

1-4 Unit Housing Study

Introduction and Phase 1 Zoning Text Amendments

Presentation to start at 6:05 p.m.
Q&A following the presentation

-This webinar is being recorded -

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Guide to this Webinar

- This webinar is being recorded and will be posted on the project website:
stpaul.gov/1to4housingstudy
- Please mute your microphones during the presentation and when you are not speaking 
- If you would not like your image to be recorded, turn off your camera 
- Please type your questions in the meeting chat;
we will answer those questions first during the Q&A 
- During the Q&A, please raise your hand if you would like to ask your question verbally 



Why are we doing this study?



Low rental vacancy rates



Many households experiencing housing cost burden



Accommodate community growth



Accommodate the diverse needs of residents



Support broadened housing choices



Address the city's housing shortage



Implement policies from the 2040 Comprehensive Plan



Carry out actions called for City Council Resolution 18-1204



What will the study evaluate?

Phase 1

- Allowing for physically **smaller homes**



- Allowing **more than one residential building per lot**



- Allowing accessory dwelling units (**ADUs**) on **smaller lots**



- Allowing **larger-sized** accessory dwelling units (**ADUs**)



Phase 2

- Allowing a **greater diversity of single-family developments**, such as:



Townhomes



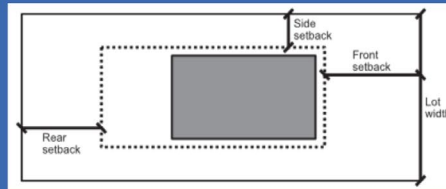
Cluster developments

- Allowing **duplexes** and **triplexes** in more places



- Allowing **fourplexes** in some places

- Changing **dimensional standards** and other zoning requirements to **facilitate this greater range of housing**, such as:



- Reduction of **minimum lot size/width standards** or elimination paired with FAR standards

- Reduction of **setback requirements**

- Increasing **maximum lot coverage**

- Consideration of **maximum lot sizes** to regulate the degree of redevelopment and protect against displacement

- Consideration of **affordable housing incentives**

- Amendments to **cluster development** requirements and **accessory dwelling unit (ADU)** requirements to support greater flexibility of use



Resident Engagement

- Activities at community events
- Virtual listening sessions
- Project website and survey activities
- Outreach to stakeholders
 - Culturally-based or -serving community organizations
 - District councils
 - Advocacy groups
 - Business groups

Technical Expert Engagement

- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and interviews
 - Nonprofit community developers
 - Private developers + architects
 - Financial professionals
 - Department of Safety Inspections 1-2 unit plan reviewers
 - PED Housing Team
- Urban design and financial consultants



What's the tentative schedule?

City of Saint Paul

Phase 1

- **Proposed amendments released for public comment:** September 3
- **Webinar on proposed amendments:** Today, September 28
- **Planning Commission Public Hearing:** October 15
- **Planning Commission review of public comments and forward to City Council:** Mid-November
- **City Council public hearing, review process, and adoption:** December

Phase 2

- **Engagement activities:** Through Spring 2022
- **Text amendment drafting:** Early 2022-Summer 2022
- **Planning Commission and City Council Process:** Late 2022



Phase 1 Infill Housing Objectives

- Permit smaller homes;
- Make smaller lots easier to utilize for housing;
- Opening opportunities for "cottage cluster"-style housing;
- Facilitate a greater variety of accessory dwelling units on more lots;
- Improve zoning code organization and staff protocols



Objectives (cont.)

- Permitting more 1-4 unit housing will provide more options and less competition in the market overall by increasing housing supply, leading to more housing affordability over time.
- Phase 1 isn't directly looking into the creation of affordable housing, but rather removing barriers to allow for more housing overall.
- Phase 1 does not include consideration of the owner-occupancy requirement properties with ADUs per the Planning Commission's request.



