

Kevin Cross, Randy Sulte & Daniel Volland

BRINGING BACK THE TRIPLEX (+1)

A Review of AO 2023-103(S)





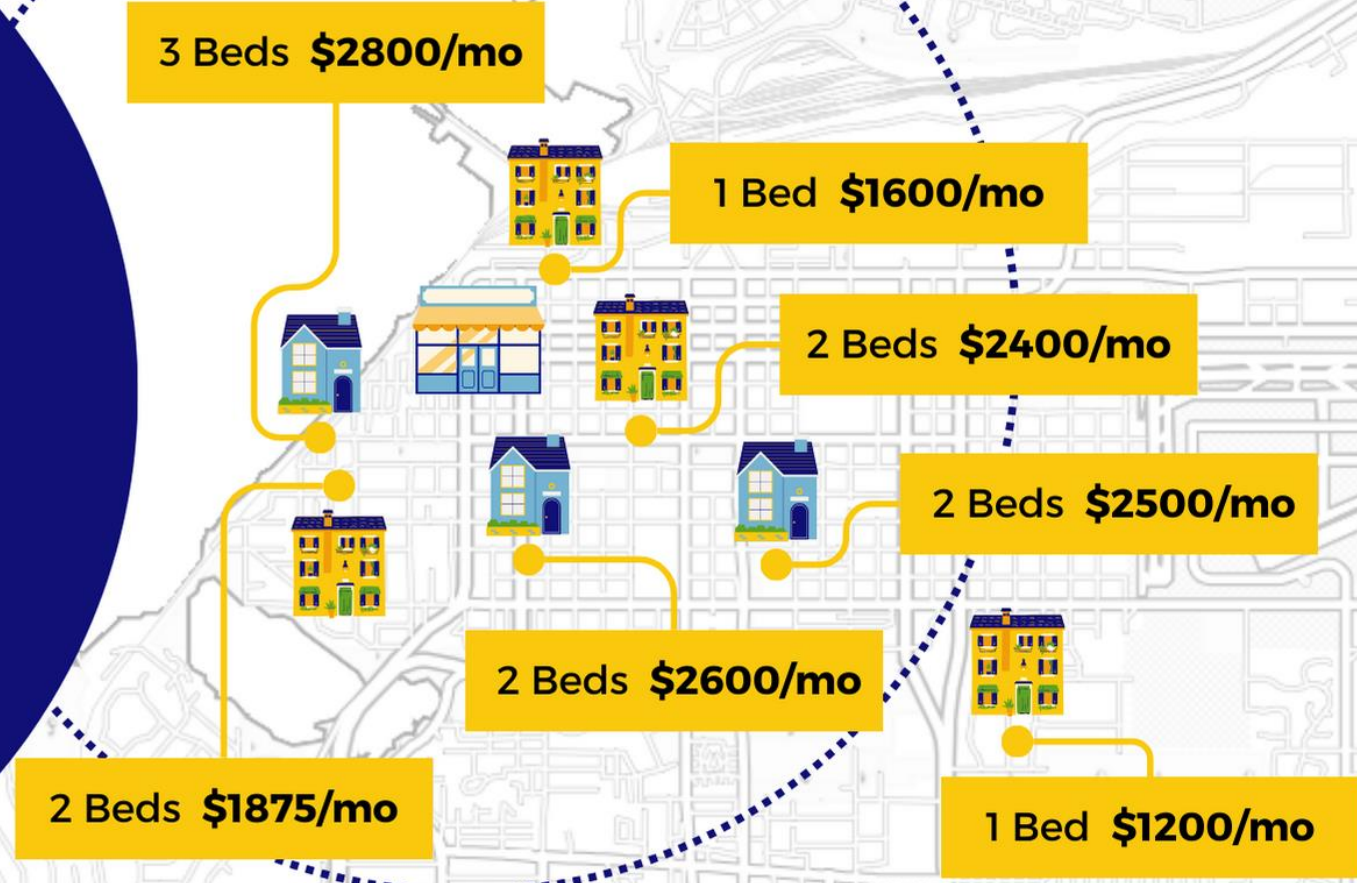
WHERE CAN MICHELLE LIVE WITHIN 1.5 MILES OF THE COFFEE SHOP?

\$15/HR Starting Wage

\$2,028 Monthly Income
Before Taxes

\$780

Rent Budget as 30%
of Monthly Income



PROFESSIONALS NEED HOMES TOO.

