

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
AO No. 2023-87(S-1), As Amended

1 **AN ORDINANCE OF THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY ADOPTING THE**
2 **“HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE MUNICIPALITY FOR EVERYONE”**
3 **(HOME) INITIATIVE BY AMENDING AND REPEALING PORTIONS OF**
4 **ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTERS 21.04, 21.05, AND 21.06 TO**
5 **REALIGN THE RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS THROUGHOUT THE**
6 **ANCHORAGE BOWL WITH THE STATED GOALS AND INTENTS OF THE**
7 **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND ANCHORAGE 2040 LAND USE PLAN.**

8
9 **WHEREAS**, the Anchorage Assembly has stated one of its priorities is to increase
10 housing availability within the Municipality of Anchorage; and

11
12 **WHEREAS**, the Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan is the parent of the
13 Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan (“2040 LUP”) and both guide the implementation of
14 and changes to Title 21 of the Anchorage Municipal Code; and

15
16 **WHEREAS**, the 2040 LUP aims to promote sustainable growth and development
17 within the Anchorage Bowl; and

18
19 **WHEREAS**, 46% of the Anchorage Bowl is comprised of single-family zone areas,
20 allowing for duplexes in the R-10 district has potential to significantly increase
21 housing but the MOA comprehensive plan cautions broad increases to residential
22 density within hazard prone or environmentally sensitive areas, without mitigating
23 those risks; and

24
25 **WHEREAS**, the 2040 LUP seeks to improve capacity and types of housing to
26 alleviate costs; and

27
28 **WHEREAS**, the 2040 LUP supplements the Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan
29 and provides a baseline from which land use decisions can proceed, by: providing
30 greater land use predictability and clearer policy direction, coordinating
31 recommended land uses from various adopted area-specific plans, and clarifying
32 the framework for making zoning and development decisions; and

33
34 **WHEREAS**, the 2040 LUP recommends future land uses and a range of potential
35 intensities of use, however, it is zoning that regulates and sets the rules for the use
36 of property, lot size, setbacks, building heights, and other site attributes; and

37
38 **WHEREAS**, changes to the official Zoning Map (rezonings) or to Title 21 land use
39 regulations are separate public processes that include community input; and

40
41 **WHEREAS**, the 2040 Land Use Plan Map is the “blueprint that guides future use,
42 intensity, and character of growth” and Title 21 Land Use Code is the “action that
43 carries out the plan by regulating use of property” (2040 LUP, p. 7); and

1
2 **WHEREAS**, the 2040 LUP contends that recent Anchorage trends provide a general
3 picture of the future population, including:
4

- 5 • Accelerated growth in aging households and smaller households with fewer
6 children.
- 7 • Continued evolution into one of the most racially and ethnically diverse
8 communities in the U.S.
- 9 • Diverse households and income levels that need more affordable housing
10 options and more transportation choices.
- 11 • Talented professionals from all fields that are attracted to Anchorage’s
12 unique setting.
- 13 • A growing number of multigenerational families and less transient
14 population (2040 LUP, p. 10); and
15

16 **WHEREAS**, the 2040 LUP anticipates that over the next 25 years, more people will
17 be in “starter home,” moderate income, or downsizing households and that, as a
18 result, people will be looking for smaller, more urban residences with walkable
19 neighborhood amenities nearby; and
20

21 **WHEREAS**, the majority of the 2040 LUP policies support simplifying and
22 streamlining zoning, it is the intent of the Assembly to do so through this ordinance
23 and subsequent implementing legislation which may be known as the HOME
24 Initiative – Housing Opportunities in the Municipality for Everyone; and
25

26 **WHEREAS**, simplifying zoning in support of the 2040 LUP can help address the
27 growing housing demand in Anchorage and provide more affordable housing
28 options for residents while still retaining predictability and continuity with existing
29 neighborhood characteristics; and
30

31 **WHEREAS**, simplifying zoning promotes efficient land use by utilizing existing
32 infrastructure, reducing urban sprawl, and minimizing the need for extensive new
33 infrastructure development; and
34

