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BRINGING BACK THE TRIPLEX (+1)

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CAN ANCHORAGE BRING BACK THE TRIPLEX?

A design competition identified the key barriers to expanding great multifamily options in Alaska's largest city.

TAKEAWAYS

- > Inefficient use of land, caused in part by restrictive zoning laws, is constricting Anchorage's housing supply, making homes more expensive for everybody in an already tough economy
- > If you want to build a triplex in Anchorage, you're subject to the same standards as if you were building a big-box store.
- > Parking and setback requirements, plus a ban on pairing duplexes with accessory dwellings, can also make three-unit homes harder to build than a much larger one-family mansion.

**“IF A TRIPLEX AND A DUPLEX WERE
BUILT ON THE SAME LOT, IN THE
SAME FOOTPRINT, WHY IS THE
TRIPLEX MORE EXPENSIVE AND
MORE TIME CONSUMING?”**

OUR ROUNDTABLE PROCESS

ASSEMBLY RETREAT | SEPT 2022

MONTHLY ROUNDTABLES | FEB – SEPT 2023

Municipal Staff | Municipal Manager, Building Official, Building Engineer, Development Services, Planning
Local Housing Enthusiasts | Researchers, Contractors, Builders, and Consultants

PUBLIC PROPOSAL | SEPT 2023

SMALL MULTIFAMILY

One or more detached residential buildings not exceeding three stories with two to four dwelling units on one lot.



South Addition Duplex



Fairview Triplex

WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS TO BUILDING SMALL MULTIFAMILY?

Dimensional Standards: 3+ units requires larger lot and larger setbacks.

Residential Design Standards: Design guidelines are the same for 3+ as apartment buildings. *Single family homes are exempt.*

Offsite Improvements: Additional costs to developers to upgrade surrounding infrastructure. *Single family homes are exempt.*

Building and Fire Safety Code: These are important but treating a 3-unit project like a 50-unit project doesn't make sense.

Drainage: Drainage plans are required by unit count, not the impervious surface on the lot, which triggers higher costs for professional services and infrastructure. *Single family homes are exempt.*

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH **AO 2023-103**?

Our conversations revealed that the barriers are complex and our legislative tools are limited.

Part 1 - AO 2023-103

An ordinance to revise **Title 21 - Land Use** to reduce barriers to building small multifamily, three- and four-unit residential projects.

Part 2 - Coming Soon

An ordinance to revise **Title 23 - Building Code** to reduce unnecessary commercial requirements without sacrificing safety.

2040 LAND USE PLAN **GOAL 2**

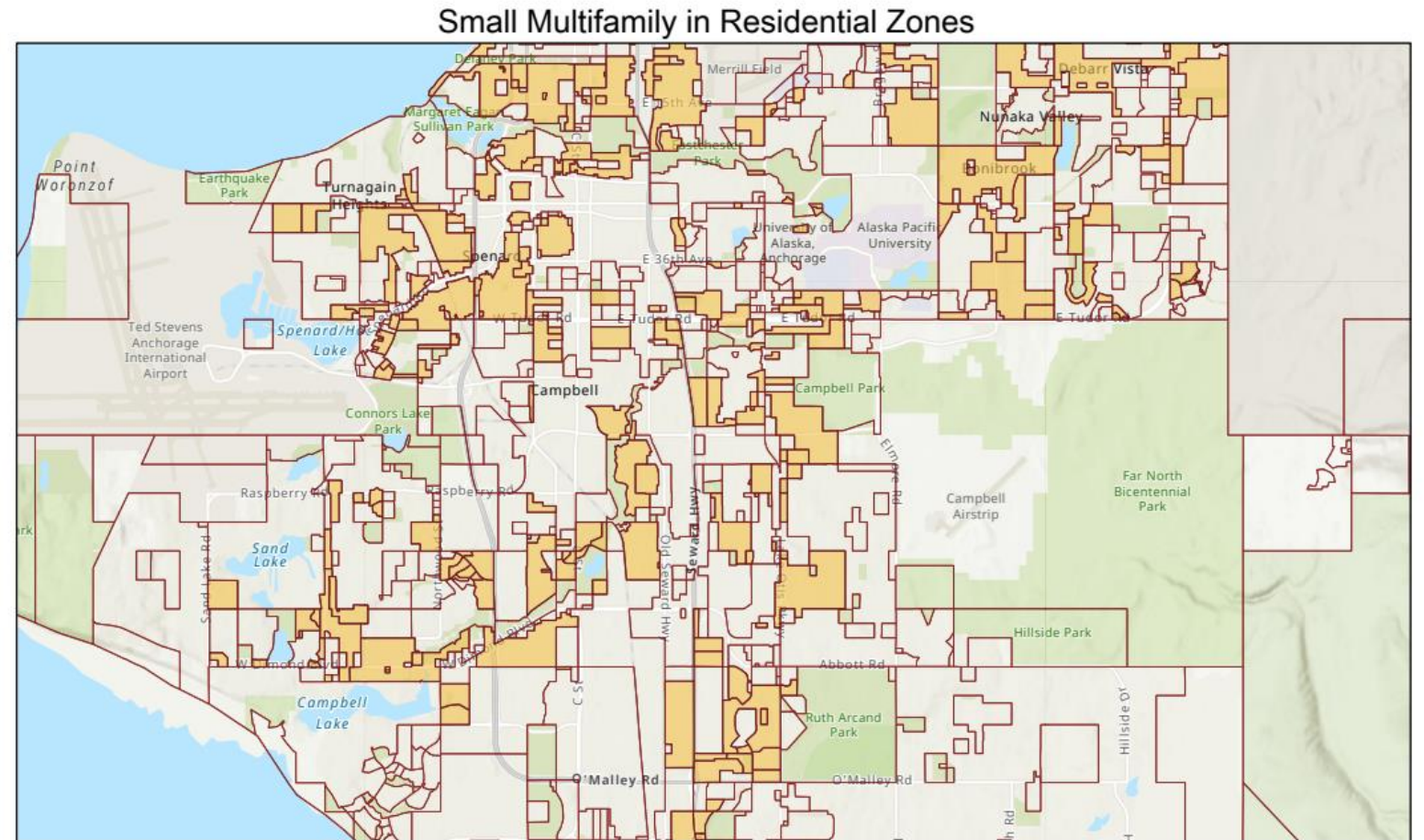
Infill and redevelopment meets the housing and employment needs of residents and businesses in Anchorage.

