zoning meeting on the 20th. Following the meeting I tried to think of practicable suggestions to improve the expanding housing options proposal. I should start by saying that on balance I think this proposal is good. I think it improves, versus the status quo.

With that out of the way, I did try to brainstorm some particulars, which are below.

I support the removal of restrictions on how many duplexes can be on a block face (R-2, Slide 14 of 31 in the associated presentation) and if any similar restrictions on duplex/triplex/quadplex per block face still exist for other zones, I would remove them, too.

I do wish there were a way to make increased density more onerous on a block face that already has high density and more appealing on a block face that currently has low density. I understand the concern that the Council might create something seen as a "taking" of property rights. But all the same, I just wish there were a way in policy to reflect the fact that if there are two block faces of the same length, the one that is already occupied by fifteen residential units has less capacity to absorb a new triplex (in terms of noise, onstreet parking, etc.) than the one that is only occupied by eight residential units.

Additionally, at the meeting there was a concern among other attendees that a neighborhood would suddenly change in "character." They were looking for a practical way to limit the rate of change. One possibility is that if currently there really is an R-2 limit on number of duplexes per block face, then there could be something like that, covering all these housing options and applied to all these zones, that escalates over time, to force any change to be gradual. This would also make it so that the block faces that already have high density would be the last ones where more could be added, in keeping with my previous paragraph.

Actually, I wish there were an overall density index that was used to guide how appealing or onerous an additional change to a property would be, taking into account how much of these other things already exist on that block face: nondetached (duplexes, triplexes, townhomes/terraces [or "row houses"]) housing, private market short-term rental (or whatever I'm supposed to say instead of a brand name), and ADUs. Personally I'd also include the conditions of the block face across the street, too, if it's also residential, since their impact on the commons (parking, congestion, "character") is so commingled.

The proposed setback distances for front, rear, and corner side yards all seem fine to me. At the meeting people seemed concerned about decreasing the narrower requirement for interior side yards (like from 8' or 6' to 4' for R-1). I know that if I were a resident and my next-door neighbor was building a new building right near my property line, my first concern would be how tall is that wall going to be. Out of all of the qualities of the new construction, height of that wall would matter more than any other quality (more than the number of units, or the width of the building, or its color, or anything else). So maybe the interior side setback could be a function of the height of the building? For example it could be 4' for buildings less than or equal to 17' in height, and stay at 6' or 8' for anything taller---akin to the way (Slide 12) that principal building maximum gross floor area per unit is a function of building height.

For small lot dwellings, I think that single-family dwellings should be allowed to have at least up to 60% building coverage (Slide 12). Right now if I'm interpreting it correctly that is not possible. If a lot has to be at least 2000sf and a footprint (for single-family) can't be more than 1000sf, then the coverage can't be more than 50%.... that's if I'm guessing right about how building coverage is calculated.

Thanks for your time,
Keith Alleman

EXPANDING HOUSING OPTIONS

Jan Hemming
To: Judi Short

Mon, Apr 13, 2026 at 5:42 PM

All:

Here are the concerns that a group of us recorded while meeting Friday.

Major concerns about new zoning codes.

4.10.26

1. Duplexes can be built anywhere. They are usually restricted to end caps. This means duplexes are allowed at mid-block. Could have solar impacts and massing impacts as well as “out of character” impacts on existing neighborhoods.
2. Unlike the ADU codes, there is no home ownership provision which opens the door to investment developers flipping the property for rentals.
3. Need clarification about how this applies in historic districts. Appears it would not impact LHDs, but the language is confusing and suggests that non-forming or non-contributing homes are candidates for high-density zones and could be built within existing LHDs or historic districts.
4. Despite what the study says, how can the city say adding more housing density does not impact – or increase -- the city’s total use of water, or add cost burdens to sewer and utility infrastructure?
5. Great skepticism that this zoning code will achieve the goal of attracting more families because the so-called homes are limited to very small sized lots and a small 1,200 gross SF footprint.
6. Planning staff was asked how many units this new code might contribute to SLC’s housing inventory. They could not provide an estimate.
7. This project needs a professional market analysis to determine the real impact of this zoning code on SLC’s housing. Too much guesswork. We’ve already seen this with ADU’s. According to the head of Planning, only 118 ADUs have been completed since 2018 (January 2026 email) – despite a myriad of projections that it would trigger a housing renaissance.
8. Basic flaw: Trying to solve a civic/sociological issue with technocratic tools.
9. Parking issues could easily arise, especially in neighborhoods with narrow roadways. The code only requires one parking spot per unit. Doesn’t account for a unit that may include multiple drivers with multiple cars.
10. What other alternatives can the city consider?

