



City of Gainesville

Department of Sustainable
Development

TO: City Plan Board
FROM: Department of Sustainable Development

DATE: June 6th, 2022

SUBJECT: City of Gainesville. City initiated petition to amend the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Element to revise the Single-Family (SF) land use category to include small-scale multi-family development up to four (4) units per building and rename the category as Neighborhood Residential (NR), amend the Land Development Code to consolidate single family zoning districts into Neighborhood Residential zoning district, introduce single-family detached and small-scale multi-family as uses in Neighborhood Residential zoning districts; amend setback, lot size dimensions, remove occupancy limits, amend bedroom limit within the UF Context Zone, amend compatibility requirements, and amend lot split and minor subdivisions regulations.

Applicant: City of Gainesville

Discussion

The City of Gainesville is currently experiencing a period of housing instability that has resulted in unequal housing outcomes for its residents. Per the Exclusionary Zoning and Inclusionary Housing Study done by HR&A, there are three primary issues driving the current housing situation in Gainesville: Housing access and quality, housing cost burden and racial segregation.

Access to housing is severely limited in Gainesville. A total of 63% of residential parcels are zoned single family residential and only allow for the construction of one house. 42% of the single family residential zones are RSF-1 which has the lowest density within all residential zones of 3.5 units per acre along with some of the most generous setback and lot size requirements. This results in a significant amount of land devoted to the construction of single family homes thus restricting the opportunity of diversification of home types needed to meet the needs of all Gainesville residents. This is not consistent with the City's Comprehensive plan Objective 1.2 which is designed to "Provide a variety of housing types and densities for moderate-income, low-income, very low-income, and extremely low-income people." Aside from the zoning restriction of single-family homes, development requirements such as lot sizes and setbacks result in the creation of larger lots within single-family zoning thus further restricting the potential of housing development. Furthermore, large lots, large setback requirements, and the restriction to one single family occupancy attribute to a higher cost for



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home construction and land ownership. This further restricts who can afford to purchase a home in Gainesville.

With fewer homes available for purchase, Gainesville residents' alternative for housing is renting. 61% of households in the City are renters. Furthermore, the student housing market is the strongest rental market in the City which makes it more difficult for non-students to access rental housing. According to the HR&A Exclusionary Zoning/Inclusionary Housing Study, student renters make up 36% of the total Gainesville population but make up 50% of the population living in housing built after 2000. Consequently, student renters are the primary beneficiaries of new rental housing development in Gainesville.

Aside from the restriction of housing availability, the cost of housing in Gainesville adversely impacts most of Gainesville residents. It's estimated that a household income of \$40,000 is needed to afford the average rent per unit in Gainesville. However, Gainesville's median household income is only \$37,000 with Black households only making 73% of the median. This cost burden is exacerbated by the lack of a diverse housing stock coupled with a significant demand for housing.

The lack of housing access and quality along with the cost burden of housing disproportionately affects Gainesville's Black and minority citizens. Data shows that white households are more likely to live in single family homes while the Black population occupies "missing middle" housing, or buildings that have 2-4 units. Furthermore, only white and Asian households earn consistently above Gainesville's median household income making the average rental unit only affordable to the typical white household.

Furthermore, Gainesville's growth trend is outpacing new housing construction. According to the Bureau of Economics data, Gainesville's population growth has increased by roughly 4.5% within the past five (5) years and will continue to grow at around this rate within the next five (5) years. It's projected that by 2025, Gainesville's population will increase by 6,542. However, according to Census data only 6,036 housing units were added in ten (10) years between 2010 to 2020.

To address the concerns stated above, staff is proposing amending the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Development Code to provide the opportunity for more equitable development while promoting a diversification of Gainesville's housing stock and eliminating restrictive Land Use and zoning regulations. This petition is initiated by the City of Gainesville and proposes several



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amendments. The amendment discussed in this report entails amending the development compatibility standards.

Amending Development Compatibility

In order to facilitate and encourage housing development, staff is proposing amending the LDC development compatibility section to remove restrictive language concerning setbacks and compatibility requirements.

Proposal:

Sec. 30-4.8. Development compatibility.

A. Setbacks.

- ~~1- Whenever a zero foot setback is allowed in a zoning district, it may only be used if the abutting property is within a district that allows the same setback.~~
- ~~2-~~ ~~1-~~ The minimum required side and rear setback for nonresidential ~~and multi-family~~ buildings located on property abutting a ~~single-family~~ [Neighborhood Residential](#) zoning district or the U1 district shall be the same as the setback required on the adjacent residential lot or as determined by the required buffer, whichever is greater.

B. Limitations on uses. All industrial or commercial activity and uses, except storage of equipment and parking, shall be conducted within completely enclosed buildings when located within 300 feet of any property that is in a ~~single-family~~ [Neighborhood Residential](#) zoning district or the U1 district.

C. Building height and massing.

Within 100' of the Following Districts:	Max. Building Height	
Single-Family Zoning Neighborhood Residential Zoning	3 stories and 36'	Building facades shall not exceed 60' unless a substantial volume break is provided, such as a volume recess with a minimum 10' depth.
U1	• Measured to the roof peak with a hip, gable, mansard or similar roof where the 3 rd floor is above the roof line, or	
Historic District (except University Heights-South)		
	• Measured to the top plate of the 3 rd floor with a flat or similar roof.	
	4 stories and 60'	



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University Heights-South Historic District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measured to the top plate of the 4th floor.
Within the Following Districts:	Max. Building Height
Pleasant Street Historic District	3 stories and 36'
Power District	6 stories, but 3 stories when adjacent to residential zoning, with a step-back of 15' per additional building story up to max. permitted.

