

# *Say Yes To Housing*

## **Zoning Reform for Complete Neighborhoods**



Scan to learn more and participate in the process.

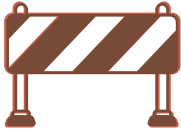




# Housing

## Zoning Reform for Complete Neighborhoods

The City is proposing amendments to ensure the zoning code is aligned with City Plan 2040. Policies were developed in response to community outreach and stakeholder input during the comprehensive plan engagement process.



Remove barriers to housing choice



Enable a range of housing types



Varied, affordable, and accessible housing

### The top housing concerns in Roanoke:

- Affordable housing
- Homeless housing
- More housing options
- Disabled & senior housing



### Achieving Equity

Housing is a top priority for achieving equity for our residents

A \*housing study prepared for the Regional Commission provides further insight into the state of Roanoke's housing.

**64%**

Households mismatched with their affordability range

**26%**

Cost-burdened owners

**47%**

Cost-burdened renters

**42%**

Households earning under 35K

**2,162**

New housing units needed by 2025

## Proposed Text Amendments

*\*"Zoning is one of the few tools the city and local partners can change almost immediately and at very little cost than can have a direct impact on housing production." - Citywide Housing Study*

### Equity in Housing

- Define Household
- Simplify Group Care Facility Types
- Replace Transitional Living Facility

### Missing Middle Housing

- Reclassify Dwelling Types
- Addition of Dwelling types

### Efficient Land Use

- Regulate Dwelling as a Land Use
- Zone for Efficient Development through Dimensional Regulations

# Dive Deeper: City Plan 2040

## City Plan 2040

The following priorities, policies, and actions were developed in response to community outreach and stakeholder input. City Plan 2040 was adopted by City Council in 2020 after a two year community engagement process. Visit [PlanRoanoke.org](http://PlanRoanoke.org) to learn more about City Plan 2040 and the public engagement process.

### **Theme: Livable Built Environment – Priority 1: Trust**

*Policy 1: Remove legal elements of institutional or structural bias*

Action Items:

- Review and eliminate City codes and policies based on explicit or implicit biases, and advocate the same approach for state laws and policies
- Advocate for criminal justice reforms that address systemic and interrelated issues of our time such as mass incarceration, militarization of police, implicit bias, school-to-prison pipeline, the war on drugs, and mandatory sentencing
- Enable complete neighborhoods to develop within the framework of the zoning code, providing access to affordable housing, services, and employment
- Ensure the diversity of advisory and decision-making bodies reflects the diversity of Roanoke

### **Theme: Livable Built Environment – Priority 4: Housing**

*Policy 1: Enable affordable and accessible housing options in all neighborhoods*

Action Items:

- Perform a housing study to look at trends, needs, and current conditions of housing in the City
- Incentivize development that includes affordability, accessibility, and context sensitive design components
- Develop programs that enable homeowners to make continual investments to keep homes safe, accessible, and wellmaintained
- Continue to allocate HOME and CDBG funds to non-profit affordable housing developers for new housing and renovation of existing housing for low income homeowners and tenants
- Prioritize funding to affordable housing near neighborhood centers

*Policy 2: Enforce housing codes to preserve safe and well-maintained housing*

Action Items:

- Maintain effective code enforcement operations
- Maintain effective relationships with neighborhoods to share ways to maintain properties
- Continue to support the city's rental inspection program and consider program expansion to cover new housing types/arrangements, as appropriate

# *Dive Deeper: City Plan 2040*

*Policy 3: Enable a range of housing types in each part of the community to achieve inclusive, livable neighborhoods that prosper over time*

## Action Items:

- Consider ways to introduce different housing types into neighborhoods that lack housing diversity while being mindful of and responsive to concerns about neighborhood character, design, and maintenance
- Study the locations and characteristics of exemplary Missing Middle housing examples (local) that successfully fit into a neighborhood setting. Use those findings to guide policies and standards for creating multiunit housing types in neighborhood settings
- Encourage the development of larger Missing Middle housing buildings near neighborhood centers and along commercial corridors
- Explore opportunities for alternative living arrangements, such as group living and co-housing, near neighborhood centers
- Permit accessory dwelling units in all residential zones