At the time of the meeting, the Board of Directors was in the process of reviewing the proposed amendments to the Charter of the City of San Diego. The Board of Directors is currently reviewing the proposed amendments to the Charter of the City of San Diego. The Board of Directors is currently reviewing the proposed amendments to the Charter of the City of San Diego.

Screenshot 2026-04-13 at 08.28.26.png
56K

Fwd: Text zoning amendment.

Sheila O'Driscoll [REDACTED]

Tue, Mar 10, 2026 at 11:36 AM

To: Judi Short [REDACTED]

Judi,
As usual I'm running to get things done in the 11th hour.
I'm forwarding to you an email I sent to Jason Berntson in the city about the rezone.
I hope it's ok.
I have a number of mixed feelings. One that I didn't address to him, is that I just don't see any affordable housing coming out of this, at least as far as "granny flats" or ADU's in my neighborhood anyway.
There are actually very few lots around me that I think could legitimately qualify.
(Unless they do a second story.)
We have had 4 deaths in our local ward in the last two weeks.
One was the 95 yr. old lady who's house we own. I've had a number of things drawing my attention away from this rezone issue.
Thanks for all you do!
Sheila O'Driscoll
Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Sheila O'Driscoll [REDACTED]
Date: March 10, 2026 at 10:53:23 AM MDT
To: Janet Hopkins [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: Text zoning amendment.

This the letter I sent to the planning commission about the rezone.
I hope I didn't make too many grammar and spelling errors!
Do I sound like a lunatic?
Sheila
Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Sheila O'Driscoll [REDACTED]
Date: March 10, 2026 at 10:17:22 AM MDT
To: jason.berntson@slc.gov
Subject: Text zoning amendment.

Sent from my iPhone
Mr. Berntson:
I'm grateful for the opportunity to respond to you regarding the proposed zoning text amendments.
I attended the SHCC LUZ meeting in February to hear issues and concerns and opinions from those more up to date than I on this issue.
Sarah Young, Judi Short among other SHCC trustees and Soren Simonson and I were in attendance. In total about 10 people.
I attended the open house the next night at HHS.
I want to thank the staff for their preparation. The maps and handouts were very helpful. It

was disappointing that the AV equipment was not available to add to the discussion. The staff was kind and hospitable.

My personal concerns now do not differ from what they were at the LUZ sub committee meeting.

They are as follows:

1. Many of my neighbors and I purchased residential property in a well established neighborhood that had an established sense of community and lifestyle.

That's what many I speak to want to maintain.

Concerns include:

a. Added traffic and parking issues.

b. How will the city actually be able to monitor and keep potential landlords renting to too many people in a single family home or apt.?

c. How will the city be able to make sure that new construction meets zoning requirements.

d. What potential negatives to residential property values be?

(instead of living next to another single family home with a nominal amount of people, the potential for college kid renters and parties that are noisy , late and often littered with debris afterwards). Disrupting the established peace and quiet that has existed for decades?... this has happened a number of times up my street as single family homes have become rentals.)

e. Safety: there is hardly room for a large emergency vehicle to pass safely on our residential streets in my neighborhood hood with vehicles parked legally on both sides of the street.

It is already virtually impossible for two small vehicles to pass safely each other with legally parked vehicles on the street, let alone an SUV, large truck or a delivery van.

f. I believe adequate notice should be given to those who have to put up with new construction and the safety and disruption that construction vehicles and their supplies before the construction begins because of the negative issues that arise from it.

g. While I genuinely appreciate the open house options, the HHS effort was an epic fail. I doubt there were 50 locals there besides those who had already attended the LUZ mtg the night before.

