

Submitted by: Chair of the Assembly at
the Request of the Mayor
Prepared by: Planning Department
For reading: _____

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
AO No. 2026-___

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF TITLE 21 OF ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL CODE TO ALLOW SHOP-HOUSE DESIGNS—RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES WITH ACCESSORY GARAGE OR WORKSHOP AREAS LARGER THAN THE PRINCIPAL RESIDENTIAL USE—IN COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICTS.

(Planning and Zoning Commission Case No. 2026-0035) (All Community Councils)

WHEREAS, there is an acute need for additional housing to support the projected population and housing demand growth in the Municipality of Anchorage; and,

WHEREAS, Title 21 of the Anchorage Municipal Code defines “dwelling or dwelling unit” to mean “A building or portion thereof designed or used exclusively as the separate residence for one household and providing independent and complete living facilities, generally including provisions for sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation.” (AMC section 21.15.040); and,

WHEREAS, “Residential” is defined to mean “activity involving the occupation of buildings for living, cooking, sleeping, and recreation”; and,

WHEREAS, restrictions on the floor area of a private residential garage or workshop area detached or attached to a residential dwelling unit are generally up to half the size of the gross floor area of the principal use or structure (the house or dwelling) in higher density residential districts (R-2M, R-3, R-4, and R-4A) and up to the same size as the house or dwelling in large lot and lower density residential districts (R-1, R-1A, R-2A, R-2D, R-5, R-6, R-7, R-8, R-9, and R-10), with some allowing larger sizes up to 10% of the lot size (AMC section 21.05.070C.9. and C.10); and,

WHEREAS, the Municipal Code does not contain any language on area restrictions for a private residential garage or carport accessory to a residence in the B-3 or other commercial districts, although townhouses, multifamily housing, and mixed-use residential buildings are permitted; and,

WHEREAS, the “shop house” or “s-house” is becoming a popular design and marketing feature for new developments; essentially a dwelling unit where an attached garage or workshop dominates the floor plan, and the total dwelling area is smaller than the shop or garage square footage; and,

WHEREAS, a s-house design is not accommodated in current Title 21, but the character of such designs in general are consistent with commercial districts; and,

WHEREAS, the intent of this ordinance is to provide for s-house designs and allow them as permitted residential uses in the B-3 and other commercial zoning districts without extensive changes to the code, allow for more residential development, and help facilitate an increase to the housing inventory in the Municipality; and,

WHEREAS, the B-3 general business zoning district is already one of the Municipality’s most urban zones, indicating flexible regulations are appropriate; now, therefore,

THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY ORDAINS:

Section 1. Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.05.010E., Table 21.05-1: Table of Allowed Uses, is hereby amended as shown in in the table below (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

21.05.010 TABLE OF ALLOWED USES.

Table 21.05-1 below lists the uses allowed within all base zoning districts in the Anchorage Bowl except for the Downtown (DT) Districts. (See Chapters 21.09, 21.10, and 21.11 for regulations specific to Girdwood, Chugiak-Eagle River, and the Downtown (DT) Districts, respectively.) Each of the listed uses is defined in Sections 21.05.030 through 21.05.060.

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E. Table of Allowed Uses - Residential, Commercial, Industrial, and Other Districts

TABLE 21.05-1: TABLE OF ALLOWED USES – RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, AND OTHER DISTRICTS									
P = Permitted Use S = Administrative Site Plan Review C = Conditional Use M = Major Site Plan Review T = Special Land Use Permit for Marijuana									
For uses allowed in the A, TA, and TR districts, see section 21.04.060.									
Use Category	Use Type	*** **	B-1A	B-1B	B-3	RO	*** **	*** **	Definitions and Use-Specific Standards
RESIDENTIAL USES									
Household Living	Development [DWELLING], mixed-use	*** **	P	P	P	P	*** **	*** **	21.05.030A.1.
	Dwelling, multifamily	*** **		P	P	P	*** **	*** **	21.05.030A.2.
	Dwelling, single-family, attached	*** **	P	P	P	P	*** **	*** **	21.05.030A.3.
	Dwelling, single-family, detached	*** **	P	P	P	P	*** **	*** **	21.05.030A.4.
	Dwelling, townhouse	*** **	P	P	S	S	*** **	*** **	21.05.030A.5.
	Dwelling, two-family	*** **	P	P	P	P	*** **	*** **	21.05.030A.6.
	Dwelling Unit, Relocatable	*** **			P		*** **	*** **	21.05.030A.7.
	Relocatable dwelling unit community	*** **			P		*** **	*** **	21.05.030A.8.
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(AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2013-139, § 1, 1-28-14; AO No. 2014-58, § 2(Att. A), 5-20-14; AO No. 2015-133(S), § 3(Exh. A), 2-23-16; AO No. 2015-142(S-1), § 3(Exh. B), 6-21-16; AO No. 2016-3(S), §§ 6, 7, 2-23-16; AO No. 2016-131, § 1, 11-15-16; AO No. 2016-136am, § 2, 11-15-16; AO No. 2016-156, § 1, 12-20-16; AO No. 2017-10, § 1, 1-24-17; AO No. 2017-57, § 1, 4-11-17; AO No. 2017-74, § 1, 5-23-17; AO No. 2017-176, § 4, 1-9-18; AO No. 2017-175(S), § 3(Exh. A), 2-13-18; AO No. 2020-38, § 6, 5-28-20; AO No. 2020-56, § 2, 6-23-20; AO No. 2021-54, § 1, 6-22-21; AO No. 2023-77, §§ 5, 18, 7-25-23; AO No. 2023-42, § 2, 8-22-23; AO No. 2023-87(S-1), § 2(Exh. B), 6-25-24; AO 2025-36, 4-16-25; AO 2025-112, 10-21-25)