Zillow Data provided by Zillow through the Zillow Housing Market Metrics. July 10, 2023

Since 2019...



**Average listing increased
by \$103,500**



Inventory fell by 72%

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 COMMENT | SEPT - DEC 2023

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

AO 2023-103

- Introduced in September 2023.
- Created “Small Multifamily” Use Definition.
- Added Small Multifamily to zones where multifamily was already allowed with dimensional standards to match duplexes.
- Exempted Small Multifamily from multifamily requirements, including design standards, snow storage and landscaping.

DRAFT AO 2023-103(S)

- Currently in development in collaboration with MOA Planning Department
- Removed “Small Multifamily” Use Definition.
- Revises dimensional standards only in R-2M.
- Added 3- and 4-units to existing exemptions for single-family and duplexes, including multifamily design standards and landscaping requirements.

SMALL MULTIFAMILY



South Addition Duplex



Spenard 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 large apartment buildings. *Single family homes and duplexes are exempt.*

Offsite Improvements: Additional costs to developers to upgrade surrounding infrastructure. *Single family homes and duplexes 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 DOES **AO 2023-103(S)** DO?

WHAT IT DOES

- ✓ Relax restrictions on small multifamily where multifamily is already allowed
- ✓ Lower minimum lot size requirements for small multifamily in R2M
- ✓ Match small multifamily height to single family / duplexes in R2M
- ✓ Match small multifamily setbacks to single family / duplexes in R2M
- ✓ Exempts small multifamily from multifamily design standards

WHAT IT DOESN'T DO

- ✗ Allow small multifamily in zones where multifamily isn't currently allowed
- ✗ Exempt small multifamily from single family and duplex design standards
- ✗ Exempt small multifamily from site plan review—all projects, including single family homes, require site plan review

2040 LAND USE PLAN

GOAL 2

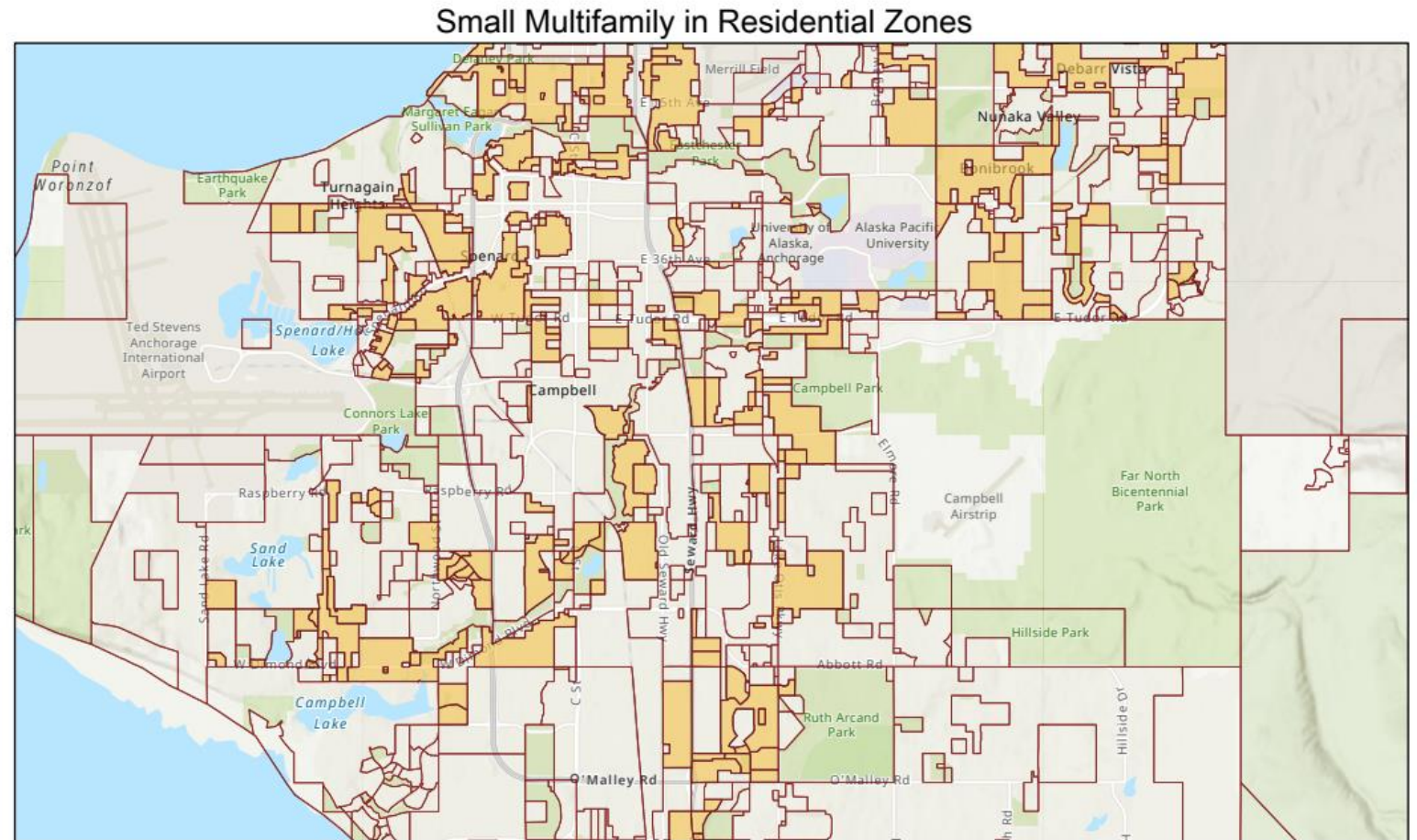
Infill and redevelopment meets the housing and employment needs of residents and businesses in Anchorage.