This is NOT a legitimate successful effort to inform the people who live in my neighborhood and own residential property of permanent potential options and negatives to the proposed zoning changes.

It may have completed a check on a required list of to do's required before a decision is made, but it did not reach any reasonable amount of people to get valid and reliable data on the public support or rejection of this rezone!

Notices to local public and private schools via their SCC and to local churches and on public bulletin boards at local businesses would vastly improve the public notice.

We need at least hundreds of people attending the HHS open house and to fill up the auditorium to get even a fraction of notice to the abutting community and their feelings about the proposal!

Finally, I did speak with 3 other people attending the open house. All three had reservations mostly regarding the potential negative impacts to their established neighborhoods and the lack of the city's ability to regulate the new zoning if approved. My question was: What do you know about the proposal and how do you you feel about it?

I served from 1994 to 2014 as a trustee and interested resident of my neighborhood on the SHCC.

Virtually no one I speak to has any idea about this proposal. I have tried to point them to the LUZ sub committee of the SHCC for information.

Sincerely,

Sheila O'Driscoll

Meeting tonight

Breanne Clement [REDACTED]

Mon, Apr 20, 2026 at 3:47 PM

To: Judi Short [REDACTED]

Hi Judi,

It turns out I will be able to attend the meeting tonight. This is my overall first impression of the proposal's problems and possible solutions. I'm not sure if this has already been addressed so I wanted to share it to avoid discussing already covered topics.

The City states that one of its primary goals is to "ensure compatibility with existing neighborhoods" yet the proposal is too broad and flexible to achieve this goal. Overall this proposal is good for housing production but does not provide the safeguards that would ensure compatibility with existing neighborhoods.

Issue 1:

This proposal provides a strong financial incentive to tear down existing homes and rebuild at max density by::

- Allowing 4 units per lot
- Reducing lot sizes to 2,000 sq ft per unit
- Increasing building coverage up to 60%

Possible Solutions:

- Add demolition review thresholds
- Incentivize conversions within existing structures
- Incentivize additions vs full teardown

Issue 2:

The proposal reduces parking requirements but does not include a corresponding neighborhood parking management strategy.

- Requires only 1 parking space per unit
- States that reducing parking is intentional to support walkability. This assumes behavior changes faster than reality, especially in neighborhoods without strong transit.

Possible Solutions:

- Tie parking minimums to transit access and walkability scores
- Require more robust parking plans for multi-unit developments.

Issue 3:

The proposal provides no protections against rapid, clustered redevelopment. Nothing prevents one block from being heavily redeveloped all at once.

- Proposal does not address this at all

Possible Solutions:

- Phase in implementation geographically
- Limit number of new multi-unit permits per block per year

Issue 4:

The proposal highlights the need for family housing, but does not include mechanisms to ensure that new units meet those needs.

- Nowhere in the proposal does it require family-sized units.

Possible solutions:

- Require 3 bedroom units
- Require ground-level units for families
- Require open space and usable outdoor areas

Issue 5:

The proposal assumes affordability but does not guarantee affordability

- Smaller units may cost less, but there is no data to support that.
- No affordability requirements

Possible solutions:

- Create incentives for income-restricted units
- Have a tracking measurement for actual affordability outcomes

Issue 6:

The proposal does not preserve tree canopy and green space that contribute to neighborhood livability

- It encourages more density for water savings by increasing lot coverage to 60%, but has no actual numbers on whether this would make a big difference.

Possible Solutions:

- Tree preservation requirements
- Minimum open space requirements

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Draft Letter to Planning Commission On Proposed Residential Zoning Changes

Jeff Larsen

Sat, Apr 25, 2026 at 6:47 PM

[Redacted]

Alan and all,

I think this letter does a great job of listing out the concerns.

I've included one sentence from the letter with an added highlighted word, that is the only grammar/typing update that I would suggest to the letter's text.

