

**TO:** City Plan Board  
**FROM:** Department of Sustainable Development

**DATE:** June 6<sup>th</sup>, 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

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

amendments. The amendment discussed in this report pertains to language defining the new use “neighborhood scale multi family”.

### **Adding and defining the Neighborhood Scale Multi-family (NSM) use**

The neighborhood scale multi-family development (referred to as NSM from this point forward) is a specific use meant to address the lack of “missing middle” housing type development within the City of Gainesville. Its purpose is to allow more than one family to live within a building designed to be characteristically consistent with a neighborhood with a footprint similar to that of a larger single-family home. The building height would be regulated to what is currently allowed in all single-family zones, that is, a maximum of three stories. Furthermore, the building would be restricted to a minimum of two (2) units per building and a maximum of four (4) units per building. Lastly, the use will have language that would regulate the design for buildings with 3 to 4 units by limiting the amount of main entry doors on the front façade, defining glazing requirement, the preservation and/or inclusion of high-quality trees, and defining parking locations.

**Proposal:** Add language in the definition section Article II Sec. 30-2.1 of the Land Development Code defining NSMs.

**Natural resources** means the biological, physical, geological and hydrological components of the environment in the City of Gainesville.

**Nature parks and public conservation/preservation areas** means those lands owned and managed for the protection, preservation, and/or conservation of natural communities, as well as any other public park, preserve, or conservation areas, or the portion of those parks, preserves, or conservation areas, that are established to preserve natural communities. Nature parks and public conservation/preservation areas are shown in the Nature Parks and Public Conservation/Preservation Areas District Map that is maintained in the city's GIS map library.

**Neighborhood Scale Multi-family (NSM)** means a multi-family development comprised of a minimum of two units per building and a maximum of four units per building.

**Noise level reduction (NLR)** means a measurement standard for the reduction in sound level transmission between the exterior and interior of a structure. NLR standards are used to evaluate the effectiveness or establish requirements of techniques to limit sound transmission

in order to prevent or mitigate adverse noise impacts through incorporation of noise attenuation into the design and construction of a structure.

**Nonconforming lot** means any lot that does not meet the requirements for minimum lot area, lot depth or lot width, for any use, for the zoning district in which such lot is located.

**Nonconforming structure** means any building or structure that does not meet the applicable zoning district's regulations for dimensions and location, site improvements or development standards.

**Proposal:** Add language to Article V. - Use Standards section of the Land Development Code to regulate Neighborhood Scale Multi-family within Neighborhood Residential Zoning district.

To provide regulatory language for the neighborhood scale multi-family use, staff propose to amend the Use Standards section of the Land Development code by adding Neighborhood Scale multi-family (NSM) as a principal use. The new section would provide regulatory language that would mitigate the aesthetics impact of a NSM development and ensure consistency with neighborhood characteristics.

### **Sec. 30-5.19. - Mini-warehouses/self-storage facilities.**

Within the transect zones, there shall be no access to the individual storage units from the exterior of the building. All units shall be located within a building and accessed from within the building.

### **Sec. 30-5.20. - Neighborhood scale multi-family (NSM)**

All NSMs are limited to a minimum of two (2) units per building and a maximum of four (4) units per building. Within the Neighborhood Residential zone:

- A. Development is limited to one building on one lot or parcel created through a recorded and approved subdivision, lot split, lot line adjustment, single lot replatting, or minor subdivision.
- B. Buildings will be limited to a maximum of two (2) stories
- C. 3 -4 unit buildings front facade must meet these requirements:
  1. A maximum of two (2) primary entrances are allowed.
  2. 30% glazing minimum is required for the first floor with 15% minimum for upper floors.

3. Facades shall not exceed 20 horizontal feet without including at least one of the following elements:
  - a. A window or door
  - b. Awning, canopy or marquee
  - c. An offset, column, reveal, void, projecting rib, band, cornice, or similar element with a minimum depth of three (3) inches.
  - d. Complementary changes in façade materials or texture
- D. Off-street parking is limited to two (2) parking spots in front of the building. Additional parking spaces may be located in the rear.
- E. A minimum of one high quality tree must be provided with the development. The preservation of an existing high-quality tree may substitute this requirement.
- F. The main entrance(s) shall be on the first floor and shall be part of the front facade of the building. The front facade of the building must be facing a street. Buildings must have an entrance on the first floor, however entrances on the second floor may be located to the side or rear of the building.