WHERE SMALL MULTIFAMILY IS ALLOWED

Residential Zones

Zones where small multifamily is already allowed

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

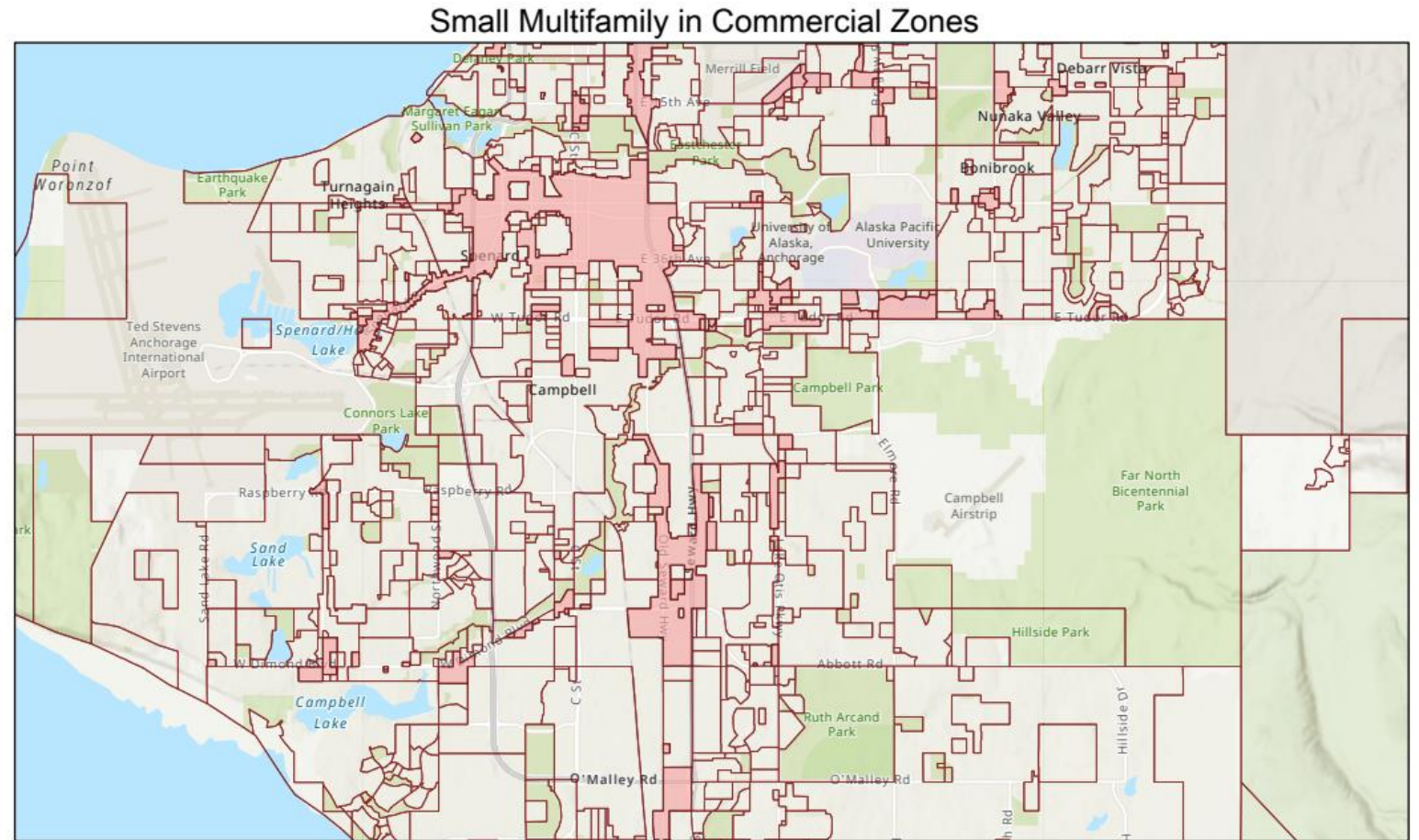


WHERE SMALL MULTIFAMILY IS ALLOWED

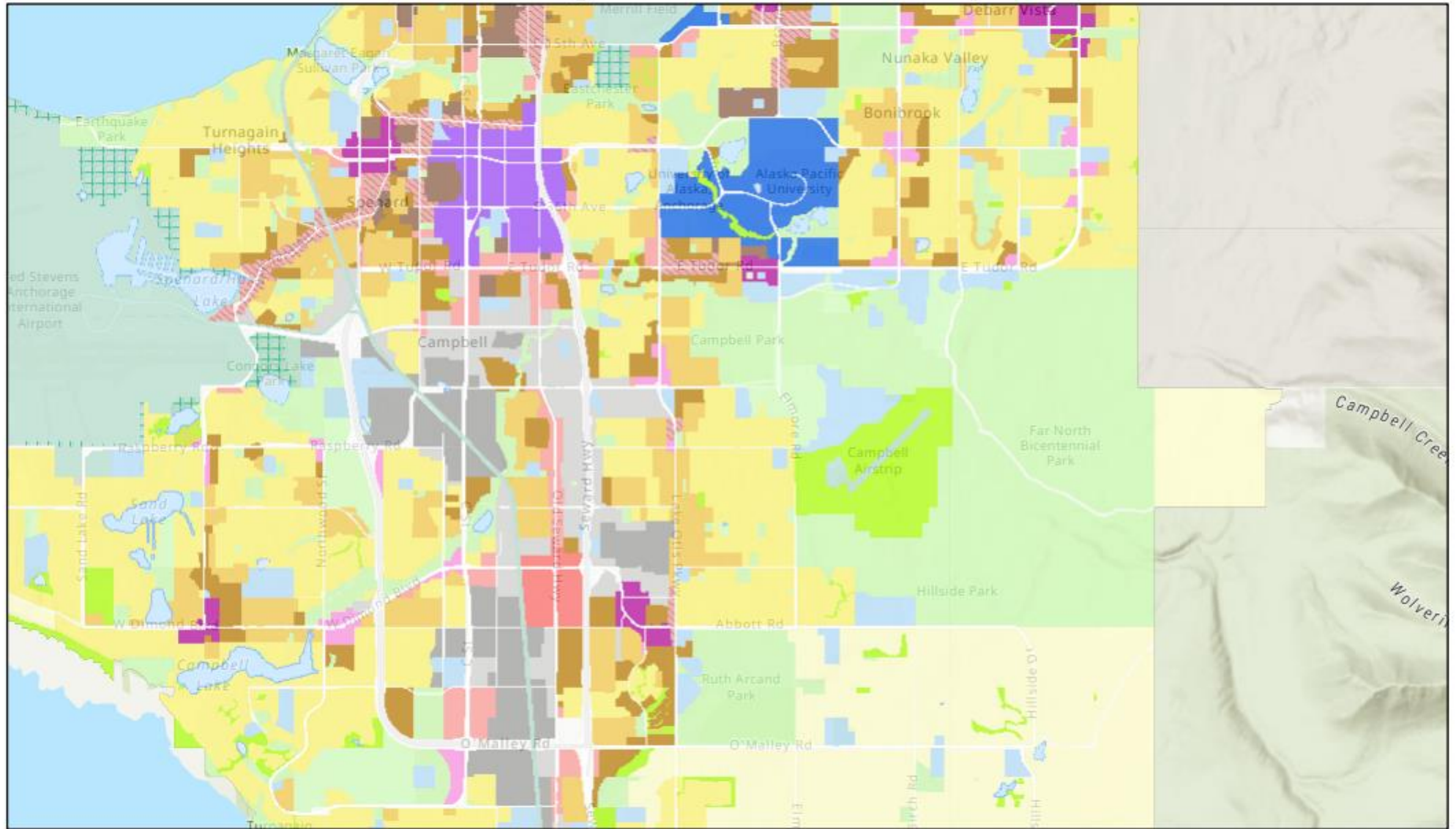
Commercial Zones