WHERE AO 2023-103 APPLIES: RESIDENTIAL ZONES

Residential Zones

Redefines small multifamily where it is already allowed

- R-2M
- R-3
- R-3A
- R-4
- R-4A

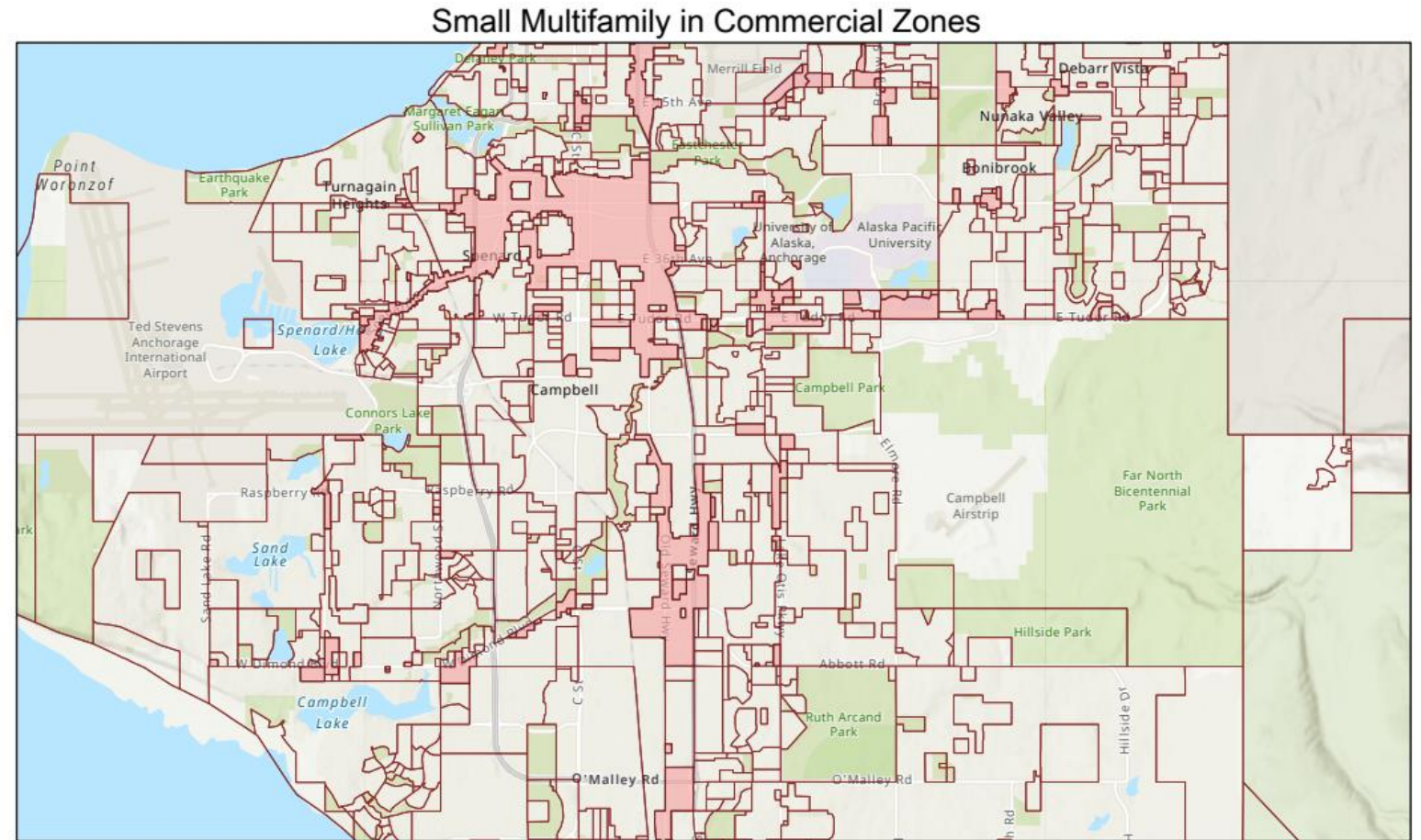


WHERE AO 2023-103 APPLIES: **COMMERCIAL ZONES**

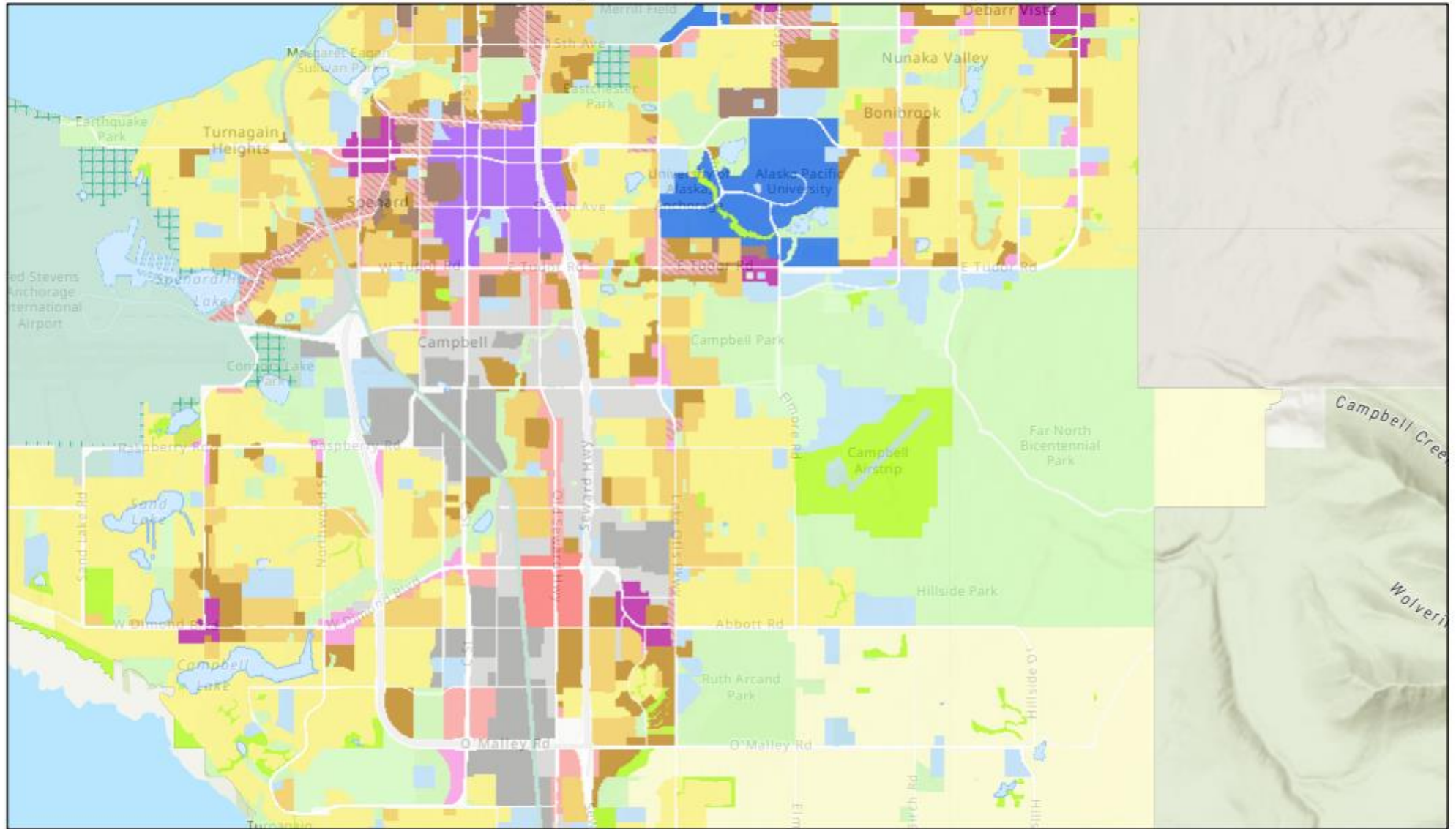
Commercial Zones

Defines small multifamily in alignment with the 2040 LUP

- B-1A
- B-1B
- B-3
- RO
- MC



Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan Map



10/3/2023, 1

Zoning

Mul

10/3/2023, 2:13:21 PM

Anchorage 2040 Land Use Designations

Large-Lot Residential

Single-Family and Two-Family

Compact Mixed Residential - Low

Compact Mixed Residential - Medium

Urban Residential - High

Neighborhood Center

