

I object to the State mandating how Cities should allow for multi-family dwellings in single family zones. However, I do favor the State somehow encouraging jurisdictions to review their existing single family neighborhoods to determine which ones might be suitable for limited density increases with plexes (middle housing). Here is an elaboration of what I first sent to your committee last month.

The careful planning of cities and counties in determining what residential density should go where is based on a number of criteria. A major one is the existence of needed infrastructure and infrastructure capacity. For example, Are there roads built to an adequate standard, i.e. are they paved? have gutters and sidewalks wide enough for traffic lanes and parking?, etc. Capacity for vehicle traffic volumes, water service capacity, sewer capacity, storm water capacity, and more. Other criteria are proximity to commercial services and adequate pedestrian access to those services. In some residential neighborhoods that have adequate roads, sidewalks, transit, sewer, water and stormwater facilities, and are in walking distance to commercial services, a limited mix of infill residential unit types "could" be possible.

The word "could" is based on a number of variables like: density limitations (the number of a plex building units to be relatively proportionate to the zone district minimum lot size); building square footage, height and bulk requirements, setbacks; and compatibility standards. Other provisions for keeping the neighborhood character should be: allowing a limited number of duplex units to be built on lots of adequate size mid-block (i.e. 1 duplex structure per block); and only allowing triplex and four-plex units on corner lots of adequate size. These types of standards would have to be developed to: prevent a cumulative, qualitative increase in public facility demands; provide compatibility with existing adjoining dwellings, and sustain the general character of established neighborhoods.

Two examples of what I mean by density limitations are: Example 1. In a R-5 zone the minimum lot size is 5,000 sq ft for one detached dwelling unit. A possible standard of allowing one duplex on a lot mid-block would be requiring the lot size to be at least one and one half larger than the required size of the lot, which would be 7,500 square ft. Example 2. In the same R-5 zone, a fourplex could be allowed only on a corner lot and only if the lot is double the zone district minimum lot size for a single family dwelling, which would be at least 10,000 sq ft. In an R7 zone, only one duplex could be built mid-block only on a lot that is 10,000 sq ft or more; and a fourplex could only be built on a corner lot 14,000 sq ft or more. These limitations allow for a limited, finite amount of cumulative density increases in an existing residential neighborhood. This allows for alternative housing types in suitable single family neighborhoods, while basically respecting the existing zone district underlying density- a density owners of the existing dwellingsexpected would not qualitatively increase when they bought their homes.

Municipal jurisdictions, and not the State of Oregon, would need to determine which single family residential neighborhoods would be suitable for limited, and finite density increases; and subsequently determine residential infill architectural and compatibility standards for plexes in those neighborhoods.