"Our residents are much more likely to be concerned if this becomes a general practice within their neighborhoods, rather than something confined to vacant lots or run-down houses. "

Finally - everything in the paragraph below is implied, or alluded to in the letter... but here's my nutshell/summary of my concerns, that I would love to see somehow incorporated in the letter, to "wrap a bow around it"...

My overarching concern is that this creates the opportunity to make changes that only consider the "micro-view" without looking at the "macro-view". In the past the City has been against spot zoning that creates irregularities in the character of neighborhoods. These changes effectively create and endorse opportunities to do exactly that. The real issues aren't about sawtooth effects or changing setbacks, and measures to increase density. But with increased overall density there should be some trade-offs - For instance, with decreased setbacks and an increase to the number of buildings per lot/parcel, if those are looked at in the macro view, across city blocks or larger subdivision plats, there can be plans for trade offs to those measures, that would still allow for an overall increase density. Things like creating open or greenspaces with parks or community gardens, within that larger plan. Overall, density could be increased, even substantially, where it's appropriate, while maintaining a consistent character and feel through the neighborhood. Increasing density in these micro views doesn't allow for any of that to come into consideration. Salt Lake City's overall character and quality of life has been created in no small part, by primarily looking at the macro-view of planning, and limiting the exceptions where the micro-view takes priority. These changes seem like they flip all that history on its head, just at a moment when density is poised to increase faster than ever, rather than keeping with the principles that have built an overall exceptional experience, living in Salt Lake City.

Jeff

[Quoted text hidden]

Expanding Housing Options Proposal

Peter Wetzel

To: Judi Short

Wed, Apr 22, 2026 at 2:18 PM

Thanks for the correspondence, Judi.

Yes, I am very interested in speaking with you. In the interim I offer the following short comments:

- 24 individuals on my block (of 20 houses) cosigned my April 6 letter of opposition to Councilman Dugan.
- I am inclined to believe my block is not a statistical outlier, i.e. – with proper explanation of the proposed Small Lot Development (SLD) ordinance to the property-owning citizens of SLC, I believe we would find city-wide opposition similar to that on my block.
- We have representative government - council members need to represent (and vote) the positions of their constituents.
- I watched the February 17th City Council working session during which the Planning Division made the presentation of the proposed zoning changes. During this meeting, Councilman Chris Wharton (3rd) voiced his opposition. Council Erika Carlson (5th) asked smart questions about mass teardowns of existing SFH's. Victoria Petro voiced her approval. Dan Dugan asked, "On a 6000 square foot lot, 3 dwellings could be built?" Was he asking this question to make a point, or was it a genuine inquiry? I'm hoping he was being "dumb like a fox".
- I'm not beating my chest, but I believe you will find the documents I sent to you with my arguments against Small Lot Development - at this point - are probably the best articulated to date. I have more arguments I am developing – including SLD to be a (regulatory) Taking as written in the 5th Amendment of the United States Constitution.

I'd be happy to meet with you to review my writings if you believe that would be helpful.

Best regards,

PETER

Peter Wetzel



From: Judi Short <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, April 22, 2026 12:29 PM
To: Peter Wetzel <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: Expanding Housing Options Proposal

I'm not ignoring you, just trying to catch up with too many things to do. I'm hoping to read everyone's comments in the next day or two, then maybe we can talk. No one thinks this is great, but Sarah says the Council Members are all in favor. Maybe we can figure out a way to make it less bad.

Judi Short



[Quoted text hidden]