Zones where small multifamily is allowed in housing-centered commercial areas

- B-1B
- B-3
- RO



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

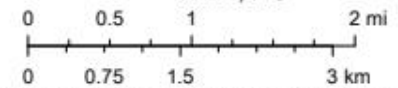
Commercial Corridor

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: R2M

Definition of R2M

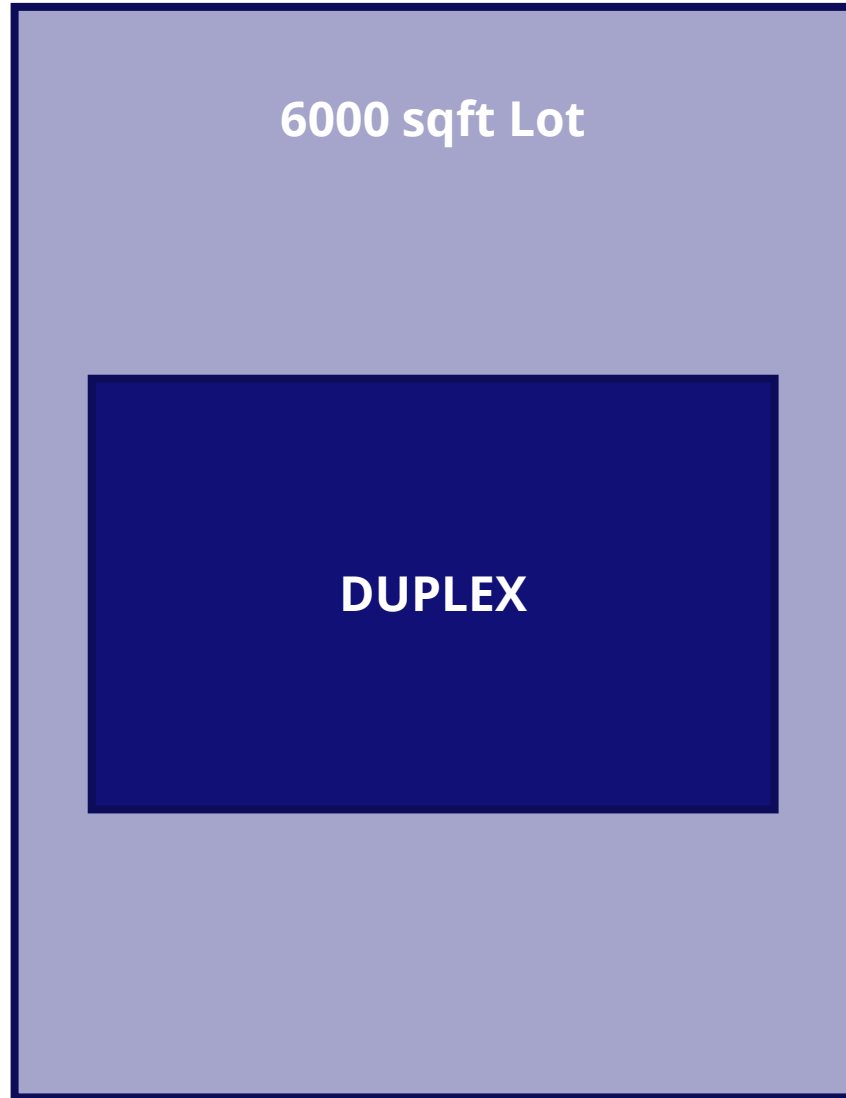
The R-2M district is intended primarily for residential areas that allow for a variety of single-family, two-family, and multifamily dwellings, with gross densities between five and **20** dwelling units per acre.

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.

