

## Title 17C Land Use Standards

### Chapter 17C.110 Residential Zones

#### Section 17C.110.350 Cottage Housing

##### A. Purpose and Intent.

The intent of cottage housing is to support a diversity of housing choices citywide, and especially near neighborhood centers, to help meet market demands for walkable urban environments, increase the variety of housing types for smaller households and provide the opportunity for small, detached single-family dwelling units at higher densities within existing neighborhoods.

##### B. Qualifying Situations.

1. Cottage housing developments shall have a minimum of two units and a maximum of twelve units.
2. A development site may contain more than one clustering of units with respect to an open space, with a clear separation between clusters.
3. Cottage housing may be developed as condominiums or as a small lot subdivision in accordance with the procedures of chapter 17G.080 SMC, Subdivisions.

[Staff note: The text of subsection 3 above would change and replace the text of 17C.110.350(D)(7)(c) which now reads "Cottage housing may be developed as condominiums and shall not be allowed as small lot subdivision."]

##### C. Housing Types Defined.

The following definitions apply to the housing types allowed through the provisions in this section:

1. Cottage – A detached, single-family dwelling unit.
2. Attached Unit Home – A structure containing two dwelling units designed to look like a detached single-family home.
3. Carriage Unit – A single-family dwelling unit located above a garage structure.

##### D. Procedure.

Cottage housing is allowed by Type II permit in the RA, RSF, RSF-C, RTF and RMF zones, subject to compliance with subsections (D) through (I) of this section. Design review of the site plan shall be required.

1. A site plan depicting building locations and orientation, common open space, private open space, fencing, landscaping, parking, setbacks, easements, footprints and photographs of all adjacent structures, and compliance with subsections (D) through (I) of this section shall be submitted with the Type II permit application. If the site plan is approved, deed restrictions for the subject property that enforce the elements of the cottage housing ordinance shall be recorded at the Spokane County Auditor's Office.
2. The Type II permit submission shall include typical building elevations showing architectural expression and fenestration.
3. Prior to issuance of a final certificate of occupancy for any dwelling unit within the development, a homeowners' association or similar organization shall be formed to maintain the common open space, parking areas and other common use areas or buildings within the development.
4. Where the property is to be subdivided into individual lots or sold as condominiums, a copy of the draft covenants, codes and restrictions shall be submitted for review prior to recording of the final plat or condominium.

~~D~~. E. Site Development Standards.

1. Lot Coverage.  
The maximum lot coverage permitted for all structures shall not exceed the site coverage permitted in the underlying zone classification.
2. Density.
  - a. Cottage Housing shall be development at no more density than the underlying zoning permits.
  - e. The transition lot size requirements of SMC 17C.110.200(C) ~~do~~ shall not apply to cottage housing development.
3. Height.  
The height for all structures shall not exceed the height limit permitted by the underlying zone classification

[Note: Subsection (5) above is moved to (J)(4) on p. 12 of this draft, below.]

#### 4. Common Open Space.

- a. Clustering of units around a common open space is encouraged. If there is more than one cluster in a development, the clusters should have a clear separation.

The common open space shall be at least two hundred fifty square feet per cottage housing unit

- b. Common open space shall be located in a centrally located area and be easily accessible to all dwellings within the development.
- c. At least 50 percent of the units in the development shall abut a common open space. A cottage is considered to “abut” an area of open space if there is no structure between the unit and the open space.
- d. Landscaping located in common open space areas shall be designed to allow for easy access.
- e. With the exception of critical or natural areas, prior to occupancy of the first eighty percent of completed homes or two less units than the total, whichever is less, the common open space shall be landscaped prior to occupancy of any structures and shall be maintained by a homeowners association or similar organization formed to maintain the landscaping. Occupancy of the last twenty percent or minimum of two homes shall be contingent upon the completion of all site landscaping.
- f. The following critical and natural areas, where proposed to be preserved through site design, may be used to meet up to fifty percent (50%) of the total requirement for common open space, provided that these areas are either accessible to pedestrians to the extent practical or visually accessible from adjacent common open space:
  - i. Wetlands and wetland buffers;
  - ii. Geologically hazardous areas;
  - iii. Fish and wildlife habitat buffers;
  - iv. Frequently flooded areas;
  - v. Shorelines and Shoreline buffers;
  - vi. Natural features (such as basalt outcroppings); and
  - vii. Native vegetation (including stands of mature trees).