## **Theme: Interwoven Equity – Priority 3: Neighborhood Choice**

*Policy 1: Identify and remove barriers to housing choice*

## Action Items:

- Reconsider housing policies rooted in racial segregation efforts such as exclusionary zoning districts that exclude all but single-family houses
- Work to reduce tenure bias, that is, the favoring of owner-occupants over renter occupants, by reviewing City policy and plans to eliminate such bias
- Ensure the Fair Housing Board is active in removing barriers by providing community education, paired testing, and assessment of barriers to housing choice

*Policy 2: Understand the connection between finances, housing, and literacy in order to remove barriers for vulnerable people like veterans, homeless people, elderly, domestic violence victims, formerly incarcerated people, and people recovering from addiction*

## Action Items:

- Review and reexamine how and where zoning codes permit group care facilities and group homes providing housing and supportive services and support distribution of such housing in neighborhood settings dispersed throughout the City
- Continue housing first programs and test other innovative housing approaches
- Improve connections among local service providers for the homeless and those experiencing poverty
- Expand/extend after care resources for previously homeless individuals
- Inventory the existing group care/transitional living facilities; disperse such facilities and amend policy as needed to meet the needs of the community
- Support and improve financial literacy services
- Better promote and improve literacy action

# *Dive Deeper: City Plan 2040*

## *Policy 4: Develop varied and affordable housing options in each neighborhood*

### Action Items:

- Develop a housing plan as a component of the comprehensive plan
- Ensure affordable housing is available in all neighborhoods in the city
- Promote complete neighborhoods, so all neighborhoods have a broad range of housing types, including multifamily housing
- Pursue legislative opportunities to increase affordable housing options and opportunities
- Incentivize housing that is affordable and/or is built with universal design standards

## *Policy 5: Avoid displacement resulting from gentrification*

### Action Items:

- Maintain vigilance by monitoring data to identify emerging gentrification patterns
- Put decision-making about neighborhood improvements at the neighborhood level. Consider intensive public deliberation processes to determine neighborhood improvement priorities
- Use funds to rehabilitate existing housing stock to help current residents remain in their home
- Support the development or rehabilitation of affordable rental housing
- Educate community on the Homestead Exemption law



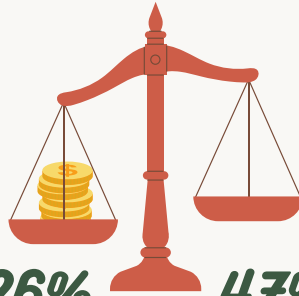
# Equity in Housing

Housing was identified by residents as the top priority for achieving equity during the City Plan 2040 process.



42%

Households earning under 35K

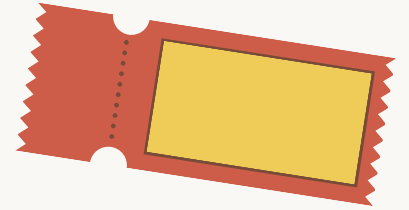


26%

Cost-burdened Owners

47%

Cost-burdened Renters



1K+

Waiting for Housing Vouchers

## City Plan 2040 Policies

- Identify and remove barriers to housing choice
- Understand the connection between finances, housing, and literacy in order to remove barriers for vulnerable people
- Develop varied and affordable housing options in each neighborhood

## Proposed Text Amendments

### Define Household

This amendment will combine City's current definition of family, federally required living arrangements, and nonfamily living arrangements into a simplified household definition.

### Simplify Group Care Facility Types

Various group care facility types will be consolidated into a single use defined as **Group Living**. This amendment will focus on governing land use rather than the background and status of individual residents.

### Replace Group Care Facility, Transitional Living Facility

The use *Transitional Living Facility* will be replaced with **Small Scale Community Housing Services** and **Large Scale Regional Housing Services**. This amendment will remove barriers to temporary housing in appropriate districts.

# Dive Deeper: Equity in Housing

## Define Household

Redefines **Household** to include family and nonfamily living arrangements, including federal preemption families.