**Note:** NSM as a permitted use would be introduced into the Use Standard Section of the Land Development Code alphabetically. The section numeration would reflect the alphabetical location of NSMs within the other listed uses. As such, the subsequent numeration of the uses after NSMs would be amended to reflect the new numeration order.

Below are existing examples of NSM homes in Gainesville that incorporate façades that are consistent with single family residential homes.

Examples of Exclusionary Zone: Neighborhood Scale Multi-family currently in Gainesville



Neighborhood Scale Multi-family: 4 units

Examples of Exclusionary Zone: Neighborhood Scale Multi-family currently in Gainesville, Cont.



Neighborhood Scale Multi-family: 5 units



(Note: 5 unit shown above is for illustration purposes only and is not part of the four (4) unit definition of NSM)

Examples of Exclusionary Zone: Neighborhood Scale Multi-family currently in Gainesville, Cont.



Neighborhood Scale Multi-family: 6 units

(Note: 6 unit shown above is for illustration purposes only and is not part of the four (4) unit definition of NSM)

Examples of Exclusionary Zone: Neighborhood Scale Multi-family currently in Gainesville, Cont.



Neighborhood Scale Multi-family: 2 units

The scale of NSMs would be consistent with what's currently allowed in Single Family Residential zoning. Currently, single family zones allow a house of up to three (3) stories high with a large footprint as long as it meets setback requirements. NSM buildings would be limited to the same height requirements and would be limited to no more than four (4) dwelling units per building.

NSMs of three (3) to four (4) units would require Rapid development plan review per Division 9 of the Land Development Code.