35 **WHEREAS**, allowing simplified zoning in residential areas can create diverse and
36 vibrant neighborhoods with a greater mix of housing types, promoting social
37 interaction and community cohesion, support public transit systems by providing a
38 larger customer base, making public transportation more economically viable and
39 accessible, enhance access to amenities such as parks, schools, healthcare
40 facilities, and shopping centers, as these amenities can be located closer to where
41 people live, help preserve natural areas and open spaces by minimizing the need
42 for new development on undeveloped land, help reduce the environmental impact
43 associated with suburban sprawl, including carbon emissions from transportation
44 and the loss of natural habitats; and
45

46 **WHEREAS**, allowing for the possibility of more density in residential zoning
47 consistent with the 2040 LUP can encourage the development of mixed-use
48 neighborhoods, where residents have easy access to a variety of services,
49 employment opportunities, and recreational amenities; and
50

1 **WHEREAS**, allowing for the possibility of more density in residential zoning
 2 consistent with the 2040 LUP aligns with the goals of creating a more inclusive and
 3 equitable city by providing housing options for people of different income levels and
 4 lifestyles and can foster a sense of belonging and community pride, as residents
 5 have more opportunities to engage with their neighbors and participate in local
 6 activities; and

7
 8 **WHEREAS**, simplifying residential zoning to allow for predictable development in a
 9 streamlined manner is a proactive and forward-thinking approach that supports the
 10 long-term growth and sustainability of Anchorage as outlined in the Anchorage
 11 2040 Land Use Plan; and

12
 13 **WHEREAS**, the need for increased housing should not compromise the safety of
 14 residents currently living in neighborhoods whose ability to safely evacuate or
 15 receive emergency response might be affected by increased congestion; and

16
 17 **WHEREAS**, in light of safety concerns, two-family developments in
 18 neighborhoods in the R-10 district with single route egress should require a
 19 process that considers those factors; and

20
 21 **WHEREAS**, the Planning and Zoning Commission is granted specific advisory
 22 powers and duties in AMC 21.10.015 regarding the comprehensive plan and Title
 23 21, including to “1. Develop, review and make recommendations to the assembly
 24 regarding policies, plans and ordinances to implement the municipal function of
 25 planning for the economic, social and land use needs of the community” and “2.
 26 Develop, review and make recommendations to the assembly regarding the
 27 comprehensive development plan and amendments”; now, therefore;

28
 29 **THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY ORDAINS:**

30
 31 **Section 1.** Deleted.

32
 33 **Section 2.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.05.010E., Table 21.05-1: Table
 34 of Allowed Uses is hereby amended as shown in Exhibit B (*the remainder of the*
 35 *section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

36
 37 **21.05.010 Table of allowed uses.**

38
 39 Table 21.05-1 below lists the uses allowed within all base zoning districts in
 40 the Anchorage Bowl except for the Downtown (DT) Districts. (See Chapters
 41 21.09, 21.10, and 21.11 for regulations specific to Girdwood, Chugiak-Eagle
 42 River, and the Downtown (DT) Districts, respectively.) Each of the listed uses
 43 is defined in Sections 21.05.030 through 21.05.060.

44
 45 *** **

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

48
 49 *[See Exhibit B for amendments to the Table]*
 50

(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)]

Section 3. Deleted.

Section 4. Deleted.

Section 5. Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.05.030 is hereby amended to read 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.

This section defines the general residential use categories and specific residential use types listed in Table 21.05-1. This section also contains use-specific standards that apply to specific use types. The use-specific standards apply regardless of whether the use type is permitted as a matter of right, or subject to a site plan or conditional use review process.

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:

*** *** ***

6. Dwelling, two-family.

a. Definition. Two detached buildings on a single lot, each constituting one dwelling unit, or o[ne] detached building on one lot designed for and constituting two dwelling units. The definition includes the term "duplex."

b. Use-specific standard. Two-family dwellings constructed after January 1, 2014 shall comply with the applicable residential design standards in Section 21.07.110, Residential Design Standards.

*** *** ***

(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)

Section 6. Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.06.020 is hereby amended to read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

21.06.020 Dimensional standards tables.

*** *** ***

B. These general standards may be further limited or modified by other applicable sections of this title. In particular, some uses have use-specific standards in Chapter 21.05 that impose stricter requirements than set forth in these tables.