**Household** is defined as: a person or group of persons living within a dwelling and sharing kitchen facilities, sanitation facilities, and common areas. A household may have one of the following types of occupancy:

- (a) A family of related persons of unlimited number.
- (b) A family defined as up to eight persons with mental illness, intellectual disability, or developmental disability who reside with one or more resident or nonresident staff persons in a residential facility for which the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services is the licensing authority pursuant to the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended.
- (c) A family defined as up to eight aged, infirm, or disabled persons who reside with one or more resident counselors or other staff persons in a residential facility for which the Department of Social Services is the licensing authority pursuant to the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended.
- (d) A group of up to eight unrelated persons who may or may not receive supportive services or medical care.

## Simplify Group Care Facility Types

Current code excludes certain types of group living based on the status of the residents rather than impacts of the land use. Decades of exclusionary zoning have limited housing opportunities for vulnerable populations and thus contributed to homelessness.

The proposed amendment will simplify the various group care facility definitions into one **Group Living** definition. The amended code will permit a dispersed, dignified, and low impact model for permanent housing for our vulnerable populations.

The proposed approach treats these uses similar to their counterpart residential uses and eliminates discrimination based on the status or history of people.

Note that all group living arrangements are for permanent housing (30 days or more). Sheltering operations remain excluded from residential districts.

## Proposed Districts for Group Living

**Sec. 36.2-311. Use table for residential districts.**

District	RA	R-12	R-7	R-5	R-3	RM-1	RM-2	RMF
Group Living	---	---	---	---	---	S	S	P
Blank means not permitted at all S means permitted only by special exception P means permitted as of right								

# Dive Deeper: Equity in Housing

## Replace Group Care Facility, Transitional Living Facility

An impactful change is the modification of how the zoning code defines temporary sheltering of vulnerable populations. The current code classifies a shelter as a *Group Care Facility, Transitional Living Facility*. This use is extremely restricted. The zoning code permits it only in the INPUD district and further requires a special exception from the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Staff recommends the creation of two new uses to replace *Transitional Living Facility*: **Community Housing Services** and **Regional Housing Services**. This approach provides for a small, limited community scale version which may be more broadly permitted around the City. Enabling a model of smaller scale sheltering options distributed among higher intensity districts is a less impactful, more equitable, and more accessible alternative to one large facility.

**Community Housing Services** is defined as: a small-scale operation providing temporary occupancy, and may provide mental health counseling, employment services, permanent housing assistance, and other supportive services. The temporary housing capacity of a community housing services operation shall be limited to twelve people and occupy no more than 10,000 square feet of gross floor area.

**Regional Housing Services** is defined as: an operation providing temporary occupancy, and may provide mental health counseling, employment services, permanent housing assistance, and other supportive services. The temporary housing capacity of a regional housing services operation is not limited.

Proposed amendments permit Community Housing Services by right in CG, CLS, D, IN, ROS, and UF districts. Regional Housing Services would be very restricted- permitted only in the INPUD district with a special exception.

## Proposed Districts for Community Housing Services

Sec. 36.2-315. Use table for multiple purpose districts.

District	MX	CN	CG	CLS	D	IN	ROS	UF
Community housing services	---	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Blank means not permitted at all P means permitted as of right								





# Missing Middle

RVARC Housing Study identified the addition of Missing Middle Housing options as a key regulatory strategy for addressing housing issues in Roanoke.



Households mismatched with their affordability range



Housing Market Study & Focus Groups expressed desire for Missing Middle Housing

## City Plan 2040 Policies

- Develop all neighborhoods to be complete neighborhoods
- Enable affordable and accessible housing options in all neighborhoods
- Enable a range of housing types in each part of the community to achieve, inclusive, livable neighborhoods that prosper over time

## Proposed Text Amendments

### Reclassify Dwelling Types

The proposed amendment will classify new and existing dwelling types in order to manage form, location, and orientation of structures so they will be compatible in neighborhood settings.

### Dwelling Types

- Accessory Dwellings
- Cottage Courts
- One and Two Dwelling Buildings
- Single-façade Apartment Buildings
- Multiple-façade Apartment Buildings
- Townhouse Buildings

# Dive Deeper: Missing Middle Housing



## Proposed Dwelling Types

*Dwelling types:* This code identifies the following types of dwellings for the purpose of providing supplemental regulations that prescribe form, location, and orientation.

