



CONSENT AGENDA ITEM NO. 8.K.

FOR COUNCIL: July 28, 2025

WARD IMPACTED: City-Wide Impact

SUBJECT: Consideration and Action on an Ordinance Approving Text Amendments to the Zoning Code of the City of Bloomington [Chapter 44] Relating to Practical Buildability in Mixed- and Multiple-Family Residential Districts, as requested by the Development Services Department.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: The proposed Ordinance be approved.

STRATEGIC PLAN LINK:

Goal 5. Great Place - Livable, Sustainable City

STRATEGIC PLAN SIGNIFICANCE:

Objective 5a. Well-planned City with necessary services and infrastructure

Objective 5b. City decisions consistent with plans and policies

BACKGROUND: Per § 44-1706B, text amendments may be proposed by City Staff. The following are recommendations for improvements or additions to the existing Zoning Code of the City of Bloomington (Chapter 44).

Summary of Topics Addressed:

- *Removing duplication/conflict with lot size governance between the Subdivision Code (Ch. 24) and Zoning Code (Ch. 44) to allow platting and owner-occupancy of multiple-family structures that can already be built.* Clarifying the difference between a "Zoning Lot" (buildable area) and "Lot of Record" (legally transferrable area) will not change which uses and structures can go where, but it will allow those structures to be platted in a way that allows fee-simple ownership. The way our Zoning Code and Subdivision Code interact has resulted in most attached structures (duplex, townhome, etc.) being divisible only as Condominiums. Condos are difficult to finance and insure so most of these structures end up remaining rentals. Community interest in owner occupancy, combined with the market interest in these structure types, indicates the need to rectify this conflict in the Code. Owner-occupancy is linked to lower financing costs, generational wealth building, reduced property management costs, increased property values, and neighborhood stabilization.
- *Rectifying duplicative or impractical Residential Bulk and Site Standards.* Most of the Residential Zoning Districts apply a combination of at least five, if not all of the Bulk and Site Standards used in the Code. Bulk and Site Standards all restrict how large a building can be compared to the lot it sits on, and when too many are implemented they can come into conflict when trying to apply the Code to real world development. "Floor Area Ratio" is proposed for removal, in favor of the more familiar combination of buildable area and maximum building height. Physical height restrictions (feet) are poorly aligned with descriptive building height restrictions (stories). Height restrictions are poorly

aligned with the practical application of triggers in the Building Code, as well as with the existing structures in the community. Minor changes to Lot Characteristics and Site Design have been made to the R-3A District to make the transition from the commonly-adjacent R-1C/R-2 Districts more visually seamless. A full discussion of the conflicts and opportunities for improvement may be found in the [original Staff Report to the Planning Commission](#).

- *Clarifying notes added in the R-2 and R-3 "Bulk and Site Standards" tables that use different terms than the "Permitted and Special Uses" tables.* The R-2 District Permitted and Special Use table aggregates uses differently than the Bulk & Site Standards table, causing confusion over which uses fit under which classification. Notes "1" and "2" have been added for clarification, and the R-3 table classifications have been aligned with the R-2 for streamlined use and understanding.

On June 4, 2025, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on a package of text amendments including the subset of amendments in the proposed Ordinance. Public testimony was accepted; no testimony in opposition to the proposal was received. The Commission voted 9-0-0 in favor of adopting findings of fact that the request was in the public interest and recommending approval of the request to City Council.

COMMUNITY GROUPS/INTERESTED PERSONS CONTACTED: The application was filed in conformance with applicable procedural and public notice requirements. Notice was published in *The Pantagraph* on May 8, 2025.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Reducing hurdles to resident ownership of the dwelling units that can already be built may increase the property tax base; owner-occupancy supports increased property values due to the valuation methods used to assess homesteads versus rental properties. A potential increase in development value may be realized due to greater returns on investment from more clear and consistent standards.

Respectfully submitted for consideration.

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ATTACHMENTS:

[DSD 3B Ordinance](#)

[DSD 3C Ordinance - Exhibit A](#)

[DSD 3D Planning Commission Findings of Fact](#)