

CITY OF COOS BAY JOINT WORK SESSION

Agenda Staff Report

MEETING DATE	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER
July 30, 2026	2.a

TO: Mayor Benetti, Council President DiNovo, and City Councilors

FROM: Chelsea Schnabel, Community Development Director

THROUGH: Nichole Rutherford, City Manager

ISSUE: Discussion Regarding Coos Bay Housing Policy and Code Audit Findings

SUMMARY:

The consultant has completed an audit of the City's housing-related policies and codes to identify areas where changes are needed. Key points for discussion are below. A detailed summary of housing policy and code audit findings is attached.

Topic and Recommendation	Policy Question
1. Allowing Middle Housing in More Locations : Ensure that all housing is allowed through a clear and objective process including: • Allow townhouses in the LDR zone by right with clear and objective standards. • Allow triplexes and quadplexes in the SLR zone by right with clear and objective standards. • Allow small group care and group residential care facilities by right (for example, facilities serving fewer than 10 persons) with clear and objective standards, with larger facilities subject to conditional use approval.	<i>Should the CBDC be revised to allow these middle housing types by right with clear and objective standards or, in zone districts where these middle housing types are permitted with conditional use approval, should they no longer be allowed?</i>
2. Definition and Standards for Triplexes, Quadplexes, and Cottage Clusters. Recommendations include: • Identify triplexes and quadplexes as allowed uses in the LDR and SLR residential zones. • Prepare basic new standards for triplexes and quadplexes which are less complex than those for larger housing developments. • Review minimum lot sizes for triplexes and quadplexes and modify them to help make these forms of housing feasible to develop. • Update standards to reduce potential barriers to development of cottage cluster housing by allowing more cottages in a single cluster and reducing some procedural requirements.	<i>Should the CBDC be revised to explicitly define these types of housing separate from larger "multi-unit dwellings" and create standards that allow for them to be developed in a more feasible manner?</i>

3. Live/Work Housing. The CBDC can be updated to define “live/work unit” as a distinct housing type that is allowed in the SLR and MDR districts and possibly in the C and MX subareas. This also would entail: • Limit the non-residential floor area to a defined percentage of the unit, with limits on the types of non-residential uses allowed and on the number of non-resident employees, parking, signage, and hours of operation. • Coordinate with the City's building official to confirm that units meeting the updated standards qualify for building code review with appropriate separation features rather than full commercial building code review.	<i>Should the CBDC be revised to define and authorize live/work units in selected residential zones, with clear and objective standards calibrated to support a residential building-code classification?</i>
4. Adjustment Review Option. The city’s Adjustment Review process can provide an optional path for housing developers who want more flexibility to deviate from specific development standards. Clarifying this in the Code would help communicate the purpose of this process.	<i>Should the CBDC be revised to clarify that the existing Adjustment Review process serves as an optional discretionary path for housing developers?</i>
5. Public Improvements and Infill Street Standards. On smaller infill sites, full street improvements such as curb, gutter, sidewalk, and full pavement width are often infeasible due to topography, existing development patterns, or cost, and may be a barrier to housing production. To address this, the City could do the following: • Apply specific measurable thresholds for when housing applications are subject to impact mitigation and remove open-ended discretionary criteria as applied to housing. • Allow for narrower right-of-way and pavement standards for short street segments, queuing streets, and partial improvements where full improvements are infeasible.	<i>Should the CBDC and CBMC Title 18 be revised to allow for these exceptions for smaller infill developments?</i>

ACTION REQUESTED:

Consider the five (5) key policy questions and provide direction.

BACKGROUND:

The Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) Housing Accountability and Production Office (HAPO) awarded the City a Housing Planning Assistance Grant to complete an audit of the City's housing-related policies and codes. This work is being led by DLCD provided consultant MIG. The purpose of this work is to comply with housing laws, address permitting and land use barriers to housing production, and to facilitate housing production, affordability, and choice. The result of this work will be comprehensive plan and development code text amendments that align with the project's purpose. City Council and Planning Commission will have the opportunity to review and comment on draft proposed amendments this Fall prior to adoption proceedings. The expected project completion date is March of 2027.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

Staff time and resources to complete the recommended amendments.

ATTACHMENT(S):

- Coos Bay Policy & Code Audit Summary Memo