1[A]. Table of Dimensional Standards: Residential Districts

[See Exhibit C for amendments to the Table]

*** *** ***

(AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2015-100, § 2(Exh. A), 10-13-15; AO No. 2016-71, § 1, 6-21-16; AO No. 2017-160, § 3, 12-19-17; AO No. 2017-176, § 6, 1-9-18; AO No. 2018-43(S), § 3(Exh. B), 6-12-18; AO No. 2019-11, § 4, 2-12-19; AO No. 2019-58, § 3, 5-7-19; AO No. 2020-38, § 7, 5-28-20; AO No. 2021-89(S), § 9, 2-15-22; AO No. 2022-36, § 3, 4-26-22; AO No. 2023-77, § 9, 7-25-23; AO No. 2023-42, § 3, 8-22-23; AO No. 2023-103(S), § 4(Exh. B.Rev1), 1-1-24)

Section 7. This ordinance shall be effective immediately upon passage and approval by the Assembly.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this 25th day of June, 2024.

Christopher Constant

Chair

ATTEST:

Janie Lum

Municipal Clerk



MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE
ASSEMBLY MEMORANDUM

No. AM 524-2024

Meeting Date: June 25, 2024

From: Assembly Chair Zaletel, and Assembly Members Brawley and Volland.

Subject: AO 2023-87(S-1) AN ORDINANCE OF THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY ADOPTING THE “HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE MUNICIPALITY FOR EVERYONE” (HOME) INITIATIVE BY AMENDING AND REPEALING PORTIONS OF ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTERS 21.04, AND 21.05, ~~21.06 AND 21.07~~ TO REALIGN THE RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS THROUGHOUT THE ANCHORAGE BOWL WITH THE STATED GOALS AND INTENTS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND ANCHORAGE 2040 LAND USE PLAN, ~~AND PROVIDING FOR STAGGERED EFFECTIVE DATES FOR CHANGES TO GROUPS OF RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS~~, AND WAIVING PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION REVIEW OF THIS ORDINANCE].

The proposed S-1 version of the AO 2023-87 makes several substantive changes that are the product of extensive research and public outreach by the sponsors and legislative staff.

To preface, the American Community Survey data shows that household sizes in the Municipality decreased between 2000 and 2022,¹ as the result of a combination of local conditions and larger demographic trends, including: a large aging population cohort (Baby Boomers), smaller family households, a larger proportion of people living alone, and a continuing outflow of working-age adults and families leaving Anchorage and Alaska, particularly over the last decade. Additionally, the Municipality’s own 2012 *Anchorage Housing Market Analysis* found that “given the historic density of development and rate of redevelopment, the Anchorage Bowl does not have sufficient vacant buildable residential land to accommodate the demand for housing units forecasted over the next 20 years,” and that “building mid-rise residential and mid-rise mixed-use rental developments is not financially feasible in the current market.”²

These findings continue to be applicable today, as the rate of new housing production has slowed further in the last decade, and the real estate development

¹ <https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/cen/profiles/anch.PDF>, <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP1Y2022.DP04?q=Household%20Size%20and%20Type&g=160XX00US0203000>

² Municipality of Anchorage, *Anchorage Housing Market Analysis*, 2012, prepared by McDowell Group and ECONorthwest, page 4.

1 community has demonstrated the infeasibility of most housing developments
2 without subsidies through multiple real-world projects, feasibility tests on a variety
3 of properties, and proposed projects that ultimately do not get built.³ This fact is
4 reflected in the Planning Department's May 2023 *Housing White Paper*, which
5 identifies a persistent lack of housing production per year, documented through
6 counts of new building permits and completed units, and inability to meet prior or
7 revised (lower) targets for number of additional housing units needed. This analysis
8 was conducted through comparison of projections from the 2020 Comprehensive
9 Plan, 2040 Land Use Plan, 2012 housing analysis, and various neighborhood and
10 district plans with localized housing needs projections.⁴ These challenges to
11 developing are compounded by steep housing price increases year over year, with
12 both 2022 and 2023 data demonstrating rapidly-rising rent and housing purchase
13 prices.⁵

