PLANNING COMMISSION

Work Session Minutes
September 9, 2026

Chairman Fialka called the housing code update works sesion meeting to order at 7:00PM. Present were Commissioners Doherty, Saylor, Caplinger, Misner, and Hamm. Commissioners Serrano & Rebman were excused. Commissioner Kirkpatrick was absent. Staff in attendance included Planning Director C.F. Spencer, City Attorney Rich Tovey, and Planning Assistant Heather La Beau. Youth Advisor Jazmin Sanchez was present.

Housing Code Updates

Planning Director summarized the process and work completed thus far for updating the city's development code to comply with changes in housing law at the state level. The work session is an opportunity for the planning commission to review the draft updates and discuss any changes to the final ordinance that will be presented at hearings on October 14 Planning Commission meeting and the October 26 city council meeting. Updates are proposed for both the Subdivision (Chapter 154) and Zoning (Chapter 157) code.

Planning Director Spencer introduced Keava Campbell, an Associate Planner with WinterBrook Planning, the consultants working with the city on the code updates. Ms. Campbell reviewed some of the changes with the attached PowerPoint presentation.

The planning commission discussion included:

- Livability standards for neighborhoods
- Clear and objective housing standards
- Removal of community input through lack of noticing requirements
- Definitions of manufactured homes and child care center, child care home
- Likelihood of additional code changes in the future
- Administrative approval of plats
- Standards for multi-unit in the DCO versus the C-1 zone

The planning commission stated their preference for the following:

- No multi-units (5 and above) allowed outright in R-2
- No allowing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) on lots with triplex and above
- Remove boarding and rooming houses in code as now referred to Single Room Occupancies
- Phasing the rear setback based on building height
- Minimum lot sizes for multi-units remain the same for R-3 & R-4 if less than 5 units, change if 5 units and above
- Lot coverage standards remain the same
- Design standards for windows of at least 15% for street facing façade and 10% for other street
- Use the model code for Cottage Clusters

Planning Director Spencer thanked the commissioners and Ms. Campbell for attending and providing input.

Planner comments and unscheduled communication

There was no unscheduled communication.

Adjournment

Chairman Fialka adjourned the work session meeting at 10:58PM.

Hermiston Code Update

Planning Commission Work Session

City of Hermiston, Oregon
Wednesday, September 9, 2026

Funded by the DLCD 2025-2027 Planning Assistance Grant Program

Agenda



Source: Oregon Live

10 min	Project Overview
35 min	Statutory Requirements
60 min	Code Amendment Discussion Points

What's this Code Update About?

Amendments to the Hermiston Municipal Code (HMC) to comply with State Law changes addressing housing need.



Source: City of Hermiston

Process

1. Review Legislative Changes to Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR) and Revised Statutes (ORS)
2. Assess Hermiston Municipal Code
3. Draft and Finalize Code Updates
4. Adopt

Large Cities Requirements

- Per PSU Population Estimate, Hermiston has a population of approximately 20,300.
- Additional requirements for housing per State Law "kick in" at 25,000 (Large City).
- City Council committed to implementing code changes necessary for Large Cities to be proactive.

Additional Large Cities Requirements

- **Allow all middle housing types in all residential zones.**
- **Allow middle housing land divisions on lots for all middle housing types.**
- **Allow bonus units for middle housing types.**

Regulatory Compliance

Regulatory Compliance Changes for Hermiston

- **SB 1537, SB 974, HB 4037 –** Expands the application types subject to limited land use decision review or a similar administrative process.
- **HB 2138, HB 4063 –** Requires cities to allow middle housing types and SROs, reduces development barriers, including traffic impact requirements, and allows expedited middle housing land divisions.
- **HB 3395 –** Allows affordable residential development on commercial lands and requires SROs and duplexes in all residential zones.
- **HB 3560 –** Requires family child care homes and child care centers to be allowed more broadly in residential areas.
- **HB 2347, HB 4064 –** Prohibits applying stricter standards to manufactured dwellings than would apply to site-built homes, updates definitions.