Town Center

Regional Commercial Center

City Center

Commercial Corridor

Main Street Corridor

Park Or Natural Area

Other Open Space

1:144,448



Kenai Peninsula Borough, Matanuska-Susitna Borough GIS, Municipality of Anchorage, State of Alaska, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, MET/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA, Esri, USGS

2040 LAND USE PLAN **POLICY 2.3**

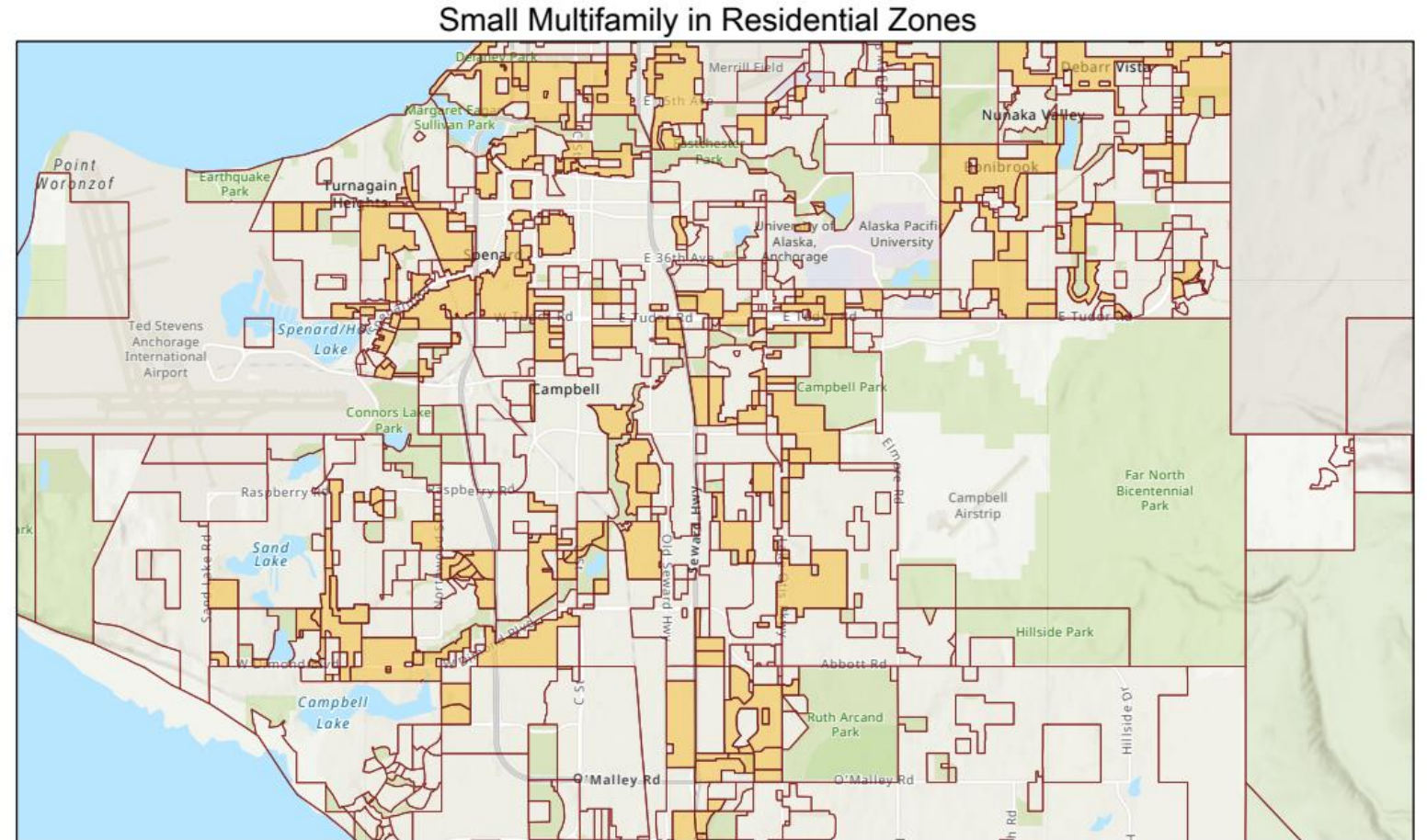
Remove barriers to desired infill development and incorporate flexibility in standard development requirements to promote adaptive reuse of older buildings and compact infill/redevelopment, including that which reflects traditional urban neighborhood design contexts.