Proposed Phase 1 Amendments

- a) **Delete 22-foot minimum width for homes in residential districts;**
- b) **Permit multiple principal residential buildings on a zoning lot in RL-RT1;**
- c) Restore lower side setbacks for single-family homes in RM1-RM2;
- d) Delete the minimum distance of 12 feet between buildings on a zoning lot;
- e) Simplify the calculation with which an average front setback is calculated;
- f) **Delete minimum lot area requirement of 5,000 square feet for ADUs;**
- g) **Change the maximum permitted size for an ADU from 800 sf to 75% of the principal unit;**
- h) **Increase maximum square footage of the rear yard that accessory buildings may occupy;**
- i) Reorganize Article V. - 63.500. Accessory Buildings for improved readability;
- j) Discontinue Duplex & Triplex Conversion Guidelines as mandatory staff recommendations;*
- k) Correct student housing overlay in accordance with recent definition of *Family* amendments

* Not a zoning text amendment. Requires Planning Commission resolution.



a) Delete 22-foot minimum width for homes in residential districts



**15' wide dwelling on
a 30' wide lot**



Modular home
Credit: GSH of Alabama



Cottage court
Credit: Opticos Design Inc.

- Allows new, narrower homes, and could eliminate need for setback variances on narrower lots.
- Lots still need to meet zoning code requirements for height, lot coverage, and setbacks.
- Increases opportunities for cottage court/cluster developments.



b) Permit multiple principal residential buildings on a zoning lot in RL-RT1

District	Minimum lot size per unit	Yard setback minimum	Lot size required to build 2 principal residential buildings
RL	Area: 21,780 SF Width: 80'	30' front / 10' side / 25' rear	Area: 43,560 SF Width: 160'
R1	Area: 9,600 SF Width: 80'	30' front / 10' side / 25' rear	Area: 19,200 SF Width: 160'
R2	Area: 7,200 SF Width: 60'	30' front / 8' side / 25' rear	Area: 14,400 SF Width: 120'
R3	Area: 6,000 SF Width: 50'	30' front / 6' side / 25' rear	Area: 12,000 SF Width: 100'
R4	Area: 5,000 SF Width: 40'	30' front / 4' side / 25' rear	Area: 10,000 SF Width: 80'
RT1	Area: 3,000 SF Width: 25'	30' front / 9' side / 25' rear	Area: 6,000 SF Width: 50'

Density and Dimensional Standards



R3 Lot Example

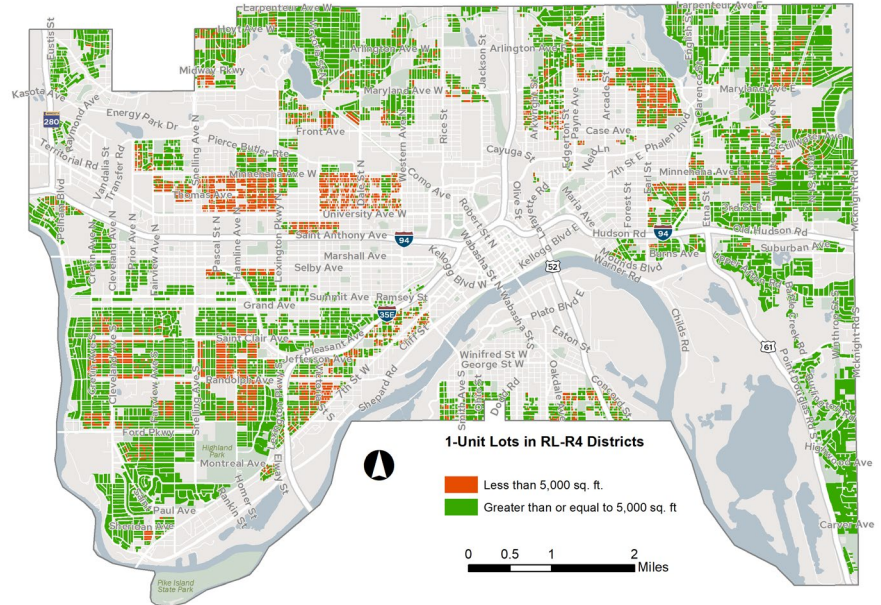
- Already allowed in T, RT2, and RM zoning districts.
- Lots still need to meet zoning code requirements for minimum lot size per unit, width per unit, and setbacks, and building code requirements.