14
15 Unsurprisingly, statements emphasizing the need to plan for additional housing in
16 the Anchorage Bowl to accommodate future growth have been a consistent theme
17 in the broad intent and policies of the Municipality's comprehensive plans. This is
18 evidenced in language in the Land Use and Housing objectives from the 1982 plan
19 which states:

20
21 "The Municipality should encourage a range in choices of housing
22 within neighborhoods";

23
24 "Residentially zoned land should be brought into balance with
25 housing needs"; "Higher residential development densities should be
26 permitted and encouraged in those areas where amenities can be
27 provided, where the land is suited to such development, where
28 access may be provided without constituting a hazard or overloading
29 of residential streets, and where the development can be designed
30 to minimize conflicts with other uses"; and

31
32 "Zoning, subdivision and building requirements should be reviewed
33 to determine if changes in these requirements could be made which
34 would lower housing costs while maintaining housing quality."⁶

³ One example: the Housing Anchorage presentation "Does It Pencil?" to the Municipality and key organizations, June 6, 2014: <https://mtviewpost.com/2014/06/07/coalition-seeks-assembly-support-easing-housing-crunch/>

⁴ Municipality of Anchorage Planning Department, *Housing White Paper*, May 2023, pages 6-8.

⁵ Alaska's New Source, "Anchorage sees record breaking jump in rental prices, up 14%," September 13, 2022. <https://www.alaskasnewsource.com/2022/09/14/anchorage-sees-record-breaking-jump-rental-prices-up-14/>

Anchorage Daily News, "Alaska home prices jumped again last year as high interest rates also hurt affordability," May 9, 2023. <https://www.adn.com/business-economy/2023/05/08/alaska-home-prices-jumped-again-last-year-as-high-interest-rates-also-hurt-affordability/>

Anchorage Daily News, "Alaska rents just saw their highest increase in over a decade," September 7, 2023. <https://www.adn.com/business-economy/2023/09/07/alaska-rents-just-saw-their-highest-increase-in-over-a-decade/>

⁶ The Comprehensive Plan was published in Title 21 as of July 1982, quoted above are AMC 21.05.050 Land Use Objectives and 21.05.055 Housing Objectives:

1
2 The *Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan* identified Anchorage’s preferred growth
3 scenario as “Urban Transition” and includes the following goals: “General Land Use:
4 A forward-looking approach to community growth and redevelopment;” “Residential
5 Uses: A variety of housing types and densities in safe, attractive neighborhoods that
6 offer a choice of urban, suburban, and rural lifestyles that are appropriate for
7 northern conditions and in harmony with our natural setting;” “Neighborhood Identity
8 and Vitality: A variety of safe, pleasant, and distinctive neighborhoods responsive to
9 the diverse needs of residents, with good access to schools, recreation, natural
10 areas, and community facilities”; and “Housing: A balanced, diverse supply of
11 affordable, quality housing, located in safe and livable neighborhoods with amenities
12 and infrastructure, that reflects Anchorage’s varied social, cultural, and physical
13 environment.”⁷

14
15 The *Plan* goes on to re-affirm this policy direction in its stated goals:

16
17 “Goal 1: Plan for Growth and Livability, Anchorage achieves residential
18 and commercial growth, which improves community resiliency and
19 citizens’ quality of life as it supports their vision for the future expressed
20 in the Comprehensive Plan;”

21
22 “Goal 2: Infill and Redevelopment, Infill and redevelopment meet the
23 housing and employment needs of residents and businesses in
24 Anchorage”; and

25
26 “Goal 4: Neighborhood Housing: Anchorage’s neighborhoods provide a
27 range of places to live, meeting the housing needs of residents of all
28 income levels, household sizes, interests, ages, abilities, races and
29 ethnicities.”⁸

30
31 Given this clear policy direction, and the public feedback to the HOME Initiative
32 documented in the accompanying AIM to this substitute version, the proposed
33 S-1 dramatically pares down the originally proposed ordinance to accomplish
34 two key changes to code:

- 35
36 1. Amending AMC 21.05.010 to permit two-family dwellings (duplexes) in
37 all residential zones; and
38
39 2. Amending AMC 21.05.030 to redefine two-family dwellings to include
40 two detached structures on one lot.