WHERE AO 2023-103 APPLIES: RESIDENTIAL ZONES

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DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS IN R2M

R-2M – Mixed Residential District

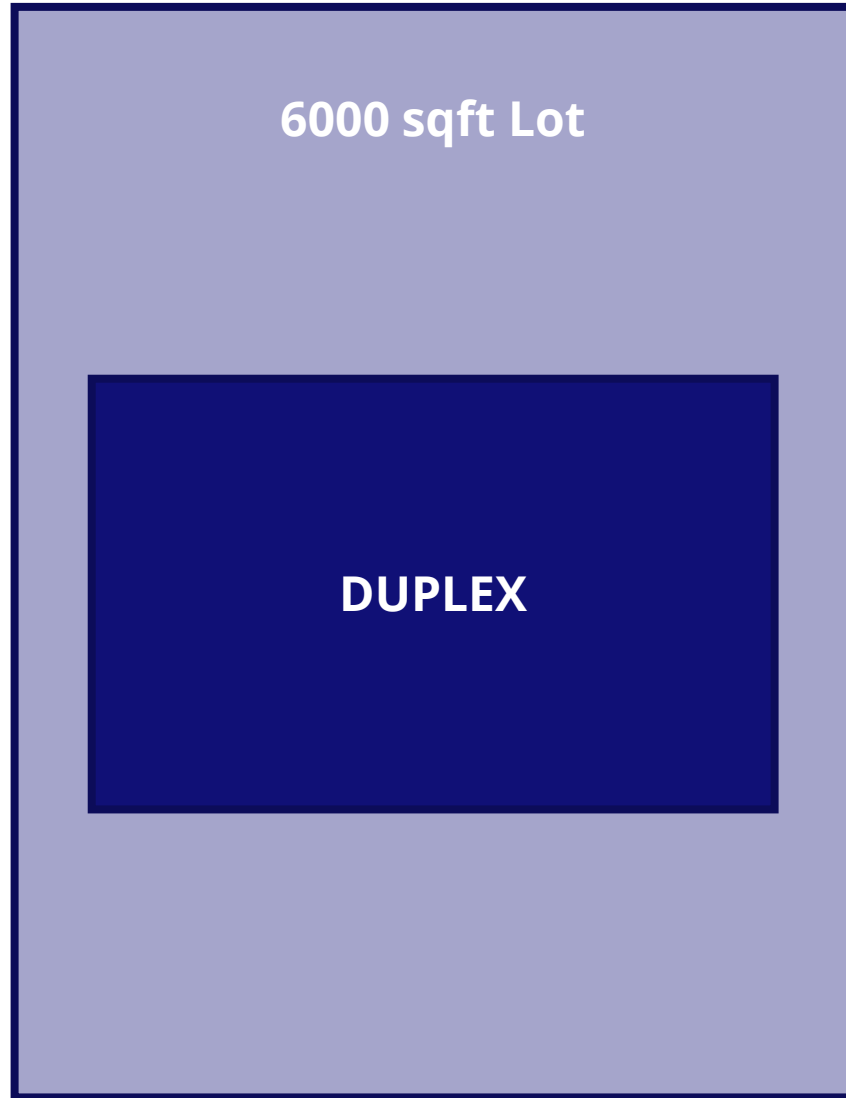
The R-2M district is intended primarily for residential areas that allow for a variety of single-family, two-family, small multifamily, and multifamily dwellings, with gross densities between five and 15 dwelling units per acre.

The R-2M district provides residential neighborhoods with a greater diversity of housing by allowing a mix of both detached and a variety of attached dwelling types in close proximity to each other, rather than separated into different zoning districts.