f) Delete minimum lot area requirement of 5,000 square feet for ADUs

Other standards that limit ADUs:

- Accessory buildings may only occupy up to 35% of a rear yard
- Accessory buildings may only occupy up to 1,000 sq. ft. (*1,200 sq. ft. proposed as Phase 1 amendment*)
- ADUs have a maximum size (currently 800 sq. ft.; *amendment proposed – see next slide*)
- No more than one household (up to 6 adults along with any number of minors) may occupy the principal dwelling and ADU together



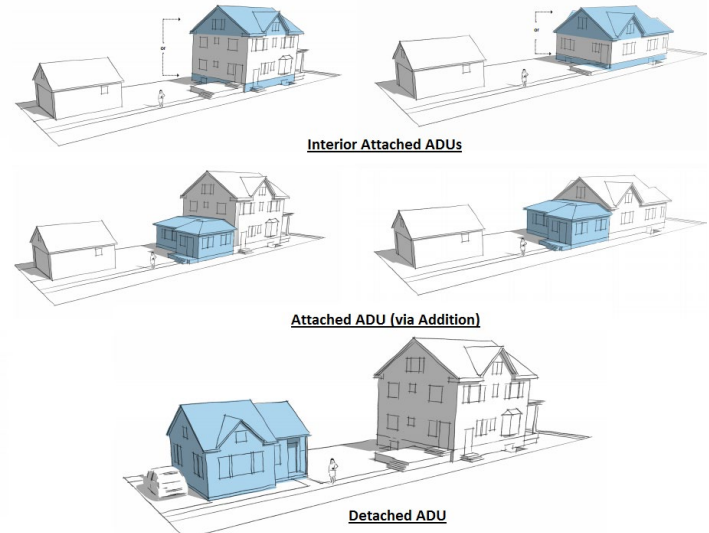
Approximately 15,000 one-unit lots in RL-R4 do not meet the lot area requirement for an ADU



g) Change the maximum permitted size for an ADU from 800 sf to 75% of the principal unit

- Allows larger lots with bigger homes to build ADUs that can house more people.
- **ADU size is still capped by other regulations:**
 - Accessory buildings may only occupy up to 35% of a rear yard
 - Accessory buildings may only occupy up to 1,000 square feet (*1,200 proposed*)
- Number of ADU occupants depends on the square footage minimums in the Minnesota Residential Code, Minnesota Fire Code, and Saint Paul Legislative Code (*not proposed to change*).

Principal Unit Size (sq. ft.)	75% of Principal Unit Size (sq. ft.)
650	488
800	600
1,333	1,000
1,600	1,200





h) Raise permitted lot area for accessory buildings from 1,000 square feet to 1,200 square feet

- Adds flexibility in design, layout, and opportunity on larger lots to build ADUs.
- **Size and number is still capped by other regulations:**
 - Accessory buildings still may only occupy up to 35% of a rear yard
 - Limit of three accessory buildings on one-family and two-family lots (and on one-family lots, one of these three can be the ADU)
- If an ADU is the only accessory building, it can reach 1,200 sq. ft. in size depending on site conditions.



Accessory buildings may include a shed, garage, and/or ADU

Q&A

Project website:

www.stpaul.gov/1to4HousingStudy

1to4HousingStudy@ci.stpaul.mn.us



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a) Delete 22-foot minimum width for 1- and 2-family dwellings in residential districts

Text amendment:

~~Sec. 66.233 – Minimum building width~~

~~In residential districts, the building width on any side of one-family and two-family dwellings shall be at least twenty-two (22) feet, not including entryways or other appurtenances that do not run the full length of the building.~~

Notes:

- Enacted in 1982 to tighten regulations around mobile home parks;
- Will free new-build homes to be narrower;
- Market is not expected to build homes less than 484 square feet;
- Impact on administration:
 - Fewer variance applications
 - May lead to increased conversations between builders and DSI Plan Review staff around structural engineering



b) Permit multiple principal residential buildings on a zoning lot in residential districts

