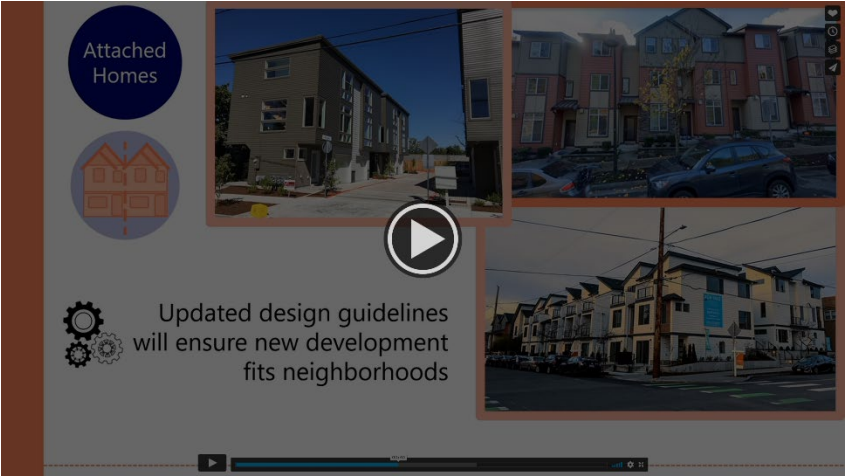




Residential Development Code Initiatives

Attached Housing

Possible changes related to **attached housing** were suggested in the Spokane [Housing Action Plan \(HAP\)](#) Strategy A1 (p. 24) and [Housing Emergency Proclamation](#) Action Item 2.b.

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Topic | Attached Housing |
| Code | SMC Section 17C.110.310 |
| Proposed Changes | Increase the maximum number of housing units permitted in RA, RSF, and RSF-C zones; revise siting and design standards. |
| Watch the Video to Learn More |  |

What is attached housing?

Two or more dwelling units that are single-family residences on individual lots attached by a common wall at a shared property line. Types of attached housing include townhouses, row houses, or other attached configurations. Attached housing differs from duplexes and other -plexes in that each unit is built on a separate lot, in a similar way as detached single-family homes, whereas a duplex or triplex is multiple dwelling units on one lot. Attached housing is also different than a condominium, which has units owned by individual property owners, but the open space, communal areas, and land on which the homes are built are owned by a condo cooperative or homeowners’ association.

How will this change the character of my neighborhood?

Demographic changes across the US have highlighted a growing need and demand for smaller housing to accommodate empty nesters, single people, young professionals, and young families who either cannot afford, or do not need, a large home. Greater housing options eases demand pressures, as all residents have more affordable housing options and therefore greater mobility.



Peabody Townhomes Bellingham, WA. © 2021 The RJ Group

Attached homes are a traditional type of housing in America and can be found coast to coast from neighborhoods in Washington, DC to the iconic Victorian rowhouses of San Francisco. Changes to neighborhoods would be dependent on developers constructing new attached housing, or redeveloping older sites, so effects to Spokane neighborhoods may not be immediately noticeable. Attached housing is a type of gentle density, a term created by Brent Toderian, similar to properties that have an accessory dwelling unit, but because each unit is a single-family home they function much the same as a larger 2- or 3-story home on the neighborhood block.



Current development regulations allow up to 8 attached houses with a common wall in the Residential Two-Family (RTF) zone, without approval as a Planned Unit Development (PUD). The example above shows alley-loaded townhomes with parking behind the buildings.



Redmond Townhomes © 2021 Google

How are they currently regulated in Spokane?

Attached housing is permitted in all residential zoning districts (RA, RSF, RTF, RMF, and RHD). Here's a brief overview of the development standards:

- Each unit must be on a lot or part of a larger area that meets the lot development standards for the base zone (see [Table 17C.110-3](#)).
- The shared property line setback is reduced to zero. This can be the rear or a side setback, but the remaining setbacks must comply with the zone requirements.
- In the RA, RSF, and RSF-C zones more than 2 attached units requires development through the [Planned Unit Development](#) (PUD) process.
- In the RTF zones more than 8 attached units requires development through the Planned Unit Development process.
- There is no limit to the number of attached units in the RMF and RHD zones. In these zones, attached housing requires 30 percent less parking than other residential development, and 50 percent less near centers and corridors.
- Design standards to ensure development aligns with the character of the existing neighborhood are applicable (Section 17C.110.310(E) and SMC 17C.110.400 through 17C.110.465).

Zoom into
[Map Spokane](#)
for your zoning
district.

What are the proposed changes to regulations?

The City is proposing several revisions to requirements for attached housing.

- First, the City is proposing to increase the maximum number of attached units in the RA, RSF, and RSF-C zones to 4 units without completing the PUD process.
- Second, to incentivize the construction of smaller more affordable units, when each unit is 1,200 square feet or smaller, 2 attached units get a density calculation bonus which counts them as a single dwelling unit.
- Additional changes include performance standards about siting and design such as prohibiting front-loaded units where 3 or more units are attached, and requiring at least 30-feet between groups of buildings to allow for maneuvering and landscaping.
- The City is also proposing updates for simple, flexible design standards that will apply to all housing types, including attached houses, to ensure that new homes will be well-designed and would add to the quality of the established neighborhood.

How can I comment on the proposed changes?

You can email public comment to developmentcode@spokanecity.org, or contact the project staff listed on the [project webpage](#). Members of the public are encouraged to testify at public hearings both before Plan Commission and City Council.



Proposed Draft

Updated design standards that apply to all housing types were detailed for Plan Commission on January 26, 2022 and you can review the [slides](#) for an overview. You can review the proposed draft text which was taken before Plan Commission on March 9, 2022 by viewing the [agenda packet](#). At the March 9 workshop, Plan Commission discussion focused on the design standards which apply to all housing types, requesting another workshop for discussion, but were otherwise supportive of the code amendments to incentivize and permit more attached housing. You can view the Plan Commission [workshop recording](#) for discussion on the proposed code amendment.