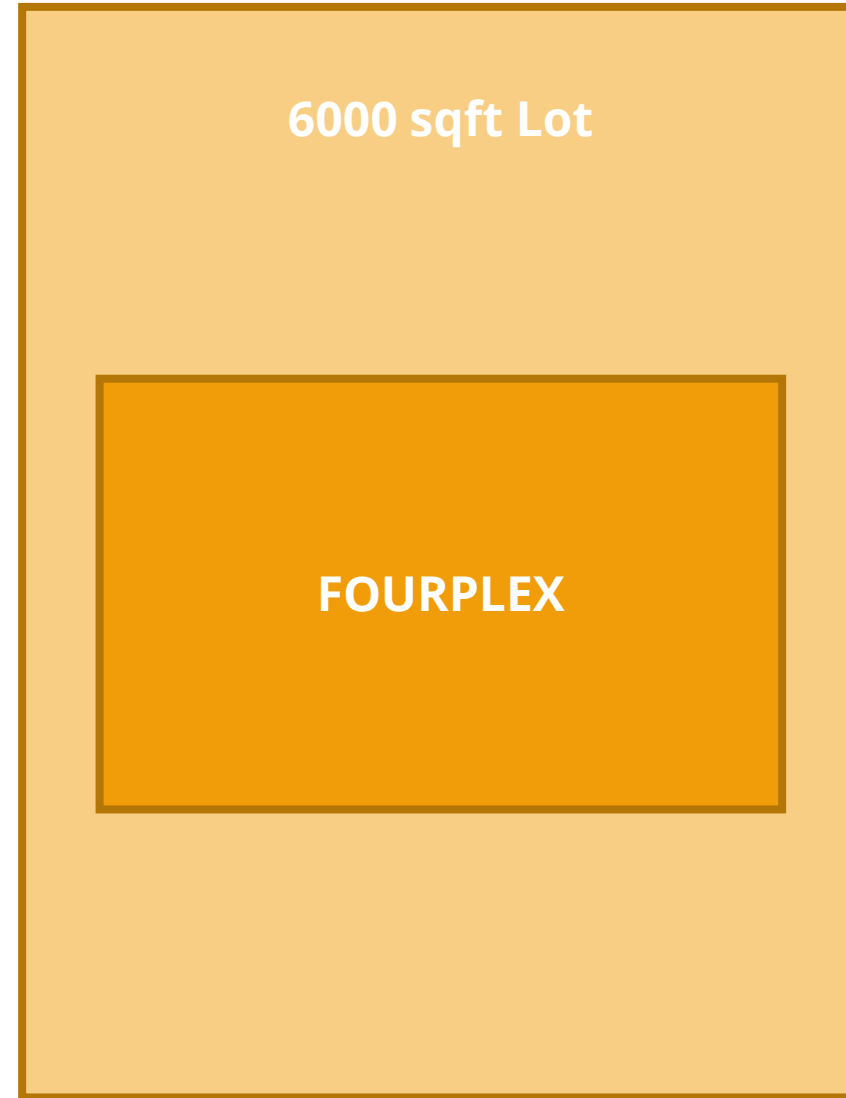
The R-2M district is to be located in established or redeveloping residential neighborhoods or is to create a transition between single-family, two-family, small multifamily, and higher density multifamily and mixed-use areas.

The design of new development, such as building scale and setbacks, parking facility size and location, and yard landscaping, should be complementary to the existing neighborhood and mix of dwelling types.