Text amendment:

Sec. 66.241. – Number of main (principal) buildings

~~In RL—RT1 residential districts, there shall be no more than one (1) main (principal) residential building per zoning lot, except as specifically allowed as a conditional use in the district. RT2—RM3 residential districts allow multiple residential buildings on a zoning lot. A carriage house building in RT2—RM3 residential districts may be regulated as an additional principal residential building or as a carriage house dwelling.~~

Notes:

- Enacted in same 1982 text amendment as minimum building width; was intended to regulate either mobile home parks or congregate living facilities (or both?);
- Already allowed in T, RT2, and RM zoning districts;
- Impact on administration:
 - Relationship between multiple buildings on a lot will still be reviewed by Plan Review, Fire, Zoning, and other staff as part of building permit process



c) Restore lower side setbacks for single-family homes in RM1-RM2

Text amendment:

Sec. 66.231. – Density and dimensional standards table [Residential districts]

(h) Side yards are required only for dwelling units on the ends of townhouse structures. When two (2) or more one-family, two-family, or townhouse structures are constructed on a single parcel, there shall be a distance of at least twelve (12) feet between principal buildings. For one-family dwellings in RM1 and RM2 districts, the minimum side yard setback shall be four (4) feet. ...

Notes:

- This is a correction of an oversight. Before the RM Zoning Study, all R4 dimensional standards applied to single-family homes in RM1 and RM2 districts. The RM Zoning Study amendments allow SF homes to be regulated by more flexible RM standards. But it *removed* flexibility by applying RM district 9-foot side setbacks to SF homes.
- Impact on administration:
 - None. Staff is currently applying 4-foot setbacks per the intention of the amendments.



d) Delete the minimum distance between buildings

Text amendment:

Sec. 66.231. – Density and dimensional standards table [Residential districts]

Side yards are required only for dwelling units on the ends of townhouse structures. ~~When two (2) or more one-family, two-family, or townhouse structures are constructed on a single parcel, there shall be a distance of at least twelve (12) feet between principal buildings.~~ For one-family dwellings in RM1 and RM2 districts, the minimum side yard setback shall be four (4) feet). ...

Notes:

- Minnesota Residential Code requires certain distances between buildings depending on the fire rating of the walls. This provision was likely introduced to avoid building plans being submitted for projects that couldn't happen due to proximity of the buildings and fire-rating requirements.
- Impact on administration:
 - DSI Plan Review staff may deny or comment on more building plans due to MRC regulations



e) Simplify the calculation with which an average front setback is calculated

Text amendment:

§ 66.231. (f) and § 66.331. (i) – Density and dimensional standards tables [Residential and Traditional Neighborhood districts]

Where at least fifty (50) percent of the front footage of any block is built up with principal structures residential buildings and the front yard setbacks of existing buildings with front yards that adjoin the front yard of the lot are all greater or all less than the district standard setback requirement, the minimum front yard setback for new buildings structures shall be the same as the adjoining front yard setback that is closest to the district standard setback requirement, except where only one existing front yard adjoins the front yard of the lot, the minimum front yard setback for new structures shall be the midpoint between the district standard setback requirement and the adjoining front yard setback. The property owner is responsible for reporting the relevant adjacent existing front setback to zoning staff on a registered land survey. average setback of the existing structures, or if the block average is more than the minimum required front setback listed in the dimensional standard table, it shall be the setback requirement in the district plus half the amount the average setback is greater than the setback requirement in the table. Existing structures set back twenty (20) percent more or less than the average shall be discounted from the formula.

