

Proposed R-3A Residential Mixed-Use District

A NEW ZONING TOOL



Anchorage is changing.

By 2040, the Anchorage Bowl is forecast to grow by as many as 21,000 households, 45,000 people, and 44,000 jobs. Mixed-use development projects offer a compact and efficient way to grow. They also offer a variety of benefits, including: another housing type; improvements in walkability between housing, workplaces, and other amenities; and stronger neighborhoods. Therefore, mixed-use development is one way to accommodate Anchorage's growth.

The R-3A District will add a new residential zone that will evolve with higher residential density and compatible commercial uses.

WHY A NEW ZONING DISTRICT?

Mixed-use developments were common prior to the adoption of modern zoning codes. Separation of uses predominated in the early 20th century. Now, mixed-use forms of development are increasingly sought after by the marketplace, investors, and residents who want access to small-scale retail commercial development, such as coffee shops, bakeries, local restaurants, and the like. Anchorage investors see market opportunities for mixed-use developments. The R-3A zoning district fits well in certain locations in the Anchorage Bowl.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The proposed R-3A district is a medium density, mixed-use, multi-family residential zoning district with densities between 15 and 40 dwelling units per acre. The R-3A district is primarily residential, but allows a variety of compatible commercial, retail, services, or office uses. To maintain and provide desired housing densities, the R-3A district allows greater building heights based on site-specific criteria. This district allows a somewhat higher lot coverage than the R-3 district, while still maintaining a quality residential living environment with common open space, landscaping, and other features that benefit residents. The commercial aspects of this mixed-use district are intended to serve neighborhood needs and promote pedestrian access to sustain local shopping.

The composition of Anchorage's neighborhoods will be different in the future. Anchorage is becoming more diverse and our population is aging.

The 2020 Anchorage Bowl Comprehensive Plan recognized that zoning district regulations would need to change and allow for and encourage mixed-use development to include residential, commercial/office, and/or retail uses within the same structure or on the same parcel.



Mixed use can include development of a tract of land, building(s), or structure(s) with a variety of different or complementary and integrated uses in a compact urban form. Such developments are designed with a pedestrian focus. They are intended to reduce dependency on the automobile and to create a sense of place.

The R-3A district allows certain commercial uses that are

compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. Commercial development in the R-3A district is not required but may be allowed up to 33% of the gross



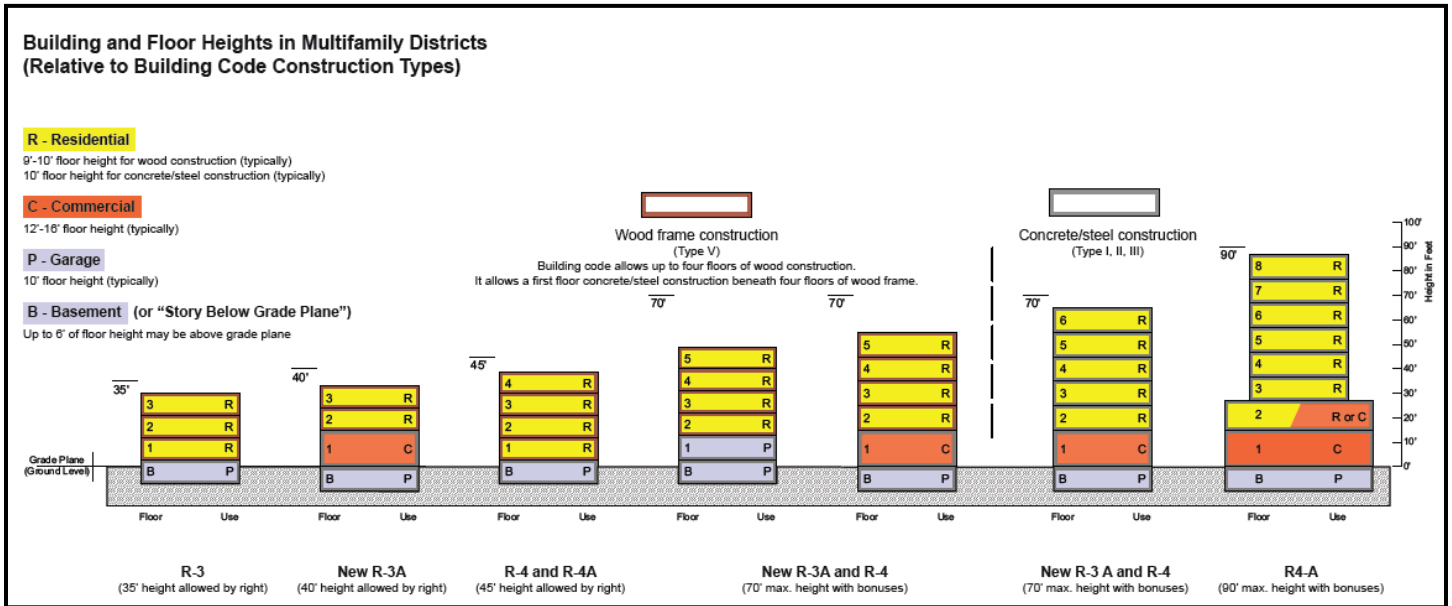
floor area, provided that certain standards are met.

Building height increases are allowed but only for housing and other site or building enhancements. Heights above 40 feet and up to 70 feet may be permitted in return for public benefit features like below-grade parking and additional open space. Allowance for building heights above 40 feet are governed by mitigating impacts to adjacent neighborhoods as a result of shadowing and loss of views.

District location requirements for R-3A district. The R-3A district will be located in areas that can accommodate growth with minimal impacts to neighborhoods. The R-3A district is intended for those areas that are designated in the comprehensive plan for medium density residential mixed-use development and public transit corridors, adjacent to a city center, regional center, town center, main street corridor, or public transit corridor.



Proposed R-3A Residential Mixed-Use District, cont'd



“Mixed use is what cities are all about. If you don’t have mixed use, you don’t have cities.” -- Joseph Rykwert, architectural historian



What are the benefits of Mixed-Use Development?

Different communities choose mixed use for different reasons. Some see it as a way to incorporate a mix of housing types on a small scale while others see it primarily as a way to spur economic development.

Listed below are some of the many benefits of mixed-use development:

- «Promotes efficient use of scarce, vacant, or underdeveloped property
- «Encourages high-quality design for mixed-use development
- «Allows mix of retail, restaurants, offices, and multi-family housing
- «Provides more housing opportunities and choices
- «May increase affordable housing opportunities
- «Enhances an area’s unique identity and development potential
- «Promotes pedestrian, transit, and bicycle travel
- «Reduces auto dependency, roadway congestion, and air pollution by co-locating multiple destinations
- «Promotes sense of place
- «Encourages investment
- «Spurs revitalization



Project Timeline

In June 2017, the Administration directed the Planning Department to draft code language necessary to implement an R-3A Residential Mixed-Use Zoning District.

