

# 2024 ZONING AMENDMENTS

## **BACKGROUND**

City Plan 2040, 2020 housing plan, and a housing needs assessment studied Roanoke's housing issues.

The Zoning Amendments directly implement the City's comprehensive plan adopted by City Council in 2020.

The March 2024 Zoning Amendments were recommended by the Planning Commission by a 5-1 vote and adopted by City Council on a 5-2 vote.

Lawsuit challenging Zoning Amendments (April).

City Council resolution on a 5-2 vote to initiate re-adoption as a more expedient response than litigation (June).

## **BACKGROUND**

Amended code is in effect now.

Action is to address details of procedures followed in adoption.

Planning Commission public hearing August 12. Voted 2-3 on the motion to recommend approval; motion failed.

Public meetings on August 27 (Melrose) and 29 (Belmont), 6:00 - 8:00 pm.

Neighborhood meetings by invitation.

City Council Public Hearing scheduled for September 16 at 7:00 pm

## **EFFECT OF ZONING AMENDMENTS**

Affected the R-12, R-7, R-5, R-3, and RM-1 Residential Districts.

Nearly half of the city geographically

Before, allowed only one-unit dwellings; considered exclusionary

Less restrictive regulations permit additional dwellings on a lot

Additional allowance for corner lots

## WHAT THE ZONING AMENDMENTS DID

	<b>R-12</b>	<b>R-7</b>	<b>R-5</b>	<b>R-3</b>	<b>RM-1</b>
INTERIOR LOT: Dwellings allowed	1	2	3	3	4
CORNER LOT: Dwellings allowed	3	4	6	6	8
LAND AREA: square feet required for each housing unit	2,500	2,000	1,500	1,000	1,500

These regulations work together to limit the number allowed on a lot.



## **R12 Corner lot**

**2,500 per dwelling with absolute max of 3 dwellings**

**28,042 sf of land area ÷ 2,500 yields up to 11 dwellings**

**Max per lot is 3**

**Permitted: 3 dwellings**



## **R5 Interior lot**

**1,500 per dwelling with absolute max of 3 dwellings**

**6,673 sf of land area ÷ 1,500 yields up to 4 dwellings**

**Max per lot is 3**

**Permitted: 3 units**



## **RM-1 Interior lot**

**1,500 per dwelling with absolute max of 4 dwellings**

**6,500 sf of land area ÷ 1,500 yields up to 4 dwellings**

**Max per lot is 4**

**Permitted: 4 dwellings**

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**2018-2020 comprehensive plan** 3-year process of community discussions about housing shortage; need for housing diversity and neighborhood choice that could not occur under exclusionary zoning.

**Fall 2023** Staff hosts a round of six neighborhood based workshops.

**October 2023** February 2024 Planning staff develops proposed amendments that balance community needs for equity and housing diversity and concerns expressed about neighborhood change and compatibility.

**February 2024** City Council briefing on content and process before starting 2nd round of **six neighborhood based workshops**, plus a virtual workshop.

**March 2024** Public hearing by the Planning Commission + Public hearing by City Council

# AFFORDABILITY AND HOUSING SUPPLY

**City Plan 2040** Specific observations of the need for a wide range of housing options, including “missing middle” housing and the need for more affordable housing.

**2020 Housing Study by RKG Associates** Zoning changes provide additional housing choices compatible with the built environment. Zoning is a tool that can have a direct impact on housing production. **The city can change it almost immediately and at little cost.**

**2021 Housing Study by Virginia Tech** Deficits of deeply affordable units. Even greater deficit of market rate units (above 80% AMI). There is a need for increased development of affordable housing and market rate housing. There is a mismatch of rents and household incomes.

**ALL new housing development, regardless of the rent or cost, will have some benefit to affordability.**

Increased supply would stabilize rent increases throughout the market.

More existing affordable units would become available as moderate and high income households shift toward units in their rent range.

## PROJECTED HOUSING UNITS CREATED

Single-unit dwelling construction is strong.

Apartment complex construction activity has been strong; however, only one project is pending.

Middle housing construction has been almost nonexistent.

Informed by the projections and actual experience of other localities.

