

# Project Update

## What has happened so far?

### 1 Kick-Off

Back in January, the consulting team at Framework met with Baker City staff, finalized the project scope, and strategized how the Code Update project would move forward.

### 2 Code Audit

Framework spent the next several weeks conducting a thorough audit of the Baker City Development Code (BCDC) to identify potential updates to begin implementing the Housing Production Strategy (HPS), and ensure the City's code is in compliance with state law.

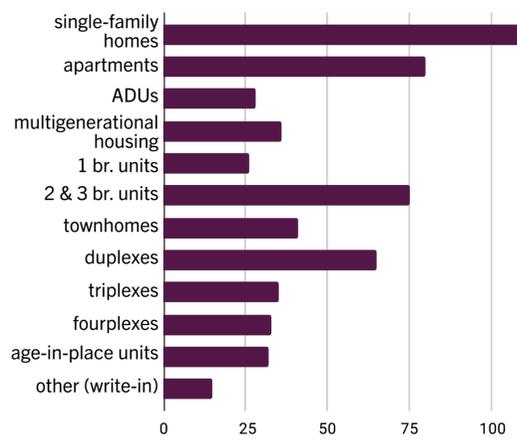
Key findings include:

- Diverse, dense housing is difficult to build due to restrictive development regulations.
- The code favors single-family homes over other housing types.
- Overall code clean-up could benefit applicants, review staff, and other users by improving readability and efficiency.
- Only minor adjustments are needed for complete compliance with state law.

### 3 Surveys

With the help of City staff, Framework also conducted two surveys: one for developers working in the city (8 responses), and another for general community members (147 responses). The information gathered from the surveys identified gaps and problems with the code, other barriers to housing production, and gaps in the existing housing supply.

Community Members responded to "What types of housing do you feel Baker City currently needs?" as follows, with write-ins including affordability and larger units.



### 4 Site Visit & HAC Meeting 1

In April, Baker City staff hosted the Framework team for an in-person visit and the first Housing Advisory Committee (HAC) meeting. Framework talked with other planning staff, former consultants, community members, developers and contractors, and public works staff.

Stakeholder feedback and on-the-ground experience of Baker City produced a clearer understanding of the City's housing issues and informed an effective and realistic strategy to implement key priorities in the HPS report.

### 5 Code Update Strategy

Framework used information gathered from the audit, surveys, HAC feedback, and site visit to craft a detailed strategy for updating the BCDC.

The general strategy is:

- Expand middle housing options and reduce development restrictions in all zones.
- Develop incentive programs that achieve affordability and accessibility goals via increased densities and heights.
- Use a scalable approach to density (lot area per unit) and more flexibility provided by a form-focused approach (detached, attached, stacked).

Specific updates include:

- Allow cottage housing in the Residential-Low Density (R-LD).
- Increase maximum floor area of cottages to 1,400 sq. ft.
- Increase max. Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) size to 1,000 sq. ft. and 25 ft. tall.
- Allow more middle housing types and revise development standards in the Residential-Medium Density (R-MD) zone to encourage options beyond detached single-family homes.
- Improve the feasibility of middle housing in the R-MD zone with new incentives.
- Improve the feasibility of small apartment buildings in the Residential-High Density (R-HD) zone via increased height limits and density.
- Control the scale of new development by limiting the number of units per building.
- Reduce minimum lot sizes for middle housing in R-MD and R-HD zones.

### 6 HAC Meeting #2

At the end of July, the Housing Advisory Committee gathered with Framework and City staff to review the major draft code changes and give feedback on the direction of the project. Topics discussed were:

- Draft code changes
- Strategies for increasing the supply of long-term rentals such as apartments
- Size increases for accessory dwelling units (ADUs)
- Topics for the Help Sheets that will be produced to communicate key concepts from the code.

Highlights from HAC feedback:

- Removing or reducing architectural detail and articulation requirements from the code would be an acceptable measure to help increase the supply of rental housing.
- Increasing maximum ADU size to 1,000 sq.ft. and up to 25 ft. tall are generally supported.

## This Project Is:

- Updating the City's Development Code to comply with recent state mandates and begin implementing the Housing Production Strategy.
- Reducing barriers to housing production in the zoning code in order to help increase housing supply and bring down housing costs.
- Creating several "Help Sheets" that will be supplemental public resources, written in plain English and using graphics and images to explain important concepts from the code. These Help Sheets are intended to help more people utilize the code changes to make the most of their property, potentially adding more housing units.

## Project Goals

- ☑ Audit existing development code and draft updates for clear and objective standards
- ☑ Edit the development code to remove barriers and incentivize housing. Begin implementing the Housing Production Strategy Report.
- Bring the development code into compliance with middle housing rules (ORS 197A.420, OAR 660-046)
- Create five help sheets on ADUs, housing types, accessibility standards, etc.