## 5. Setbacks.

- a. All cottage housing units shall maintain a minimum of ten feet of separation within the cluster. Projections may extend into the required separation as follows:
  - i. Eaves may extend up to twelve inches.
  - ii. Minor appurtenances such as pipes, gas and electrical meters, alarm systems, air vents and downspouts.
- b. Front yard setbacks on cottage housing units facing public streets shall be as stated in Table 17C.110-3. Side lot line and street side lot line setbacks shall be 5 feet.

## 6. Fences.

- a. All fences on the interior of the development shall be no more than thirty-six inches in height.
- b. Sight obstructing screening that maintains adequate provision of light to adjacent units or lots shall be allowed between cottage housing units. This fencing shall be no more than six feet in height and shall not extend beyond the foundation of the cottage housing units
- c. Fences along the exterior property lines are subject to the fence requirements of SMC 17C.110.230.
- d. Chain link fences are not allowed.

## 7. Parking.

- a. General Parking Requirements.
  - i. One parking space shall be required per cottage housing unit.
  - ii. Garages, parking, and vehicular maneuvering areas shall be set back a minimum of twenty feet from a public street lot line.
  - iii. Parking in attached garages or carports shall be served by adequate all-season drive
  - iv. All parking shall be separated and screened from adjacent public streets and the common area by landscaping and/or

architectural screen, consistent with landscape type L1 in SMC 17C.200.030, Landscaping.

b. Off-Street Surface Parking.

Surface parking shall be configured in clusters that each contain a maximum of five adjoining spaces.

c. Attached Garages and Carports.

i. Excavated basement garages may be allowed.

ii. Attached garages and carports may not be converted into living space.

d. Detached Garages and Carports.

i. Garage doors and/or carport openings shall not face a public street right of way but may face an alley right of way. The garage setback from an alley shall be not less than 5 feet.

ii. Design of garage structures and carports shall be similar to the style, materials, color, detailing, articulation, fenestration, etc., of the cottage housing units.

8. Pedestrian Connectivity.

All buildings shall have connection to an existing or planned sidewalk, public sidewalk or trail system.

F. Attached Houses and Carriage Units.

1. Attached houses and carriage units are permitted within cottage housing developments.

2. Attached houses and carriage units shall comply with applicable site development standards in subsection E above.

3. A maximum of two units may be attached in a single structure.

4. Design of attached houses and carriage units shall be similar in terms of style, materials, color, detailing, articulation, fenestration, etc., of the entire development.

G. Community Buildings.

1. Community buildings are permitted in cottage developments.

2. Community buildings shall be located on the same site as the cottage housing development.
3. Community buildings shall be clearly incidental in use to the dwelling units.

#### H. Existing Structures.

1. Existing detached single-family residential structures may be permitted to remain and incorporated into the cottage housing development just as if a newly constructed unit.
2. Retained existing structures will be counted in calculating density and lot coverage on the site.
3. Structures may be modified to be more consistent with this section. For example, roof pitches may be increased consistent with subsection E(4) above.

#### I. Design Standards Administration

All projects must address pertinent design standards and guidelines. A determination of consistency with the standards and guidelines will be made by the Director following a design review process. Design standards are in the form of Requirements (R), Presumptions (P), and Considerations (C). Regardless of which term is used, an applicant must address each guideline. An applicant may seek to deviate from eligible standards and guidelines through the design departure process pursuant to chapter 17G.030 SMC, Design Departures.

##### 1. Requirements (R).

Requirements are mandatory in that they contain language that is not discretionary, such as “shall,” “must,” and “will.” Requirements must be satisfied by any plan prior to building permit approval. An applicant may seek a deviation from certain requirements through the design departure process, chapter 17G.030 SMC. Requirements are listed with an (R) after the standard.