Figure 1: Height Compatibility Pitched Roof Example



Figure 2: Height Compatibility Flat Roof Example





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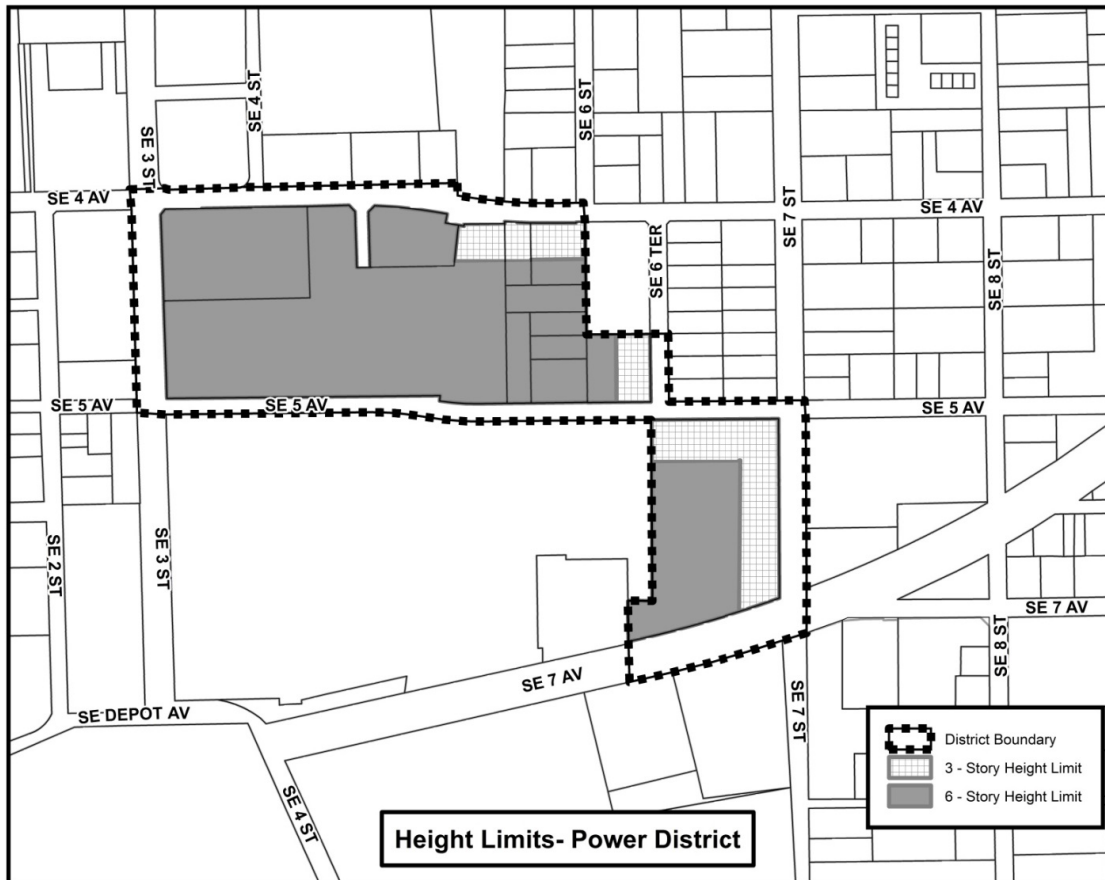
Figure 2: Height Compatibility University Heights





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D. Multi-family developments.

1. Generally. Multi-family development shall contain no more than six dwelling units per building and shall be in the form of single-family dwellings, attached dwellings, or small-scale multi-family when located within 100 feet of any property that is in a ~~single-family zoning district, the~~ U1 district, or a designated historic district.
2. Abutting single-family property. All new multi-family projects, whether stand alone or part of a mixed-use project, abutting property in a residential district or a planned development district with predominantly residential uses shall comply with the following regulations:
 - a. There shall be no outdoor recreation areas or uses allowed within any required building setback area or landscape buffer between abutting multi-family development and single-family designated properties.



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- b. Active recreation areas (including swimming pools, tennis courts, basketball, and volleyball courts) shall be located away from abutting single-family designated properties and shall be oriented in the development to minimize noise impacts on single-family designated properties.
- c. There shall be no car washing areas, dumpsters, recycling bins, or other trash/waste disposal facilities placed in the required setback area between multi-family development and properties zoned ~~for single-family~~ [Neighborhood Residential](#).
- d. Parking lots and driveways located in the area between multi-family and abutting single-family designated properties shall be limited to a single-loaded row of parking and a two-way driveway.
- e. ~~A decorative masonry wall (or equivalent material in noise attenuation and visual screening) with a minimum height of six feet and a maximum height of eight feet plus a Type B landscape buffer shall separate multi-family residential development from properties designated single-family residential. However, driveways, emergency vehicle access, or pedestrian/bicycle access may interrupt a continuous wall. If, in the professional judgment of city staff or other professional experts, masonry wall construction would damage or endanger significant trees or other natural features, the appropriate reviewing authority may authorize the use of a fence and/or additional landscape buffer area to substitute for the required masonry wall. There shall be no requirement for a masonry wall or equivalent if buildings are 200 or more feet from abutting single-family properties. In addition, the appropriate reviewing authority may allow an increased vegetative buffer and tree requirement to substitute for the required masonry wall.~~
- f. The primary driveway access shall be on a collector or arterial street, if available. Secondary ingress/egress and emergency access may be on or from local streets.

Respectfully submitted,

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