*Accessory dwelling:* an additional dwelling on a lot where the principal use is a single dwelling building. (synonyms: Accessory dwelling unit, ADU, accessory apartment)

*One and two dwelling building:* a building that contains one or two dwellings.

*Cottage court:* a group of two or more buildings that contain three or more dwellings that are limited to 1,000 square feet of gross floor area. Such located on an interior or through lot with limited size detached or connected dwellings, with such buildings oriented to create a central court for common access.

*Townhouse building:* A building containing two or more dwellings connected by vertical walls, with each dwelling having an independent entrance.

*Single façade apartment building (house form):* a building that contains three to eight dwellings and has a single primary façade.

*Multiple façade apartment building (courtyard form):* a building that contains three to eight dwellings and has multiple primary facades.

*Large apartment building:* a building containing nine or more dwellings.

# Dive Deeper: Missing Middle Housing

## Proposed Neighborhood Compatibility Regulations

**Sec. 36.2-409.1. Dwellings.** Supplemental regulations for various dwelling types prescribe the form, building location, and orientation of buildings containing dwellings in order to provide for compatibility within the context of neighborhood settings.

- a) **Accessory dwellings** (also known as accessory dwelling unit (ADU), or accessory apartment). These standards are intended to regulate number and size of accessory dwellings to ensure they are subordinate to the principal single dwelling use to which it is accessory:
- 1) One accessory dwelling may be established on a lot containing a new or existing single dwelling building. An accessory dwelling is not subject to minimum lot area requirement for each dwelling nor the maximum number of dwellings per lot.
  - 2) An accessory dwelling located in a detached accessory building shall be limited to 800 square feet or 80 percent of the gross floor area of the principal dwelling, whichever is less. The accessory building may contain other uses and shall otherwise be subject to the size and placement standards of 36.2-403.
  - 3) The floor area of an accessory dwelling located within a principal building shall be no more than 40 percent of the gross floor area of the building. An exterior stairway or additional entrances, if created, shall be located on facades other than the primary façade.
- b) **Cottage Courts.** A cottage court development is a grouping of attached or detached dwellings arranged and oriented toward an interior courtyard rather than toward a street frontage. Such development is appropriate for an interior or through lot subject to these standards:
- 1) Any single building façade facing a primary street shall be 35 feet wide or less.
  - 2) Permitted only on an interior lot or a through lot with a minimum lot area of 7,000 square feet.
  - 3) At least two buildings shall meet the maximum yard requirement of the district.
  - 4) Window or door openings shall constitute at least 15 percent of façades facing the street frontage.
  - 5) Limited to two stories.
  - 6) Dwelling units have a maximum gross floor area of 1,000 square feet.
  - 7) Buildings may be located on unit lots within a zoning lot.
  - 8) At least 20% of the lot area shall be dedicated to a central courtyard. Each dwelling shall have a doorway fronting on the courtyard. Such courtyard shall have no motor vehicle access.
- c) **One and two dwelling buildings.** These buildings are always oriented toward a street frontage. The following standards are provided to ensure compatibility with existing neighborhood contexts:
- 1) The primary façade width of one and two dwelling buildings shall be within 25 percent of the average of the widths of such buildings on the same side of the same block.
  - 2) Any garage bay door facing a primary street shall be offset at least 24 inches behind the front façade of the dwelling and the front door. An attached garage shall not make up more than 33 percent of the front façade of the dwelling.
  - 3) Window and door openings shall constitute at least 15 percent of the primary façade and at least 10 percent of a secondary façade on a corner lot.
  - 4) Where permitted by the district, a lot may contain multiple one or two dwelling buildings.
- d) **Single-façade apartment buildings.** New and converted buildings oriented in a single mass with one primary facade, and containing three to eight dwellings, shall be subject to these standards:
- 1) The maximum width of the principal façade of the building shall be 120 percent of the average widths of other dwellings on the same side of the same block.
  - 2) The building shall have one entrance facing the primary front yard. No additional entrances shall face the primary front yard unless recessed at least four feet behind the primary building facade.
  - 3) Window and door openings shall constitute at least 15 percent of the primary façade and at least 10 percent of a secondary façade on a corner lot.
  - 4) The front façade shall contain a front porch at least one-half the width of the building width and eight feet in depth.
  - 5) An addition to an existing building shall be located on the rear or side of the building, except a porch may be added to the front of the dwelling. An addition to the side of a dwelling shall be set back from the dwelling's front face by 24 inches or more.