Shea
4/27/26

Comments on EHO proposal

- 1) Despite the optimism in the proposal that seems to imply that homeowners will be able to build additional housing in their lots, it is clear to everyone that developers will be the agents of building most new units. The concept that owner occupancy is not required and that units can be sold invites the development of crass, cheap, and tacky buildings thrown up for profit only, with little regard to the feel of the street and neighborhood. With no design review and over the counter permitting, it gives carte blanche to developers who are not invested in our community, who may even be from out of state. This issue needs to be very carefully considered.
- 2) There needs to be a **limit** on the number of multifamily units or rowhouses on a block to prevent a monolithic appearance completely out of character for a neighborhood.
- 3) Fourplexes should not be allowed, period. Triplexes and sideways rowhouses on blocks that are almost entirely composed of single-story houses should be subject to **design review** to prevent the construction of architecturally rogue units looming over neighbors' homes and yards.
- 4) The requirement for only 1 parking space per unit is problematic as always, particularly with multifamily dwellings.
- 5) It will be a positive benefit if increased infill can reduce lawn water use without creating heat islands and barren cement mini-villages.
- 6) Any design review should put the kabosh on builders using more than 2 colors of panels on the sides of buildings, thereby reducing the tacky, *preschool* effect.
- 7) ***Finally, and most importantly,*** there should be pilot projects—2 or 3 zones chosen to launch, instead of throwing the whole city to the wolves at once. There is precedent for this as it was done for ADUs. There could be a 1 or 2 year pilot period, with design review, to give the best chance of implementing this for a positive result. Since it is anticipated that it will be a slow roll-out, there is surely no harm in doing the utmost to ensure the purported “**gentle infill.**”

I do appreciate the Planning Division's efforts to increase housing, and encourage further and careful tinkering with the proposed plan.

EHO Proposal.

Lynn Schwarz

Sun, Apr 19, 2026 at 3:49 PM

To: Judi Short

Rebecca Davis, Yvonne Martinez

Duplexes, twin homes, 2-family homes, townhomes and cottage homes on existing lot sizes and with present interior side lot setbacks are missing middle housing types that are compatible with existing neighborhoods and should be encouraged with down payment assistance and mortgage rate buy down programs.

Smaller lot sizes and sideways facing triplexes and quadplexes are not a compatible missing middle housing solution. While there are existing sideways facing triplexes and quadplexes that were built before 1995, their potential to overwhelm neighboring single family houses are mitigated by lower building heights, many times with first floors 1/2 below grade and larger than proposed interior side yard setbacks. Without these mitigating factors, a looming presence next to neighboring single family houses is assured.

There is a great likelihood that this proposal will negatively compete with the AHI program. While the EHO proposal would mandate smaller dwellings, but with possible multi-unit projects, they would be exempt from affordability deed restrictions and much more attractive to a developer. This is especially true on smaller lots. Also, when you include a density bonus for retaining an existing dwelling, using the AHI program is a less desirable option for the same amount of units.

Would smaller units of 850-1200 square feet be attractive for larger families, which is the stated target population for this program? It seems the reasonable maximum number of bedrooms for 850 square feet is 2 bedrooms (or 3 really, really small ones) and 3 bedrooms (or 4 really small ones) for 1200 square feet.

The median price of a house in many Salt Lake City neighborhoods is \$700,000-800,000. Would decreasing the price by approximately \$300,000 (yet to be proven feasible for a new build) really make the new dwellings affordable? With an income of \$75000, an affordable price is \$250,000, with rent at \$1875. With an income of \$95000, an affordable price is \$350,000-400,000, with affordable rent at \$2100-2375. Decreasing \$700,000 -800000 by approximately \$300,000 will realistically not meet these limits. In other words, will this program give you affordable units for larger families or incentivize institutional investors to buy up existing housing and replace single family homes with the maximum number of non- compatible smaller multi- unit dwellings?

Not generated by AI.

Affordable Housing Incentives

March 20, 2026

Councilman Dan Dugan
Salt Lake City Council District 6 Representative
451 South State Street, Rm 304
Salt Lake City, UT 84111

RE: Expanding Housing Options Proposal

Dear Councilman Dugan:

I recently read in Building Salt Lake and other publications about the Salt Lake City **Expanding Housing Options Proposal**. Reading these articles prompted me to:

1. Visit the SLC Planning Division website on the subject and study the information offered.
2. View the video of the February 17, 2026, City Council Working Session in which the Planning Division made a presentation on the proposed ordinance modification to the city council.
3. Attend a Planning Division information session Thursday, March 12 at the Sorenson Unity Center where I was able to ask SLC Planning Manager, John Anderson a series of questions.