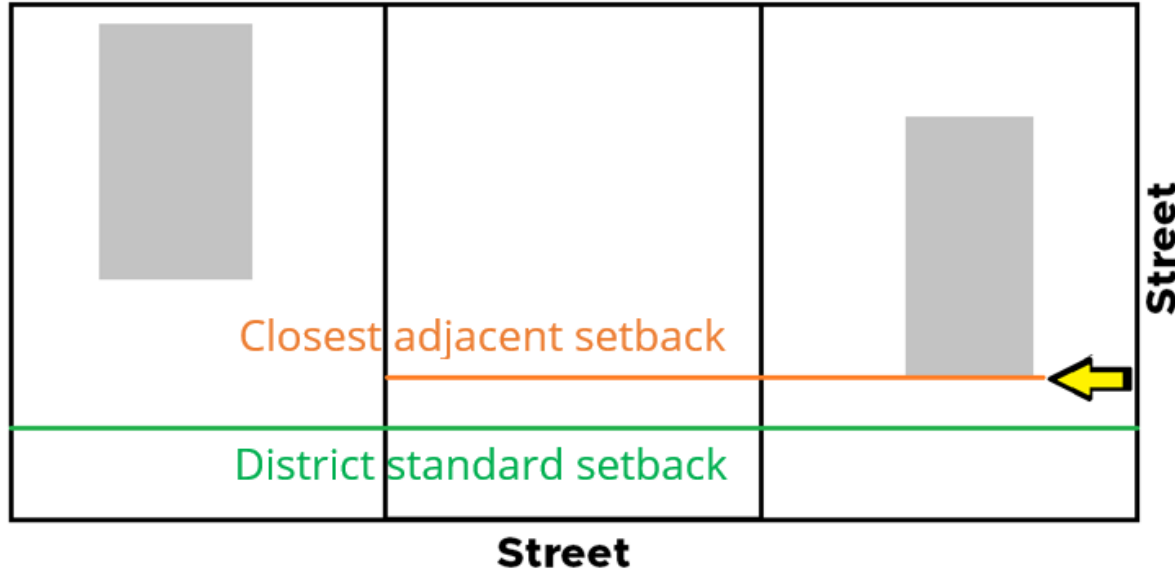
Notes:

- Summary: Instead of using front setbacks on the entire block to find the setback for a new-build SF home, we're only using the immediately adjacent properties.
- This change will greatly relieve DSI Zoning and Building Inspection staff's work load.



e) Simplify the calculation with which an average front setback is calculated

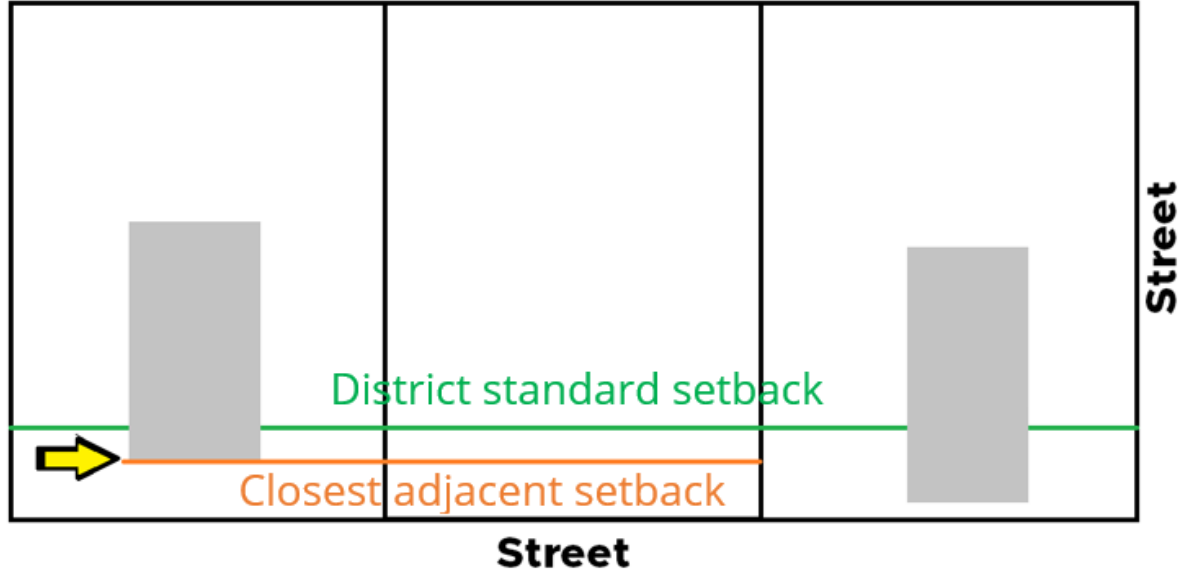
When both front setbacks are *greater than* the district standard...