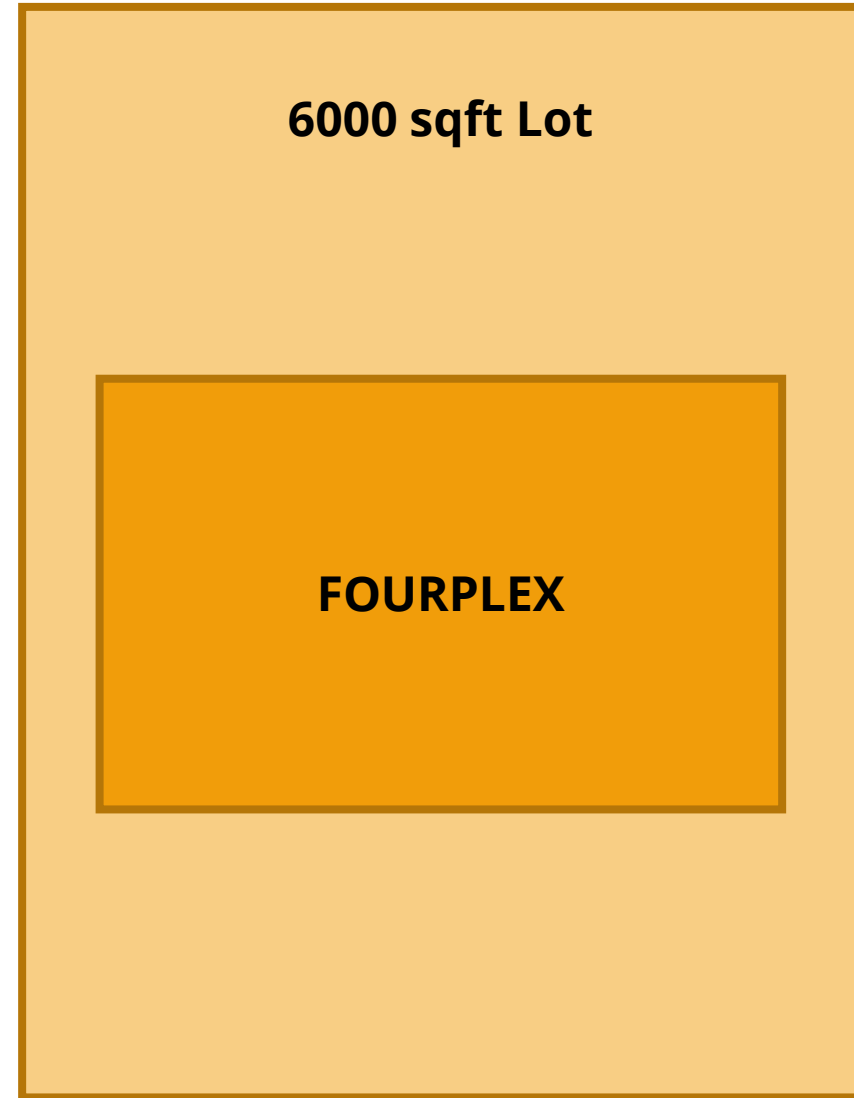
The R-2M district is to be located in established or redeveloping residential neighborhoods or is to **create a transition** between single-family, two-family, and higher density multifamily and mixed-use areas.