As you know, the proposal includes multiple elements, some worthy of consideration. The **Small Lot Development** element, however, I oppose. My initial (and still developing) reasons are as follows:

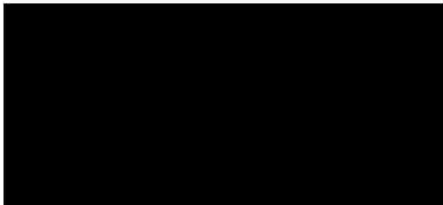
1. Density and infrastructure capacity.
2. With the potential for a property to grow from one household to three or four households, property values will drop, as the tranquility attribute of the neighborhood will be changed.
3. Once developers determine the "formula" for profiting from the ordinance, and despite the ordinance provision that provides a bonus dwelling for retaining the existing dwelling, tear downs will become the norm and construction of the allowed higher-density structures will follow.
4. The new structures will have a natural inclination to become rentals. Without owner residency, and since the renters lack a long view (for the neighborhood), the neighborhood will lose its existing character.
5. Despite the one off-street parking place per dwelling requirement, street parking will increase as will infractions against SLC Municipal (street parking) codes.
6. SLC currently has a problem with nuisance properties (discussed during the February 17 City Council meeting). This proposal will expand that problem with infractions against SLC Municipal codes (noise, outdoor storage, improper use, etc).
7. Despite the city literature stating that the **character and unique qualities of each neighborhood will be preserved**, changes that will increase density and building height, reduce front yard setbacks, without regulating (aesthetic) design and material selections (which would be a difficult undertaking), the construction of a single triplex on a block where a 70 to 100 year old existing home once stood will irreversibly compromise the character and unique qualities of a block. Allowed to be implemented city-wide, it will leave the city's fabric incongruous and aesthetically marred.
8. Although the city staff report cites (the obvious) that a similar approach (constructing smaller homes) in Durham, NC and Portland, OR yielded a 40% lower purchase price than that of larger homes, the staff reports no statistics on the long term effects (existing home values, parking, civil code infractions, crime, or the difficult to measure element of quality of life) of this approach on the established neighborhoods in which it was implemented.
9. The R-1-7000 properties comprise 703 in number and 30% of the overall affected properties. Because the R-1-7000 square footage maximizes the number of Small Lot Dwellings allowed to be built, i.e. - 1 dwelling per 2000 sf, the R-1-7000 properties, disproportionately to the other zoning classifications will be identified by developers as optimum for redevelopment (with triplexes).

For the above reasons I am asking you not to support the **Small Lot Development** element of the proposal.

I've shared my complete research on the proposal with my neighbors and included those in agreement as co-signers to this correspondence.

At your convenience, I'd like to meet with you in your office, or in the neighborhood.

Best regards,



Cosigned by:

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**Letter to Councilman Dan Dugan
 March 20, 2026
 Page 3 of 3**

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Peter Wetzel

Subject: FW: Expanding Housing Options - April 13 Information Session

From: Peter Wetzel [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, April 17, 2026 3:27 PM
To: 'dan.dugan@slc.gov' <dan.dugan@slc.gov>
Cc: 'chris.wharton@slc.gov' <chris.wharton@slc.gov>
Subject: Expanding Housing Options - April 13 Information Session

Good afternoon, Councilman Dugan.

It was good to see you Monday evening at the referenced event. Thank you for remembering me. I know you meet new people daily and your ability to recall previous encounters is something I admire and appreciate.

I have the following comments on how the April 13 (and other) Expanding Housing Options information sessions have been structured and how the Planning Division staff arrived at their conclusions:

1. The information sessions I've attended to date have presented a central planning approach to addressing an "unprecedented" issue. And while the top-down approach is at the forefront of the presentation, no voice has been given to historical perspectives on citizen private property rights - that our elected officials are oathbound to defend - and markets that have been shown ultimately to be self-correcting. 2008 – 2012 is a recent example of such a market correction.

The forums have discouraged open Q&A in favor of one-on-one Q&A following the presentation. That said, during the April 13 event, at the insistence of some attendees, an open, but limited, Q&A did ensue. It took the intervention of Council member Young to "take the stage" and get the program back on the intended (one-on-one Q&A) track. Such an approach in a public forum stifles essential political discourse.