# Dive Deeper: Missing Middle Housing

- e) Multiple façade apartment buildings.** New and converted buildings having a shape with multiple primary facades, and containing three to eight dwellings, shall be subject to these standards:
- Each façade within the primary front yard shall not exceed 120 percent of the average widths of other dwellings on the same side of the same block. Such facades shall be separated by at least 20 feet.
  - Window and door openings shall constitute at least 15 percent of the primary façades and at least 10 percent of a secondary façade on a corner lot.
  - An addition to an existing building shall be located on the rear or side of the building, except a porch may be added to any street-facing façade.
  - An addition to the side of a dwelling shall be set back from the dwelling's front face by 24 inches or more.
  - No garage door may face a primary street frontage.
- f) Townhouse buildings.** These standards provide additional controls on the scale, massing, building placement to encourage compatibility with neighborhood contexts.
- A row of townhouses in a townhouse building shall be limited to 300 feet or less.
  - The minimum width of a dwelling in a townhouse building is 15 feet.
  - No parking spaces or driveways shall be permitted between a public or private street and any principal building. Exception: Parking and driveways may be located between the street and the building under the following conditions:
    - Each townhouse dwelling is at least 25 feet in width;
    - The driveway is greater than ten feet wide.
    - The garage door is no greater than ten feet wide.
    - Driveways shall be located to minimize curb cuts.
    - Each townhouse dwelling may be located on a unit lot subdivided from the parent zoning lot.
    - Window and door openings shall constitute at least 15 percent of the primary façade and at least 10 percent of a secondary façade on a corner lot.

## Sec. 36.2-312. Dimensional regulations for residential districts.

District	RA	R-12	R-7	R-5	R-3	RM-1	RM-2	RMF
Minimum lot area for each dwelling (square feet)	43,560	2,500	2,000	1,500	1,000	1,500	1,000	1,000
Corner lot - maximum number of dwellings	1	3	4	6	6	8	No limit	No limit
Interior or through lot - maximum number of dwellings	1	1	2	3	3	4	No limit	No limit



# Efficient Land Use

RVARC Housing Study identified zoning as an immediate and inexpensive tool that can directly impact housing production.



Redevelopment is a key tool for creating housing due to limited vacant land



Housing Units needed by 2025

City Plan 2040 Policies

- Promote compatibility of different land uses through building design, building orientation, and thoughtful arrangement of accessory activities on the site
- Coordinate future land use and zoning to encourage arrangement of land uses in identifiable and predictable patterns
- Encourage active, productive uses of land and preclude unproductive uses of land

## Proposed Text Amendments

### Regulate Dwelling as a Land Use

The proposed amendment will permit dwellings in residential, multiple purpose, and planned unit development districts. The number of dwellings permitted on a given lot will be regulated by dimensional regulations. The number of dwellings permitted in residential districts will generally increase, with additional dwellings permitted on corner lots.

### Ensure the City Uses Remaining Land Efficiently

This amendment would make changes to the dimensional regulations of each residential zoning district and allow for more efficient development of the limited vacant residentially zoned land within the City. Roanoke is nearly built-out, which creates issues when faced with a housing deficit. Examples of the proposed changes include reducing the lot area per dwelling unit requirements and reducing minimum lot sizes.

# Dive Deeper: Efficient Land Use

## Regulate Dwelling as a Land Use

The amendment removes regulation by housing type and instead lists “dwellings” as a permitted use in all districts. This change is not fundamentally different from the current code because each district already permits some form of “dwelling” as a land use. The amended code relies more properly on the dimensional regulations in section 36.2-312 to control how many dwellings may be created on a given lot.

Dwelling is defined as: a room or group of connected rooms designed for occupancy by a household as an independent housekeeping unit for 30 days or longer.