✓ **ALLOWED**



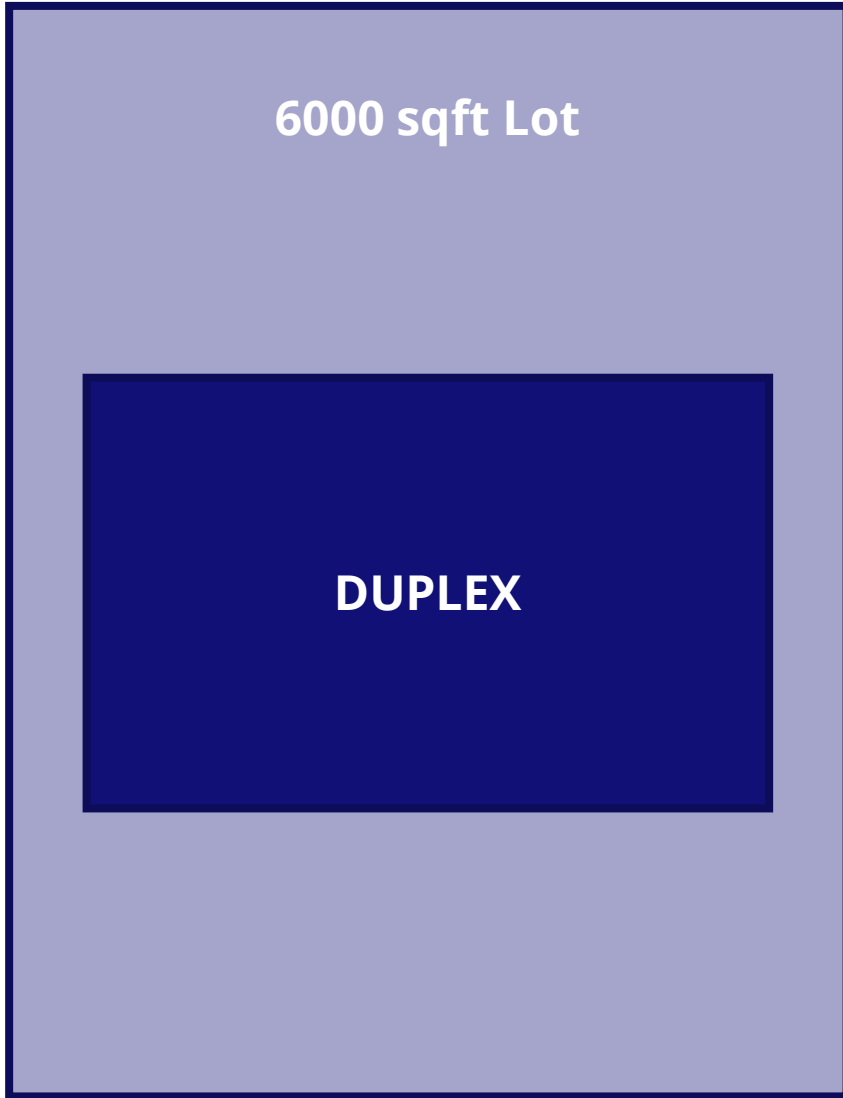
NOT ALLOWED



CURRENT DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS IN R2M

not to scale

✓ **ALLOWED**



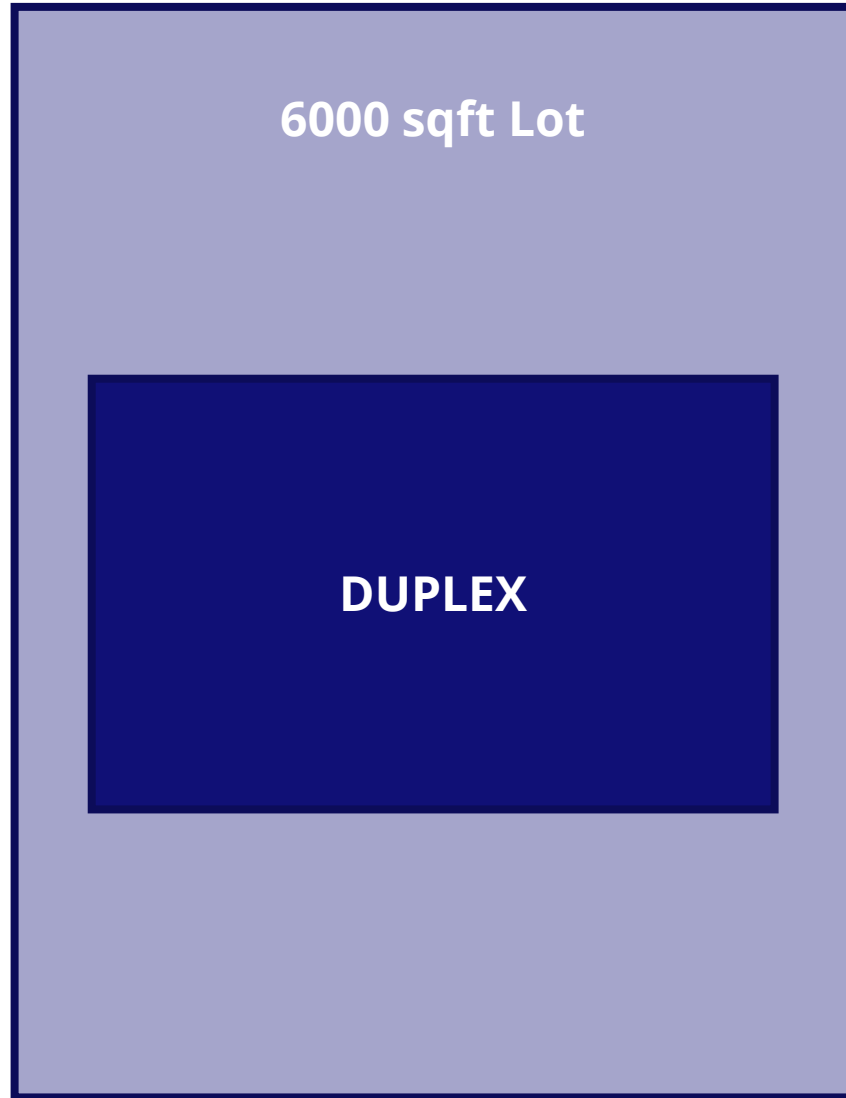
✓ **ALLOWED**



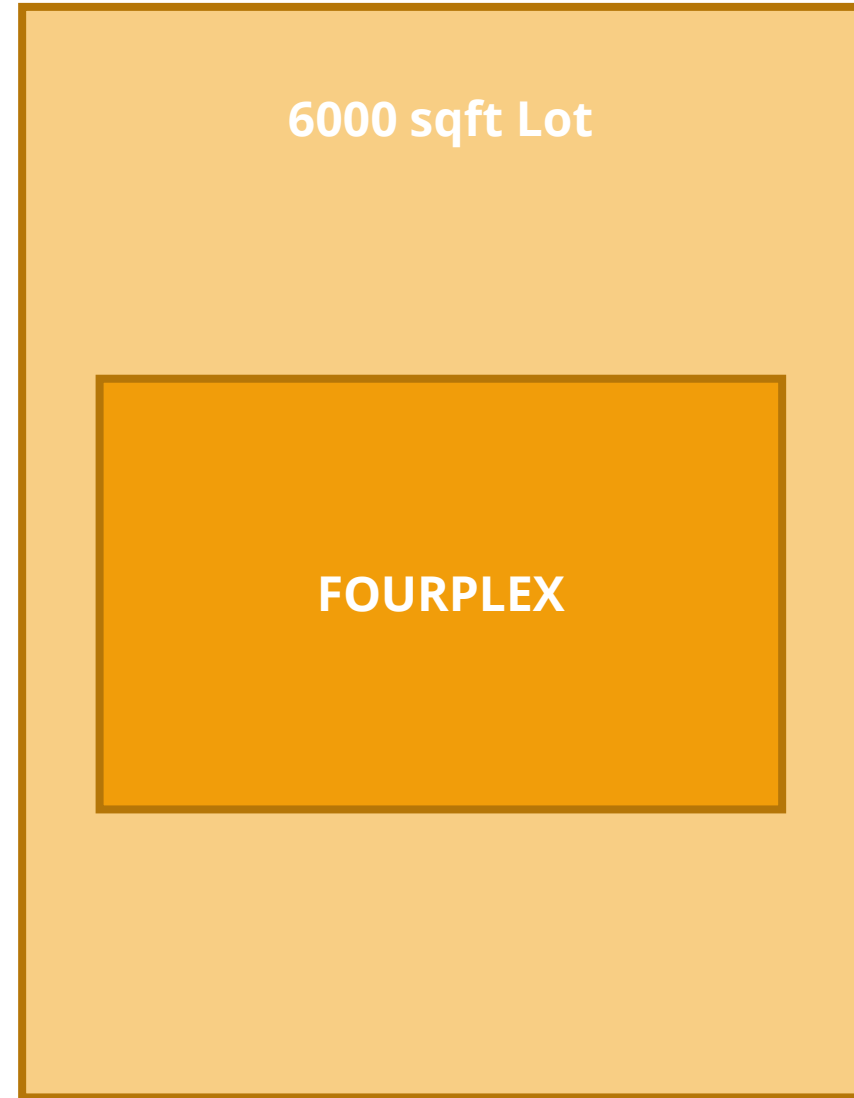
CURRENT DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS IN R2M