## This Project Is NOT:

- This project will not rezone any property in the city. What you can do on your property will not be reduced or limited.
- This project is not a proposal for any specific development project.
- No one will be required to add housing units to their property if they don't want to.
- New housing development will be confined to Baker City's existing residential zones. Parks and other open spaces will not be impacted.
- This project is not a silver bullet to solve Baker City's housing problem, but it is a big step in the right direction!

## How to Get Involved

- Add your comments to the draft Help Sheet for Housing Options online using Konveio.
- Email City planning staff at [planning@bakercountyor.gov](mailto:planning@bakercountyor.gov)
- Attend the public meetings with the Planning Commission and City Council this October - December (see the project timeline below). Dates will be posted on the website. You can give public comment or just listen in.



Scan the QR code to visit the project website and add comments to draft help sheets!

## Preliminary Updates

### Allowed Land Uses (table 2.2.110)

#### Streamlined Residential Uses

The land use table now reflects a simplified, form-focused classification of residential development. Broad categories based on unit configuration (detached, attached, and stacked) are generally permitted by-right in R-LD, R-MD, and R-HD. The number of dwelling units is controlled through the development standards table (below).

Unique housing types such as accessory dwelling units, cottage clusters, and zero lot line homes are permitted with special standards.

Residential Configurations:

- **Detached Residential** includes standalone structures with a single living unit like single-family detached homes, multiple detached, or manufactured homes
- **Attached Residential** includes horizontally attached structures like duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, fiveplexes, townhomes, and row homes
- **Stacked Residential** includes structures with two or more vertically attached units like stacked plexes, apartments, or condominiums



#### DRAFT CHANGES (subject to change)

	Residential Low-Density (R-LD)	Residential Medium-Density (R-MD)	Residential High-Density (R-HD)
Detached Residential	P	P	P
Attached Residential	S	S	S
Stacked Residential	N CU	S	S
Accessory Dwelling Unit	S	S	S
Cottage Cluster <i>new standards added</i>	N S	P S	P S
Manufactured Home Park	S	S	S

*Allowing stacked housing as a conditional use in the R-LD zone gives the city the ability to say yes to exceptional projects, such as the creative reuse of a historic old building, or an affordable housing development, without allowing stacked residential in the R-LD zone by right.*

**Key**  
 P = permitted  
 S = permitted with additional standards  
 CU = conditional use  
 N = not permitted

### Development Standards (table 2.2.120)

#### Flexible Lot and Building Requirements

Density limits, lot size requirements, and setbacks are among the development standards adjusted for housing type diversity during this update. By switching to a form-focused system based on unit configuration (detached, attached, stacked), the number of rows in Table 2.2.120 has drastically been reduced. Formatting changes have also been made to improve readability.

Key updates include:

- Decreased minimum lot size in all zones
- Scalable density via lot area per unit requirements
- Clearer distinctions between each zone by right-sizing setbacks, coverage, and building height
- Removal or relocation of extraneous footnotes and standards (mostly relocated to 2.2.200)



#### DRAFT CHANGES (subject to change)

	Residential Low-Density (R-LD)	Residential Medium-Density (R-MD)	Residential High-Density (R-HD)
Density (DU/acre)	min: 1 max: 1915	min: 2 max: 2922	min: 4 max: 4543
Max # Units in a Single Building	attached: 3 units stacked: 6 units	attached: 4 units stacked: 8 units	attached: 5 units stacked: 20 units
<b>Minimum Lot Area</b>			
Lot Area for up to 2 units	7,500 6,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	7,500 4,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	5,000 2,000 ft <sup>2</sup>
Lot Area for each additional unit	2,500 ft <sup>2</sup>	2,000 ft <sup>2</sup>	1,000 ft <sup>2</sup>
Cottage Cluster (per unit)	2,500 ft <sup>2</sup>	2,000 1,500 ft <sup>2</sup>	1,000 ft <sup>2</sup>
<b>Minimum Lot Width</b>			
Detached/Stacked Residential	alley: 50 ft no alley: 49 60 ft	alley: 40 ft no alley: 40-50 50 ft	alley: 30 ft no alley: 40-50 40 ft
Attached Residential	20 ft	20 ft	20 18 ft
<b>Minimum Lot Depth</b> <i>removing min. depth allows for more flexibility. Min. lot area and min. width are adequate.</i>			
<b>Maximum Building/Structure Height</b>			
Detached/Attached/Stacked	35 ft	35 ft	35 ft
Accessory Dwelling Unit	20 25 ft	20 25 ft	20 25 ft
<b>Maximum Building Coverage</b>			
Detached / Attached or Stacked	50% / 60%	50 55% / 60-70 65%	50 60% / 60-70 70%
<b>Minimum Setbacks</b>			
Front Setback	15 ft	15 ft	10 ft
Side Setback	5 10 ft	5 ft	5 ft
Rear (Alley/no Alley)	10 ft / 1 ft	10 ft / 1 ft	10 ft / 1 ft

*maximum densities are based on this units per lot area calculation*

*simplified housing types & terminology*

## Project Timeline