41
42 These changes are specifically targeted to help achieve the stated policy goals of
43 the Municipality stated above. All the remaining amendments originally proposed in

<https://www.muni.org/Departments/OCPD/Planning/Publications/SiteAssets/Pages/default/July%201982%20Zoning.pdf>

⁷ Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan, adopted 2001, pages 37-38.

⁸ Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan, adopted 2017, pages 16-19.

1 the original and S version of the ordinance have been removed, leaving the code
2 largely unchanged. In the interest of clarity, a sample “clean” version of the proposed
3 S-1, with all legislative drafting removed has been submitted as an AIM for the
4 members consideration.

5
6 **We request your support for the ordinance.**

7
8 Prepared by: Assembly Counsel’s Office

9
10 Respectfully submitted: Meg Zaletel, Assembly Vice Chair
11 District 4, Midtown Anchorage

12
13 Daniel Volland, Assembly Member
14 District 1, North Anchorage

15
16 Anna Brawley, Assembly Member
17 District 3, West Anchorage
18

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
[For uses allowed in the A, TA, and TR districts, see section 21.04.060.](#)
 All other uses not shown are prohibited.

Use Category	Use Type	RESIDENTIAL										COMMERCIAL					INDUST.			OTHER					Definitions and Use-Specific Standards					
		R-1	R-1A	R-2A	R-2D	R-2M	R-3	R-3A	R-4	R-4A	R-5	R-6	R-7	R-8	R-9	R-10	B-1A	B-1B	B-3	RO	MC	I-1	I-2	MI		AF	DR	PR	PLI	W
RESIDENTIAL USES																														
Household Living	Dwelling, mixed-use							P	P	P						P	P	P	P	C										21.05.030A.1.
	Dwelling, multifamily					P/S	P	P	P	P							P	P	P											21.05.030A.2.
	Dwelling, single-family, attached			P	P	P	P	P	P	P																				21.05.030A.3.
	Dwelling, single-family, detached	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P										P					21.05.030A.4.
	Dwelling, townhouse					S	S	S	S	P									S	S										21.05.030A.5.
	Dwelling, two-family	S[P]	S[P]	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	S[P]														21.05.030A.6.
	Dwelling, mobile home										P																			21.05.030A.7.
	Manufactured home community					C	C		C		C																			21.05.030A.8.
Group Living	Assisted living facility (3-8 residents)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P											21.05.030B.1.
	Assisted living facility (9 or more residents)	C	C	C	C	P	P	P	P	P	P	C	C			P	P	P	P	C							C			21.05.030B.1.
	Correctional community residential center																	C	C			C	C					C		21.05.030B.2.
	Habilitative care facility, small (up to 8 residents)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P					P	P	P								P			21.05.030B.3.
	Habilitative care facility, medium (9-25 residents)	C	C	C	C	C	P	P	P	P	C	C	C				P	P	P									C		21.05.030B.3.
	Habilitative care facility, large (26+ residents)						P	P	P	P							P	P	P									C		21.05.030B.3.
	Rooming-house					C	P	P	P	P	C	C	C	C	C		P	P	P	P										21.05.030B.4.
Transitional living facility						P	P	P	P								P	P									C		21.05.030B.5.	
COMMUNITY USES																														
Adult Care	Adult care facility (3 to 8 persons)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P									P		21.05.040A.
	Adult care facility (9 or more persons)	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C							P	P	P											21.05.040 A.
Child Care	Child care center (9 or more children)	C	C	C	C	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	P	P	P	P									P		21.05.040B.1.
	Child care home (up to 8 children)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P											21.05.040B.2.
Community Service	Cemetery or mausoleum																											P		21.05.040C.1.
	Community center						S	S	S	S							S	S	S								C	S		21.05.040C.2.
	Crematorium																	P				P	P					C		21.05.040C.3.
	Government administration and civic facility															P/S/M	P/S/M	P/S/M	P/S/M	P/S/M	C			P/S/M			M	P/S/M		21.05.040C.4.
	Homeless and transient shelter																	C										C		21.05.040C.5.
	Neighborhood recreation center	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	P	P									S		21.05.040C.6.
	Religious assembly	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	P	P	P	P			P	P					P		21.05.040C.7.