not to scale

✓ **ALLOWED**



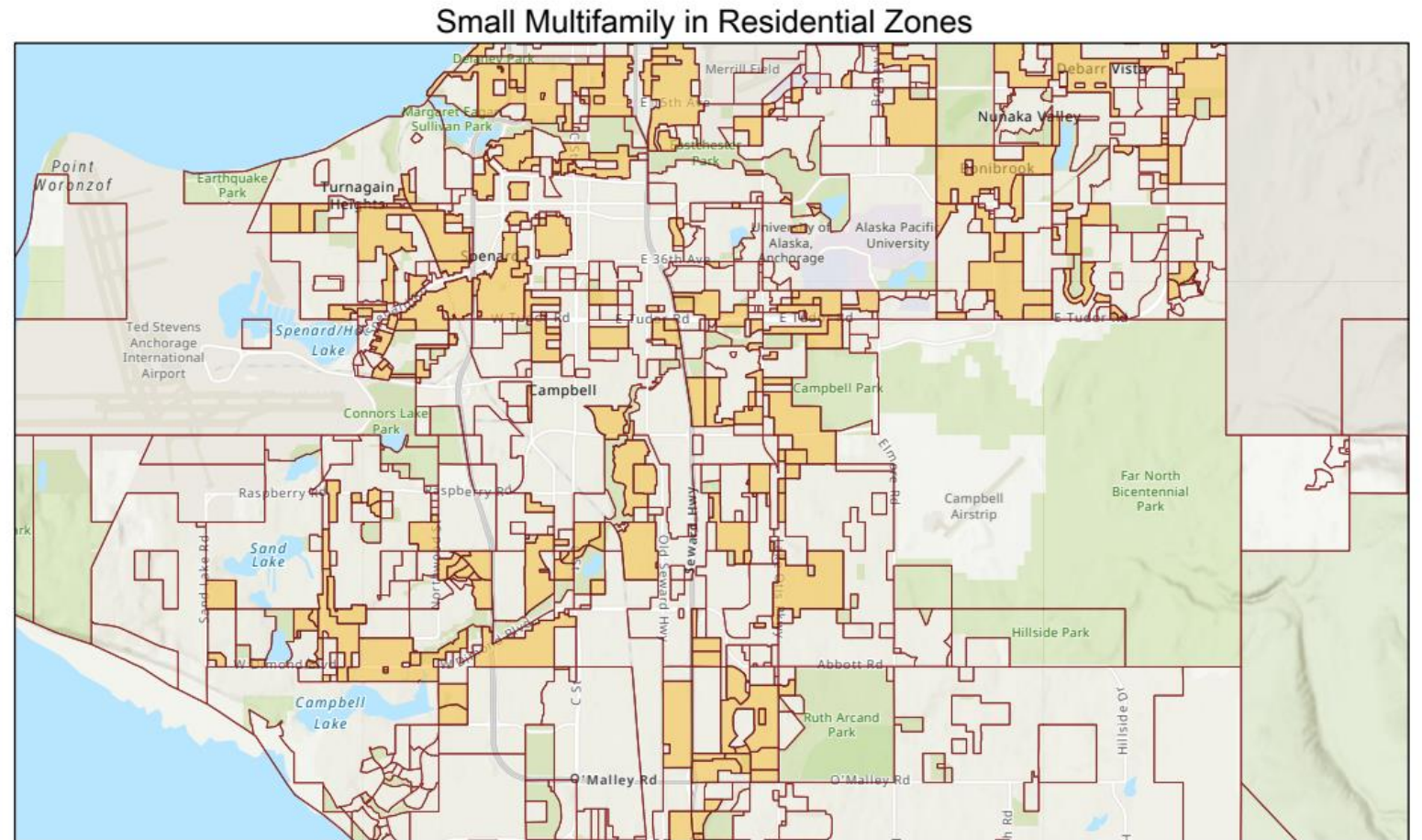
✓ **ALLOWED**



DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS IN RESIDENTIAL ZONES

AO 2023-103 sets dimensional standards for small multifamily that **mirror two-family standards**.