##### 2. Presumptions (P).

Presumptions are guidelines that are meant to be applied, but with some flexibility. Presumptions indicate that the City is open to design features that are equal to, or better than, that stated - so long as the purpose is satisfied. A submitted plan is incomplete and will be rejected if it does not demonstrate that the presumptive elements have been in some way incorporated or overcome. Presumptions are listed with a (P) after the standard.

##### a. Overcoming a Presumption.

A presumption that may be unsuitable for a given project may be waived if an applicant can demonstrate to the director that there is a good reason why the presumption is inappropriate. The director may approve an alternative that achieves the intent of the presumption. At

the discretion of the application, or in rare cases, the director may refer the permit to the design review board. A referral from the director would be for projects of unusual complexity and/or it is not clear to the director that proposed deviations meet the intent of the design standards and the comprehensive plan.

b. Appropriate ways to overcome a presumption include:

- i. Demonstrating that for a specific project the underlying design principles will not be furthered by the application of the presumption;
- ii. Showing that another design principle is enhanced by not applying the presumption;
- iii. Demonstrating an alternative method for achieving the intent of the presumption; and
- iv. Explaining the unique site factors that make the presumption unworkable, such as lot size and shape, slope, natural vegetation, drainage or characteristics of adjacent development, which are identified through their use of materials, colors, building mass and form, and landscaping. Note: Increases in the cost of development will not be an acceptable reason to waive a guideline or determine that a guideline is inappropriate.

3. Considerations (C).

Design guidelines listed as considerations are features and concepts that an applicant should consider in preparing a plan. Their omission is not grounds for rejecting a plan, but their inclusion or recognition is encouraged and may assist in overcoming certain presumptions and in gaining acceptance for a plan. Considerations are listed with a (C) after the standard.

J. Cottage Housing Design Standards and Guidelines.

1. Orientation and Building Facades

- a. Each cottage unit abutting a public street shall have a minimum of four of the following building elements, features, and treatments (R)
  - i. Variation in housing type and size.
  - ii. Additional porches and patios (required porch not included).
  - iii. Varying roof shapes or gables between adjacent structures.
  - iv. Windows with visible trim and mullions.

- v. Roof brackets.
- vi. Dormers.
- vii. Fascia boards.
- viii. Bay windows.
- ix. Entry enhancement such as a well detailed door (multi-panel or glass insert), window adjacent to front door, or roof extension.
- x. Trellis.
- xi. Modulation.
- xii. Chimney (shown on the exterior of the house).
- xiii. Variation in roof or building colors and materials, such as brick, stone or other masonry as accents.
- xiv. Other building elements, treatments, features, or site designs approved by the planning & development director that provide variety and visual interest.

## 2. Topography and Landscaping.

- a. Characteristic aspects of neighborhood topography should be continued, such as raised lots and the relationship of buildings to grade, in areas where these aspects form prevalent patterns. (C)
- b. Landscaping and trees should be used to achieve compatibility in areas where these are unifying elements of community character. (C)

## 3. Porches and Covered Porches.

- a. Cottage housing units shall have a covered porch or entry at least sixty square feet in size with a minimum dimension of six feet on any side. (R)
- b. The covered porch shall be located on the side of the cottage that serves as the main entry. (R)

## 4. Roofs.

Building rooflines should be designed to create architectural interest and contribute to the overall identity of the area. (C)



5. Exterior Building Lighting.

- a. Cottage housing developments should be designed to minimize light and noise impacts both within the development and to adjacent properties. (R)
- b. Lighting of a building facade should be designed to complement the architectural design. (C)
- c. Primary lights should address the common open space and public realm. (C)

6. Variety in Design and Architectural Features.

- a. In areas where patterns established by recurring architectural features are well-established and valued, buildings should be designed to respond to prevalent architectural features of the surrounding neighborhood context. (P)
- b. The use of modulation and articulation techniques shall be varied between adjacent buildings to add visual interest through shadows, human scale detailing and textures while reducing the appearance of mass and scale of the buildings. (R)
- c. The same combination of building elements, features and treatments shall not be repeated for more than twenty percent of the total dwelling units in a cottage housing development. (R)
- d. Dwellings with the same combination of features and treatments shall not be located adjacent to each other. (R)