2. As I understand it, the Expanding Housing Options effort came about through a March 4, 2025 Legislative Action in which the City Council tasked the Planning Division staff to study and make recommendations to **eliminate barriers to home ownership and increase home ownership opportunities for family-sized housing in Salt Lake City**. In acting on the Legislative Action, a more representative approach, it seems, would be to task competing entities, with different philosophies, to study and make recommendations.
3. Tasking an internal city department, in this case, Planning, would seem a good use of in-house resource and expertise. My concern, though, is that if one looks at similar proposals around the United States (for example, see this Denver link: https://www.denvergov.org/files/assets/public/v/1/community-planning-and-development/documents/zoning/text-amendments/unlocking-housing-choices/uhc_pub_mtgs_spring2026_slide_presentation.pdf), the proposals look very much the same. I'm guessing this is because the city planning departments attend the same national conferences where they are exposed to the same "solutions". It seems the country, following the lead of city planning departments, and in some cases, state legislatures (TX, AZ, CA, others) is, with absence of critical thought, heading in the same top-down, one-size-fits-all direction to "fix the problem".

Based on language in the 10th amendment to the United States Constitution, our country is formed in the federalist structure where co-sovereign state (and local) governments ideally act as "experimental laboratories" allowing controlled testing of new ideas before broader implementation. Given this exceptional legacy, I question why Salt Lake City, and perhaps Utah, are choosing to follow the rest of the country off the same cliff.

4. During the April 13 session the Planning Division staff presenter stated more than once his "hope" that the proposed changes would achieve the city goals (of ownership, affordability, walkability, water conservation). Prior to making truly unprecedented changes to the SLC zoning ordinance affecting 77% of all residentially zoned land that will irreversibly alter the city fabric, there must be certainty, not hope the city goals will be achieved. Perhaps

the stated goals are not achievable under any proposal. This undertaking calls for a degree of humility, not qualified hubris.

5. Referencing an exchange between the City Council and the Planning Division staff during the February 17 City Council working session, the importance of ensuring the citizens are aware of the proposed changes was discussed. In reply, the Planning Division staff offered that social media, email and other notifications had been initiated, but that a city-wide mailer had not been undertaken due to lack of funding.

Citizens must be notified through a multi-media undertaking, i.e. – social media, email, USPS (mail), local publications, broadcast news, etc.

After such a multi-media effort, additional information sessions should be scheduled with equal time allotted for historical perspectives on property rights and markets. These presentations should be followed by (time) limited public comment / Q&A.

6. Also referencing an exchange between the City Council and the Planning Division staff during the February 17 City Council working session, Councilman Alejandro Puy asked that the Planning Division staff provide a count of how many individuals attended the information sessions and report back to the City Council. This information should be in the public record. Likely, Councilman Puy had the same Concern about making sure the citizens are informed.

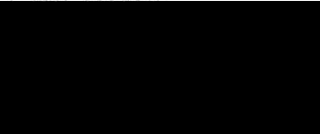
The Expanding Housing Options proposal and in particular the Small Lot Development element is a significant proffer. The outreach to the citizens as measured in the information session attendance (and I am guessing by the quantity of comments submitted through the city web portal <https://shape.slc.gov/en/projects/housing-options>) has been anemic. This issue requires more:

- Public input
- Deliberation
- Diversity of proposed solutions, and
- Open public debate

As my local representative, I'm asking that you judiciously consider the above comments and discuss with your fellow City Council members.

Best regards,

Peter Wetzel



PW comment to the Small Lot Development proposal through the Learn More and Engage web page https://shape.sl.c.gov/en/projects/housing-options/surveys/new?phase_id=e1b3a89c-4fee-4578-97aa-1494aa623e80 on April 15, 2026

The single family homes on my Bonneville Hills block have a typical front yard setback of 35 feet. The proposed small lot development ordinance calls for a 10-foot front yard setback. How is this 25-foot difference (sawtooth configuration) in keeping with the proposed ordinance language: The standards for the district are intended to provide.....development patterns and to ***preserve the existing character of the neighborhood?***