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**

6000 sqft Lot

DUPLEX

✓ **ALLOWED**

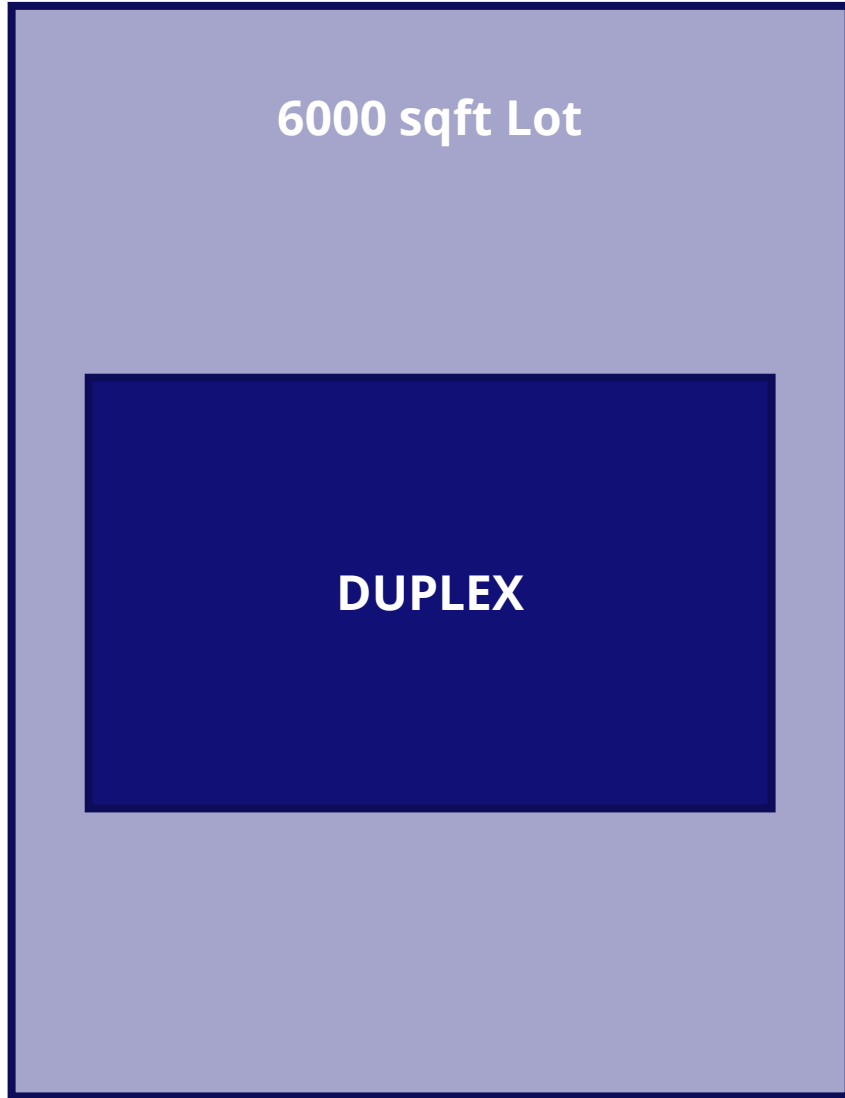
8500 sqft Lot + 2,300 for every unit over 3