## Proposed Code for Residential Districts

### Sec. 36.2-311. Use table for residential districts.

District	RA	R-12	R-7	R-5	R-3	RM-1	RM-2	RMF
Dwellings	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
P means permitted								

### Sec. 36.2-312. Dimensional regulations for residential districts.

District	RA	R-12	R-7	R-5	R-3	RM-1	RM-2	RMF
Minimum lot area for each dwelling (square feet)	43,560	2,500	2,000	1,500	1,000	1,500	1,000	1,000
Corner lot - maximum number of dwellings	1	3	4	6	6	8	No limit	No limit
Interior or through lot - maximum number of dwellings	1	1	2	3	3	4	No limit	No limit

# Dive Deeper: Efficient Land Use

## Ensure the City Uses Remaining Land Efficiently

The proposed dimensional regulations would allow for more efficient development within the City.

### Proposed Dimensional Regulations

#### 36.2-312 Dimensional regulations for residential districts

<p>Minimum lot area for each dwelling unit</p>	<p>The proposed amendment reduces lot area required for each dwelling unit. Amendments coordinate permitted housing types and maximum number of units for interior and corner lots to determine the maximum number of dwellings that may be established on a given lot. This regulation works hand-in-hand with a new regulation that provides an absolute limit on the number of dwellings allowed on a lot, regardless of the lot's size. This approach will ensure the number of dwellings is within the norm found in traditional neighborhoods that are zoned R-12, R-7, R-5, R-3, and RM-1.</p> <p>The resulting minimum lot area for each dwelling unit ranges from 1,000 square feet to 2,500 square feet. The lot area for RA and RMF is unchanged.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="402 1073 1528 1178"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>RA</th> <th>R-12</th> <th>R-7</th> <th>R-5</th> <th>R-3</th> <th>RM-1</th> <th>RM-2</th> <th>RMF</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Minimum lot area for each dwelling</td> <td>43,560</td> <td>2,500</td> <td>2,000</td> <td>1,500</td> <td>1,000</td> <td>1,500</td> <td>1,000</td> <td>1,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		RA	R-12	R-7	R-5	R-3	RM-1	RM-2	RMF	Minimum lot area for each dwelling	43,560	2,500	2,000	1,500	1,000	1,500	1,000	1,000									
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Minimum lot area for each dwelling	43,560	2,500	2,000	1,500	1,000	1,500	1,000	1,000																				
<p>Maximum dwelling units on a corner lot; interior lot.</p>	<p>A new regulation establishes an absolute maximum number of dwelling units for corner lots and for interior lots regardless of lot size. In general, corner lots can accommodate more dwelling units than interior lots.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="402 1402 1482 1606"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>RA</th> <th>R-12</th> <th>R-7</th> <th>R-5</th> <th>R-3</th> <th>RM-1</th> <th>RM-2</th> <th>RMF</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Corner lot maximum number of dwellings</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>6</td> <td>6</td> <td>8</td> <td>No limit</td> <td>No limit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Interior or through lot maximum number of dwellings</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>No limit</td> <td>No limit</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This approach moves away from regulating by TYPE of housing permitted. Various housing types may or <u>may not be permitted</u> based on the number of dwellings permitted.</p>		RA	R-12	R-7	R-5	R-3	RM-1	RM-2	RMF	Corner lot maximum number of dwellings	1	3	4	6	6	8	No limit	No limit	Interior or through lot maximum number of dwellings	1	1	2	3	3	4	No limit	No limit
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# Dive Deeper: Efficient Land Use

Minimum lot area and minimum lot frontage (for subdivision)

The minimum lot area and minimum lot frontages control the size of lots when subdividing land. Generally, larger lot sizes and lot frontages create inefficient development patterns that consume land unnecessarily and thus reduce housing development opportunities.

The proposed amendment generally decreases the minimum lot area and frontage for most residential districts.

Staff proposes an increases lot area and frontage figures in **the Residential Agricultural** district to discourage subdivision of land into lots (which is counter to the purpose of RA district).

	RA	R-12	R-7	R-5	R-3	RM-1	RM-2	RMF
Minimum area of a lot	217,800	8,000	5,500	4,000	3,000	4,000	4,000	15,000
Minimum frontage of a lot	500	60	50	40	30	40	50	50