2% rate of change over **30 years**; 2% properties will build or convert to a greater number of units.

## PROJECTED HOUSING UNITS CREATED

The results of the model indicate a high range estimate of 40 additional units per year, spread citywide. Less than is currently being added by single-unit dwellings.

Growth over 30 years is meaningful (1,191 units).

Changes are worthwhile over the long term.

First four months of actual experience suggests smaller rate of change.

## RESIDENTIAL DENSITY CHANGES

R-12, R-7, R-5, and RM-1 zones are populated at less than 40% of their allowable density prior to March 18.

Development doesn't use the maximum allowed.

After **30 years**, the density of the R-12, R-7, R-5, and RM-1 zones would be populated at 43% or less of the density allowed prior to March 18.

## EQUITY AND EXCLUSIONARY EFFECTS

Segregation ordinances, restrictive covenants, and redlining declared unconstitutional.

Exclusionary zoning was designed to segregate and continues to have the effect of segregating.

City Plan 2040 priorities for housing, dismantling segregated landscape, and addressing a history of inequity, are implemented by allowing development of a variety of housing types and affordable housing in all neighborhoods.

## EQUITY AND EXCLUSIONARY EFFECTS

The Zoning Amendments implement the Interwoven Equity Theme of City Plan 2040:

- Allow **Complete Neighborhoods** to develop.
- Develop **varied and affordable housing options** in each neighborhood.
- Remove **regulations that are barriers** to housing choice.
- Repeal policy rooted in **racial and economic segregation**.

## POPULATION CHANGE

Estimated less than 3,000 additional people over 30 years.

About 15 additional school age children per year and 450 over 30 years.

Water and sanitary sewer systems can handle such an increase.

Existing street network can handle additional vehicle trips per day.

Population accommodated by existing and future parks and recreation facilities.

## RENTER AND OWNER HOUSEHOLDS

Zoning does not regulate whether people own or rent housing.

Despite exclusionary zoning, the percentage of renter occupied households increased. As many households now rent as own their housing.

Policy should not be shaped by pro-owner/anti-renter biases.

Renter households are the **majority in most cities** in Virginia.

Housing supply, cost, interest rates, and turnover have much greater influence on ownership

## NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC

Capacity of a neighborhood residential street is 1,000-2,000 vehicles per day.

Sampled streets with max buildout scenario; all streets sampled stayed under capacity.

Development will not lead to too much congestion.

## ON STREET PARKING

Repealed minimum parking requirements in 2021 to remove a regulatory barrier to development. Developers usually provide off-street parking, even when not required.

Zoning does not regulate on-street parking.

On-street parking has no guarantee of exclusive use or availability.

Few streets outside of downtown are overburdened.

The expected change is minimal and unlikely to have much effect on parking. Driveways have a far greater influence on the supply of street parking.

## ASSESSMENTS AND PROPERTY VALUES

Text amendments unlikely to impact property assessments.

Assessment increase would be due to an actual increase in market value.

New zoning unlikely to impact value of property or assessments.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Infill development is the opposite of urban sprawl.

Uses existing infrastructure and transportation systems.

The Sierra Club recognizes the superiority of infill development and advocates the elimination of exclusionary zoning.

Infill development will have positive environmental benefit, providing needed housing in existing developed areas with no expansion into natural landscapes.

## BLIGHT REDUCTION

Run down houses and vacant lots become opportunities for new housing for people.

Economically “upside down” because exclusionary zoning permitted only one use.

Allowing additional units makes rehab or redevelopment feasible.

Promising way to deal with blight; it works on the root cause economic issue.

## **WHAT STAFF HAS HEARD:**

Concern about additional units in R-12, R-7, R-5, and RM1 districts.

Assumption that rental housing is detrimental to a neighborhood.

Assumption that more density is detrimental to a neighborhood.

Concern about change to neighborhood “character”

Concern about parking.

Concern about design.

Worst-case-scenario

## CONCLUSIONS

Reasonable proposal that considered community concerns. Degree of change moderated by how staff crafted the regulations.

Projections show an increase of only 40 units per year citywide. Early results suggest fewer.

Market and practical factors continue to limit development decisions.

Compatibility addressed with development standards for each housing type.