FOURPLEX

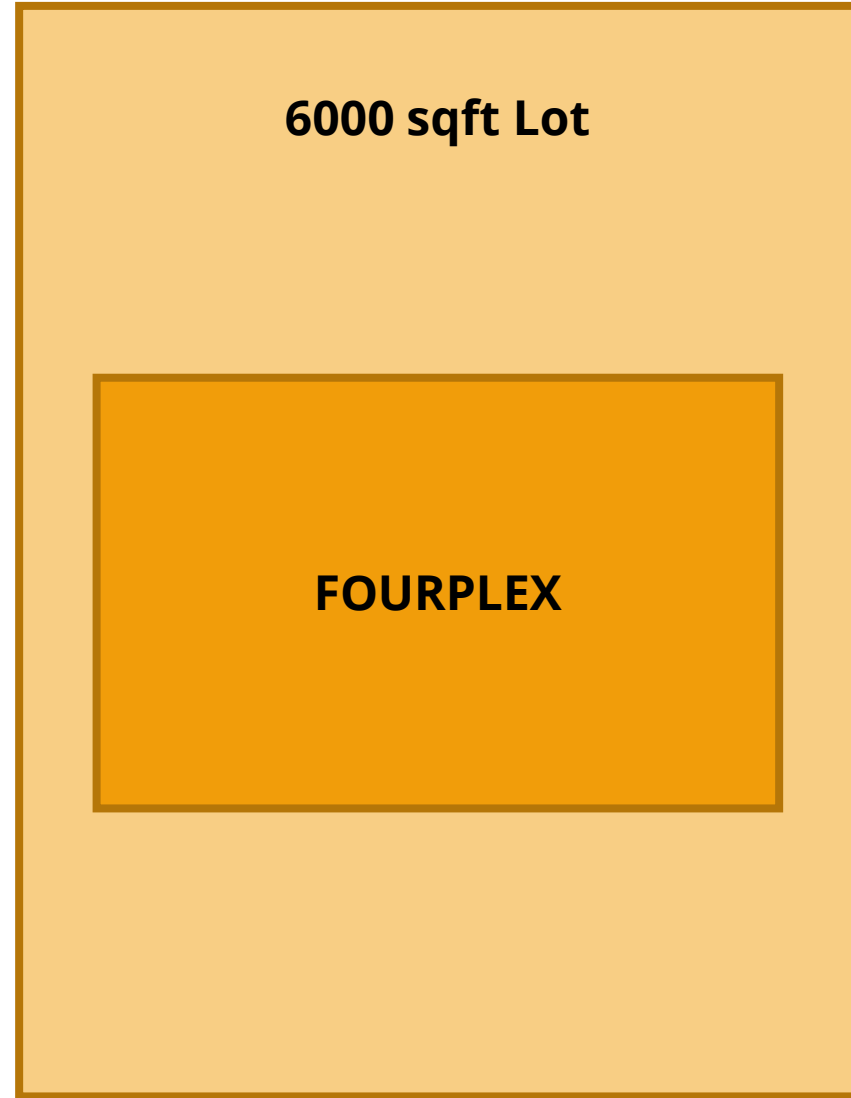
CURRENT DIMENSIONAL STANDARDS IN R2M

not to scale

✓ **ALLOWED**



✓ **ALLOWED**



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(S) IN SHORT

- **Aligns dimensional standards** for small multifamily development with the standards for single family and duplexes in residential zones where small multifamily is already allowed.
- **Exempts small multifamily from multifamily design standards and landscaping requirements** to match duplexes and single family homes.
- Makes 3- and 4-unit projects **faster** and **more affordable**.

WHAT DOES **AO 2023-103(S)** DO?

WHAT IT DOES

- ✓ Relax restrictions on small multifamily where multifamily is already allowed
- ✓ Lower minimum lot size requirements for small multifamily in R2M
- ✓ Match small multifamily height to single family / duplexes in R2M
- ✓ Match small multifamily setbacks to single family / duplexes in R2M
- ✓ Exempts small multifamily from multifamily design standards

WHAT IT DOESN'T DO

- ✗ Allow small multifamily in zones where multifamily isn't currently allowed
- ✗ Exempt small multifamily from single family / duplex design standards
- ✗ Exempt small multifamily from site plan review—all projects, including single family homes, require site plan review

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 large apartment buildings. *Single family homes and duplexes are exempt.*

Offsite Improvements: Additional costs to developers to upgrade surrounding infrastructure. *Single family homes and duplexes 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 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 large apartment buildings. *Single family homes and duplexes are exempt.*

Part 1 – AO 2023-103(S)

Offsite Improvements: Additional costs to developers to upgrade surrounding infrastructure. *Single family homes and duplexes 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 – AO 2023-130

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 NEXT

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 housing units for every 1,000 people, on
14 average. In the same year, the Matanuska-Susitna Valley added 7.0 new housing
15 units and Anchorage only added 1.3 new housing units; and

16
17 **WHEREAS**, the median single family home listing price in Anchorage rose 43% in
18 only three years from \$311,000 in January 2020 to \$446,000 in May 2023,
19 increasing financial barriers for residents who want to become homeowners; and

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

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA AO No. 2023-130

1 AN ORDINANCE OF THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY AMENDING ANCHORAGE
2 MUNICIPAL CODE TITLE 23, BUILDING CODES, TO RECLASSIFY THREE-
3 UNIT RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS AS RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION INSTEAD
4 OF COMMERCIAL, TO RELAX SOME MUNICIPAL LOCAL REQUIREMENTS
5 FOR RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES WITH FOUR OR FEWER DWELLING UNITS,
6 AND REQUEST ACTIONS BY THE ADMINISTRATION TO LESSEN THE COST
7 BURDEN OF DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION THEM.

8
9 **WHEREAS**, the costs of new construction in the Municipality of Anchorage are
10 historically higher than in other local jurisdictions in the state and country, with hard
11 costs from almost \$300 per square foot in Anchorage compared to hard costs of
12 \$120 per square foot in the Lower 48; and

13
14 **WHEREAS**, AR 2022-416 identifies actions to address the housing
15 shortage and affordability crisis throughout the Municipality and encourage
16 growth across the Municipality and encourage more diverse and dense development; and

17
18
19 **WHEREAS**, the policy principals adopted in the Anchorage Comprehensive
20 local housing stock and create more affordable housing through increased
21 ownership by establishing that the Municipality will support policies that
22 included increasing the supply of housing for sale, and encourage more in
23 the housing market to create more favorable conditions, and



**2024 Building
Season**

THANK YOU.

Kevin Cross

District 2 | Eagle River / Chugiak
kevin.cross@anchorageak.gov

Randy Sulte

District 6 | South Anchorage
randy.sulte@anchorageak.gov

Daniel Volland

District 1 | North Anchorage
daniel.volland@anchorageak.gov

www.muni.org/assembly