Section 2. Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.05.030 is hereby amended as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

21.05.030 RESIDENTIAL USES: DEFINITIONS AND USE-SPECIFIC STANDARDS.

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A. *Household living.* This category is characterized by residential occupancy of a dwelling unit by a "household," which is defined in Chapter 21.15. Tenancy is arranged on a month-to-month or longer basis. Common accessory uses include recreational activities, raising of pets, gardens, personal storage buildings, hobbies, and parking of the occupants' vehicles. Specific use types include:

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1. **Development**[DWELLING], *mixed-use.*

a. *Definition.* A dwelling that is located on the same lot or in the same building as a non-residential use, in a single environment in which both residential and non-residential amenities are provided.

b. *Use-specific standards.*

i. **One**[TWO] or more **[MIXED-USE]** dwellings in the same building with a non-residential use constitute a mixed-use development.

ii. Two or more **dwelling**s in a **mixed-use development** [DWELLINGS] shall comply with the applicable design standards of Section 21.07.110, Residential Design Standards, as determined by the building style.

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(AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2014-58, § 1, 5-20-14; AO No. 2015-133(S), § 4, 2-23-16; AO No. 2017-160, § 1, 12-19-17; AO No. 2018-118, § 2, 1-1-19; AO No. 2020-23, § 2, 3-10-20; AO No. 2020-24, § 1, 3-10-20; AO No. 2023-103(S), § 2, 1-1-24; AO No. 2023-87(S-1), § 5, 6-25-24; AO 2025-122, 10-21-25; AO 2025-128, 11-18-25)

Section 3. Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.15.040, Definitions, is hereby amended as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

21.15.040 DEFINITIONS.

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Mixed-Use Development

In the Anchorage Bowl: A single building containing one or more residential units and another classification of land use (office, retail, community use, etc.) or a single development of more than one building which includes at least one residential unit and another use (office, retail, community use, etc.).

In chapters 21.09, Girdwood, and 21.10 Chugiak-Eagle River: A single building containing two or more residential units and another classification of land use (office, retail, community use, etc.) or a single development of more than one building which includes at least two residential units and another use (office, retail, community use, etc.), where the uses of different classifications (office, retail, community use, etc.) are in a compact urban form, planned as a unified complementary whole, and functionally integrated to facilitate the use of shared vehicular and pedestrian access and parking lots.

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(AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO 2014-132, 11-5-14; AO 2015-82, 7-28-15; AO 2015-100, 10-13-15; AO 2015-138, 1-12-16; AO 2015-133(S), 2-23-16; AO 2015-142(S-1), 6-21-16; AO 2016-3(S), 2-23-16; AO 2016-144(S), 12-20-16; AO 2017-55, 4-11-17; AO 2017-75, 5-9-2017; AO 2018- 12, 2-27-18; AO 2018-67(S-1), 10-9-18; AO 2018-92, 10-23-18; AO 2019-132, 12-2-19; AO 2020-38, 4- 28-20; AO 2021-89(S), 2-15-22; AO 2022-36, 4-26-22; AO 2022-80(S), 11-22-22; AO 2023-120, 12-5-23; AO 2025-38(2), 4-22-25; AO 2025-112, 10-21-25; AO 2025-128, 11-18-25)

Section 4. This ordinance shall be effective immediately upon passage and approval by the Assembly.

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PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this _____ day of _____, 2026.

Chair

ATTEST:

Municipal Clerk

(Planning and Zoning Commission Case No. 2026-0035)

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