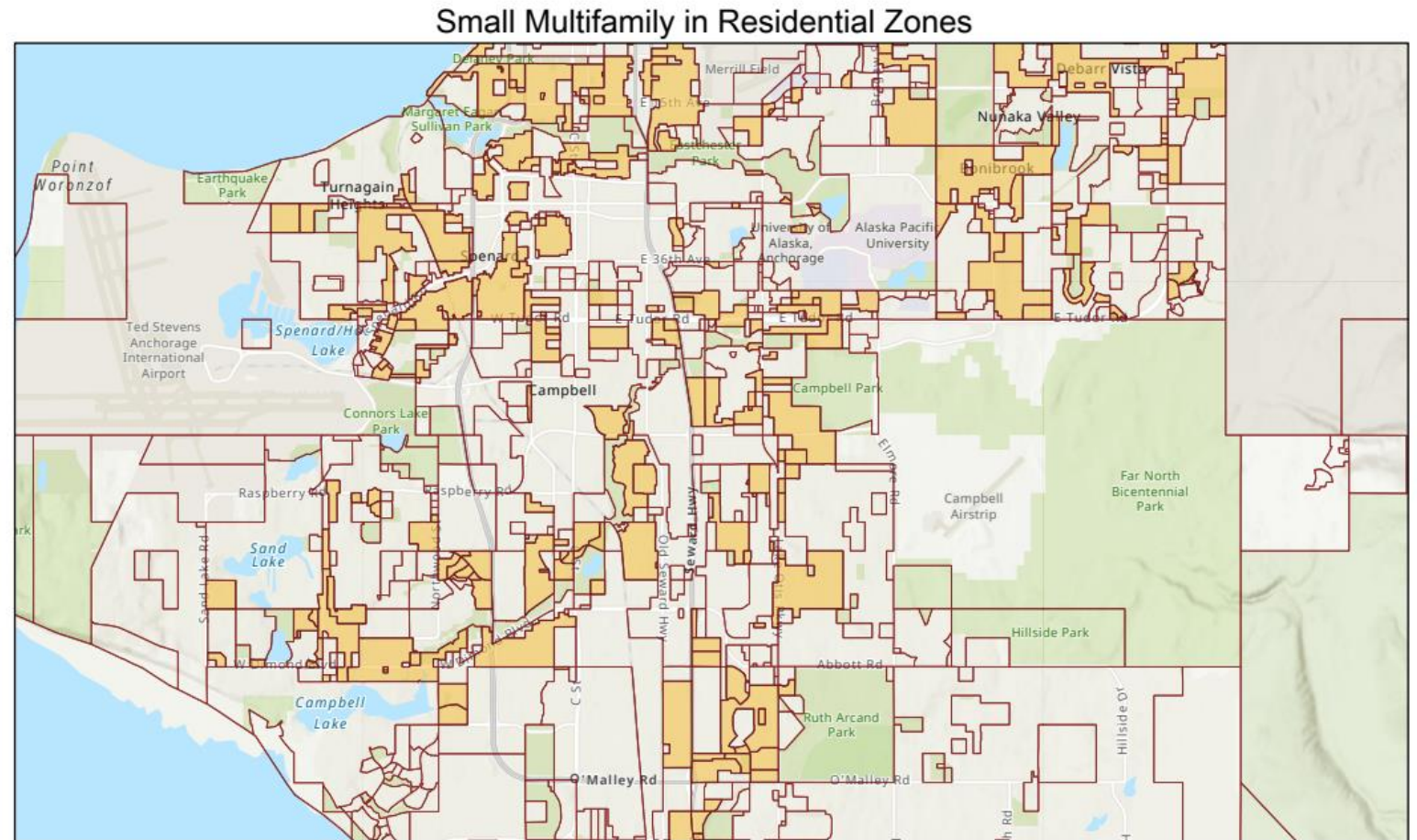
- R-2M
- R-3
- R-3A
- R-4
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DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS IN RESIDENTIAL ZONES

AO 2023-103 sets dimensional standards for small multifamily that **mirror two-family standards**.

- R-2M
- R-3
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2040 LAND USE PLAN **GOAL 4**

“Anchorage’s neighborhoods provide a range of places to live, meeting the housing needs of residents at all income levels, household sizes, interests, ages, abilities and races and ethnicities.”

AO 2023-103 IN SHORT

- **Defines small multifamily:** One or more detached residential buildings not exceeding three stories with two to four dwelling units on one lot.
- **Aligns dimensional standards** for small multifamily development with the standards for duplexes in residential zones where small multifamily is already allowed.
- **Defines dimensional standards** for small multifamily in town centers and commercial areas as reflected in the 2040 LUP.
- **Exempts small multifamily from most design standards** to match duplexes and single family homes.

WHAT'S NEXT

Part 1 – AO 2023-103

An ordinance to revise **Title 21 – Land Use** to reduce barriers to building small multifamily, three- and four-unit residential projects.

- Introduced 9/26
- Referred to Planning & Zoning Commission
- Assembly Public Hearing 12/19

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
AO No. 2023-103

1 AN ORDINANCE OF THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY AMENDING CERTAIN
2 PROVISIONS OF ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL CODE TITLE 21 TO CREATE A
3 CLASSIFICATION OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT FOR THREE AND FOUR
4 DWELLING UNIT CONSTRUCTION; APPLY THE RESIDENTIAL DESIGN
5 STANDARDS FOR ONE- AND TWO-FAMILY DWELLINGS TO SUCH
6 DEVELOPMENTS; AND CONFORMING CODE AMENDMENTS.

7
8 **WHEREAS**, with one-third of Alaska's population and nearly half of its jobs in a 100-
9 square-mile area, the Anchorage Bowl is the urban center of an emerging
10 metropolitan region and home to a vibrant community burdened by a housing
11 shortage; and

12
13 **WHEREAS**, in 2022, Alaska built 2.4 new units per 100 people on
14 average. In the same year, the Matanuska
15 units and Anchorage only added 1.3 new units

16
17 **WHEREAS**, the median single family home price in Anchorage rose
18 only three years from \$311,000 in 2019 to \$415,000 in 2022, with
19 increasing financial barriers for residents

20
21 **WHEREAS**, the costs of new construction in Anchorage are
22 historically higher than in other local jurisdictions, with the average
23 costs from almost \$300 per square foot in Anchorage in 2019 to
24 \$120 per square foot in the Lower 48; and



2024 Building Season

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Part 1 – AO 2023-103

Offsite Improvements: Additional costs to developers to upgrade surrounding infrastructure. *Single family homes are exempt.*

Building and Fire Safety Code: These are important but treating a 3-unit project like a 50-unit project doesn't make sense.

Part 2 – COMING SOON

Drainage: Drainage plans are required by jurisdiction, not the impervious surface on the lot, which triggers higher costs for professional services and infrastructure. *Single family homes are exempt.*

THANK YOU.

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