e) Simplify the calculation with which an average front setback is calculated

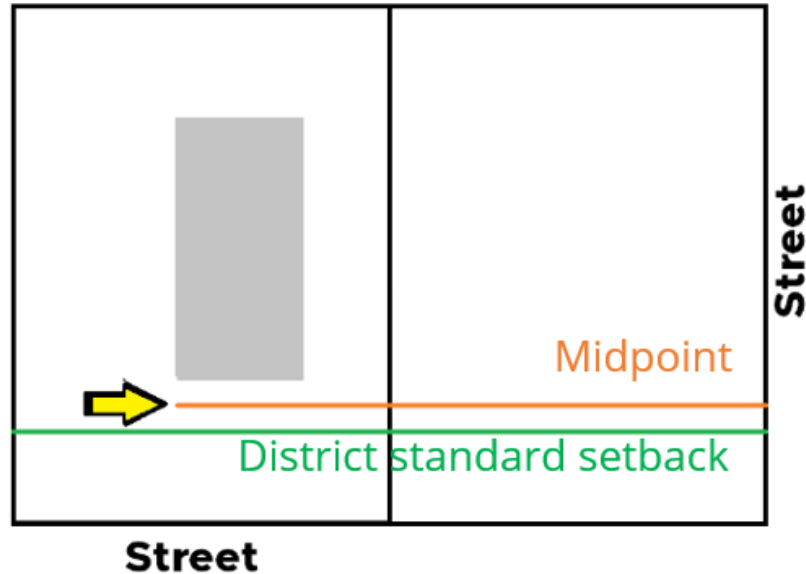
When both front setbacks are *less than* the district standard...





e) Simplify the calculation with which an average front setback is calculated

When there is only one adjacent front setback...





f) Delete minimum lot area requirements for ADUs

Text amendment:

Sec. 65.913. – Dwelling unit, accessory (a)

~~(a) *Minimum lot size.* For accessory dwelling units located in an accessory structure, the lot shall be at least five thousand (5,000) square feet in area~~

Notes:

- Other dimensional standards regulate an ADU's fit on a property (Sec. 63.501(f)):
 - Accessory buildings may only occupy up to 35% of a rear yard;
 - Accessory buildings may only occupy up to 1,000 square feet (amendment proposed)
- ADU's have a maximum size as well (currently 800 sf; amendment proposed...)



g) Raise the maximum permitted size for ADUs

Text amendment:

Sec. 65.913. – Dwelling unit, accessory (e)

(e) *Unit size.* The floor area of the accessory unit shall ~~not exceed 75% of the floor area of the principal dwelling unit be a maximum of eight hundred (800) square feet.~~ If the accessory unit is ~~within~~ located interior to the principal ~~building structure~~, the principal ~~building structure~~ shall have a minimum floor area of one thousand (1,000) square feet ~~and the accessory unit shall not exceed one-third (1/3) of the total floor area of the structure.~~ For multi-story principal ~~buildings structures~~ built prior to the enactment of this section, the maximum floor area of an accessory dwelling unit may be equal to that of the first floor, but shall be less than or equal to fifty (50) percent of the floor area of the ~~building structure~~.