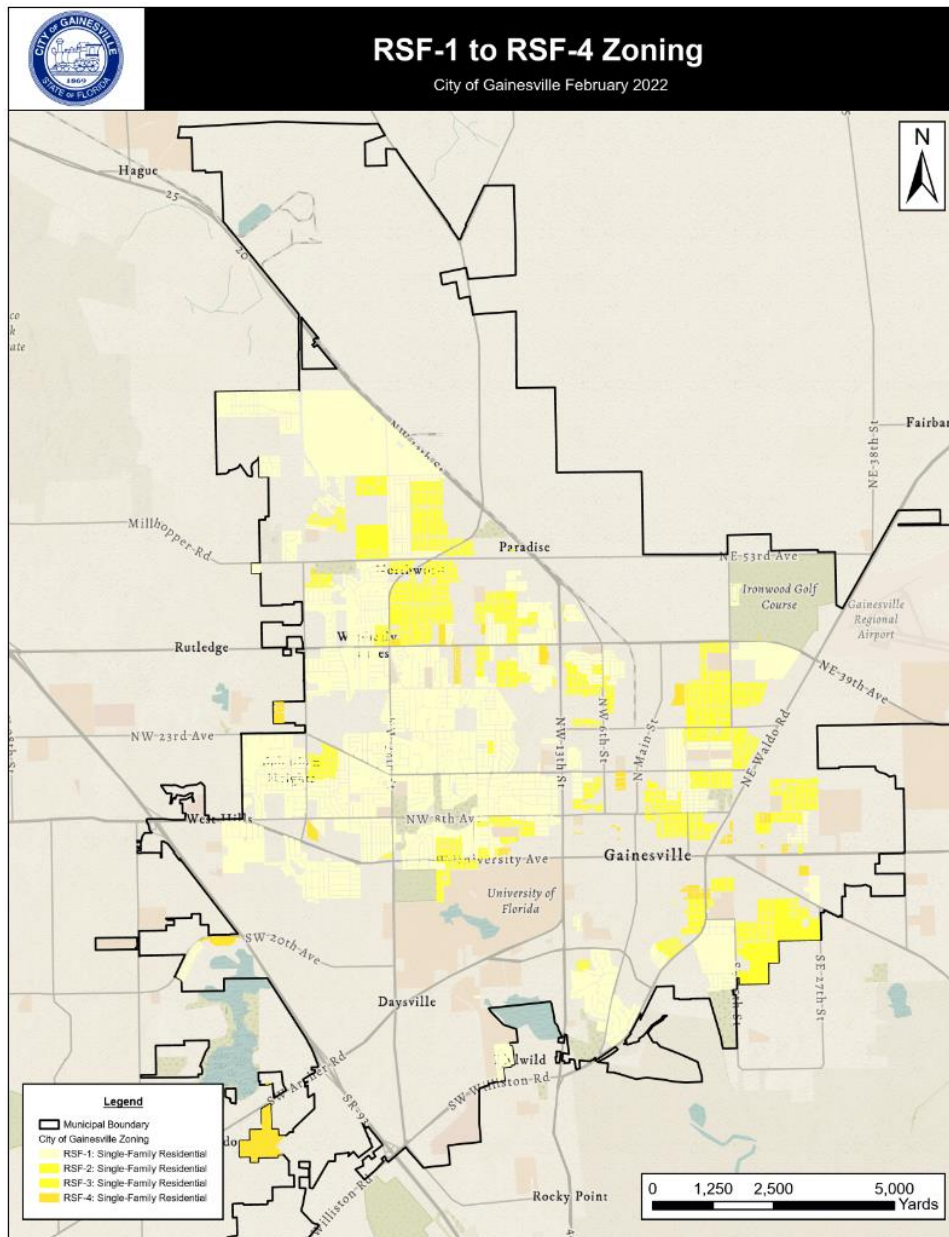


	<b>RAPID</b>	INTERMEDIATE	MAJOR
Residential	Developments of 3 to 10 multiple-family dwelling units.	Developments of 11 to 99 multiple-family dwelling units.	Developments of 100 or more multiple-family dwelling units.
Non-residential	New construction or expansions of 1,001 and up to 10,000 square feet of building area.	New construction or expansions of 10,001 to 50,000 square feet of building area.	New construction or expansions over 50,001 square feet of building area.
Parking; other impervious areas; construction activity	Parking areas that include 8—40 new parking spaces. Impervious areas: 1,000—20,000 square feet. Excavation, filling, or removal of more than 200 cubic yards of material for the purpose of development.	Parking areas that include 41—100 new parking spaces. Impervious areas: 20,001—50,000 square feet.	Parking areas that include more than 100 new parking spaces. Impervious areas: More than 50,000 square feet.

This would trigger additional regulations such as stormwater mitigation, sprinkling of the building, and GRU facility design and connections consistent with commercial development.

This proposal would have an impact on all properties zoned with RSF zoning district. It would not however have an impact to properties zoned multi-family, Urban transect, or Residential Conservation.

#### Existing Residential Single Family Zoning



## Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

The proposed amendments to the LDC are consistent with Gainesville's Comprehensive Plan as demonstrated below:

### Consistency with the Future Land Use Elements

*Policy 1.1.3 Neighborhoods should contain a diversity of housing types to enable citizens from a wide range of economic levels and age groups to live within its boundaries.*

### Consistency with the Housing Element

*Policy 1.1.4 The City shall review and evaluate zoning and other regulations that pertain to housing to insure that requirements continue to be reasonable and do not unduly limit opportunities for lower income groups to secure housing in desirable locations.*

*Objective 1.2 Provide a variety of housing types and densities for moderate-income, low-income, very low-income, and extremely low-income people.*

*Objective 1.3 The City shall allocate sufficient acreage in appropriate locations to meet the housing needs of the City's residents.*

*Policy 1.5.1 The City shall seek innovative ways to encourage affordable housing, which could include use of alternative building materials, reduced lot size requirements, design competitions for affordable housing, and a design advisory committee to advise housing providers on the development of affordable housing designs.*

*Policy 3.5.1 The City shall develop recommendations on increasing the desirability of owner-occupancy in the University Context Area.*

Respectfully submitted,

Juan Castillo  
Planner III

