

## 1-4 Unit Housing Study Phase 2

### Planning Commission Questions for the Community

The Planning Commission asks the community's thoughts on the following questions during the public comment period and public hearing on the draft ordinance for the 1-4 Unit Housing Study Phase 2.

**1. Does this draft ordinance propose a zoning approach that supports more new housing options for all Saint Paul residents in a fair or neutral way? Why or why not?**

Single-family-only zoning that allows only single-family homes has been found to be socially exclusionary, especially toward renters, low-income households, and communities of color. The draft ordinance replaces the single-family-only zoning districts and other low-density residential districts with new residential zoning districts that generally allow up to 3 or 4 housing units on a lot, with greater density (up to 6 units) allowed near Neighborhood Node intersections or fixed transit corridors.

See [overview slides](#) pages 18-24, [staff report memo](#) Section 6A (pages 31-44), and the [interactive map](#) for more details on the proposed zoning districts.

**2. Do you support creating two lower-density residential districts – the proposed H1 district (for areas currently zoned R1-R3) and proposed H2 district (for areas currently zoned R4-RT2) – or should the H1 and H2 districts be combined into one district that uses the proposed H2 standards?**

The table below lists some of the key zoning standards for the proposed new H1 and H2 zoning districts under the draft ordinance.

Proposed District	Minimum lot area per unit	Maximum number of principal units on a lot
H1 residential	2,000 sq ft	3 on lots internal to a block, 4 on corner lots
H2 residential	1,500 sq ft	4

See [overview slides](#) pages 20-21 for a map and overview of the proposed new zoning districts and [staff report memo](#) Section 6A (pages 31-44) for more details on the proposed zoning districts.

**3. Should more areas be rezoned to the proposed new H3 district? If so, which locations and why?**

The draft ordinance would rezone existing low-density residential lots (zoned R1-RT2) to a slightly higher density H3 zoning district if any portion of the lot is located within 1/8 mile of an existing or planned rail line, most bus rapid transit lines, or a Neighborhood Node.

The table below lists some of the key zoning standards for the proposed H3 zoning district under the draft ordinance. *(continued on next page)*

Proposed District	Minimum lot area per unit	Maximum number of principal units on a lot
H3 residential	1,000 sq ft	6

See pages 20-21 of the [overview slides](#) for a map of the proposed zoning districts and overview of the proposed zoning districts and Section 6A (pages 31-44) of the [staff report memo](#) for more information on the proposed zoning districts.

**4. Does the draft ordinance strike the right balance of encouraging more neighborhood-scale housing to be developed over the long term on lots throughout the city, while also managing the pace of change to minimize potential displacement pressures on existing neighborhoods and residents? Why or why not?**

The Commission recognizes that the effects of the proposed zoning changes will be mostly long-term, but that some short-term impact may be seen. Some ordinance features that support growth but still manage the pace of change include:

- Special incentives for the development of 3+ bedroom homes and homes affordable at 80% of Area Median Income (see [overview slides](#) page 23 and [staff report memo](#) pages 39-41 for more details on the proposed density bonus)
- Regulations enabling the creation of smaller lots for development of 1-4 unit housing than is currently allowed (see [overview slides](#) page 21 and [staff report memo](#) pages 36-37 for more details on the proposed lot area minimum per unit and lot width minimum standards for the H1-H3 zoning districts)
- A maximum lot size for cluster developments to support their integration into existing neighborhoods (see [overview slides](#) pages 26-27 and [staff report memo](#) pages 64-67 for more details on the cluster development standards).

**5. Are there other policy goals that the City should consider incentivizing in the form of density bonuses?**

A density bonus authorizes additional development beyond what's normally allowed by a zoning code as an incentive for property owners to develop in a way that contributes to desired City policy goals. The draft ordinance includes a density bonus that allows property owners to build more units on a lot than would otherwise be allowed by the code and an increased maximum lot coverage in exchange for the development of 3+ bedroom homes and homes affordable at 80% of Area Median Income (see [overview slides](#) page 23 and [staff report memo](#) pages 39-41 for more details on the proposed density bonus).