Notes:

- Using a percentage of the principal unit keeps the ADU subordinate in size.
- Size is still capped by maximum accessory building size in Sec. 63.501.
- Allows larger lots with bigger homes to build ADUs that can house more people.
- Impact on staff:
 - Likely workflow: will receive finished floor area from applicant and check it against Ramsey County data to verify conformance.



h) Raise permitted lot area for accessory buildings from 1,000 square feet to 1,200 square feet

Text amendment:

63.501. - Accessory buildings and uses (f)

(f) ~~Accessory buildings on a zoning lot may occupy up to thirty-five (35) percent of the rear yard. Rear yards which adjoin alleys may include half the area of the alley to calculate the area of the rear yard which may be occupied by accessory buildings.~~

~~On zoning lots containing one- and two-family dwellings, there shall be a maximum of three (3) accessory buildings, the total of which shall not occupy more than one thousand (1000) square feet of the zoning lot. On zoning lots containing all other uses, accessory buildings may occupy the same percent of the zoning lot as main buildings are allowed to occupy in the zoning district.~~

~~Accessory buildings on zoning lots containing one- and two-family dwellings are subject to the following standards:~~

~~(1) There shall be a maximum of three (3) accessory buildings, the total of which may occupy a maximum of twelve hundred (1200) square feet of the lot.~~

~~(2) Accessory buildings may occupy a maximum of thirty-five (35) percent of the rear yard. Where the rear yard adjoins an alley, half the area of the adjoining alley may be included in calculating the area of the rear yard that may be occupied by accessory buildings.~~

Notes:

- If an ADU is the only accessory building, it can reach 1,200 sf in size depending on site conditions. All accessory buildings share this total square footage.



i) Reorganize Article V. - 63.500. Accessory Buildings for improved readability

Notes:

- These changes are simply rearranging or correcting the text:
 - Grouping topics;
 - Turning paragraphs into lists;
 - Correcting grammar/vocabulary;
 - Replacing "structures" with "buildings", which is the topic of the section.
 - *Structure* - Anything constructed or erected, the use of which requires location on the ground or attachment to something having location on the ground. (Sec. 60.220)
 - *Building* - Any permanent structure having a roof supported by columns or walls, specifically excluding trailers and semitrailers as defined by Minnesota Statutes, chapter 169.



j) Discontinue Duplex and Triplex Conversion Guidelines as mandatory staff recommendations

Background and intent:

- Duplex Conversion Guidelines created in 1981 to provide consistency in staff recommendations.
 - Minimum lot areas, frontages, living areas, parking, and requirements regarding design and neighborhood context
- Duplex and Triplex Conversion Guidelines adopted in 1992 to help address a backlog of illegal conversions (w/o building permit or zoning conformance)
 - Increased parking requirements, new scrutiny for nonconforming use cases, requirements for building inspection, and economic feasibility analysis by PED
- Updated in 2009 to be slightly more permissive and relieve PED design responsibility



j) Discontinue Duplex and Triplex Conversion Guidelines as mandatory staff recommendations

Elements:

- Submission of site plans and unit plans
- Submission of MLS listing
- Requirement to recommend denial unless guidelines are met

Notes:

- Not aligned with City land use and housing policy. Current direction is support for higher density housing choices, lower or no parking requirements, adaptive reuse of buildings for residential use, and support for missing middle housing.
- The Guidelines interfere with staff flexibility. Commissioners have asked us to look at this and opined that we should not use them.
- Many of the elements can be kept in other forms – non-restrictive guidelines, standard conditions for particular uses, etc. Partnering with DSI to establish effective communication and standardized guidelines.



k) Correct student housing overlay in accordance with recent definition of *Family* study

Text amendment:

Sec. 67.708. – Revocation of status as registered and established student dwellings

The department of safety and inspections may remove properties from the list of registered and established student dwellings under the following circumstances:

- (1) Suspension or revocation of fire certificate of occupancy;
- (2) Residence by more than ~~six (6)~~ ~~four (4)~~ students in any unit;
- (3) Residence by less than three (3) students for more than twenty-four (24) of the preceding thirty-six (36) months.

A revocation of student dwelling status may be appealed to the board of zoning appeals pursuant to Legislative Code § 61.701(a)—(c).

Notes:

- City Council had expressed intention to allow as many students as non-students in a dwelling unit.
- An explicit maximum here empowers DSI to enforce this overlay.