Overarching Changes:

- **Middle Housing –** Middle housing consists of duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, cottage clusters, or townhouses. Large cities must allow all middle housing types in all residential zones.
- **Administrative Review of Residential Applications –** New streamlined section.
  - Tentative subdivision and partition, replats, nonconforming uses
  - Residential variances, residential upzoning with residential development, and planned unit development (PUD)
  - Residential applications made under clear and objective standards



Source: City of Hermiston

Overarching Changes:

- **Clear and Objective Residential Standards –** Requires creating a code path without discretion. Can the finding for the standard be responded to with a simple "yes, met" or "no, not met?"
  - Medium Density Residential Zone (R-2) (HMC 157.026)
  - Development Hazard Overlay Zone (HMC 157.100)
  - Planned Unit Developments (HMC 157.110)
  - Transportation Standards (HMC 157.150)
  - Development Requirements (HMC 157.164)
  - Subdivisions (Chapter 154)



Source: City of Hermiston

Chapter 154 Subdivision Changes

Expedited Land Divisions

HMC 154.73 [new]

- Expedited Land Divisions provide a 63-day review procedure for eligible residential applications.
- Needs to meet density or affordability threshold.
- Staff decision, no hearing, and only the Applicant may appeal.

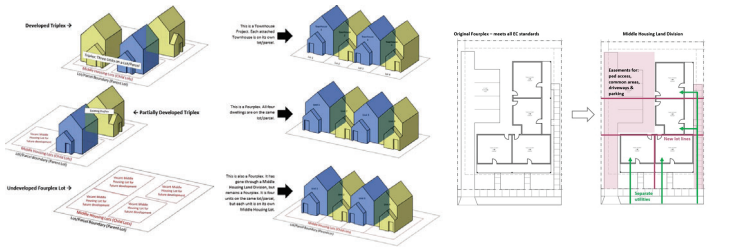


Source: City of Hermiston

Middle Housing Land Divisions (MHLD)

HMC 154.74 [new]

- MHLD provides a simplified and expedited process for subdividing or partitioning middle housing lots so each unit is on a separate property.



Source: City of Eugene, 2025

Summarized Chapter 154 Land Division Changes

- Rename chapter to Land Divisions to encompass different division types.
- Two situation-specific division types added: middle housing land division and expedited land divisions.
- Preliminary plat and replats are decided by City staff administratively.

Chapter 157 Zoning Changes

Limited Land Use and Administrative Section

HMC 157.166, 157.229 [new], and throughout

- Residential applications must be decided administratively, address in new streamlined section.
  - Tentative subdivision and partition, replats, nonconforming uses
  - Residential variances, residential upzoning with residential development, and planned unit development (PUD)
  - Residential applications made under clear and objective standards
- Remove residential uses as allowed for PUDs.
- Update noticing requirements.



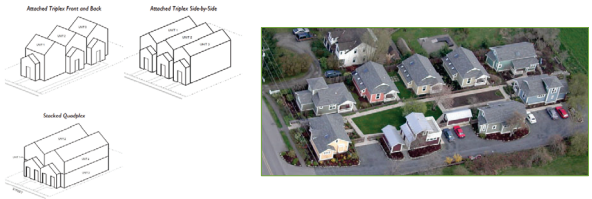
Source: City of Hermiston

Middle Housing

HMC 157.002, 157.025, 157.026, 157.027, 157.028, 157.029, 157.043, and 157.155 [new]

- Large cities are required to allow all middle housing types in all residential zones.
- New Supplemental Provisions sections to regulate additional standards.
- Traffic Impact Analyses and traffic-related improvements cannot be required for most middle housing developments.

Sources: DLCD Middle Housing Model Code (2026), Housing Choices Guidebook (2024), and American Legal Publishing





Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and Single Room Occupancies (SRO)

HMC 157.025, 157.136, 157.153 [new]

- **ADUs** allowed in all residential zones and cannot require parking.
- **SRO:** A development with at least four privately lockable rooms for rent, each used for living and sleeping, where residents share bathrooms and/or kitchen facilities.
  - Allowed in all residential zones.
  - New section with development standards added.



Source: City of Hermiston



Source: Paul Groth, 1994

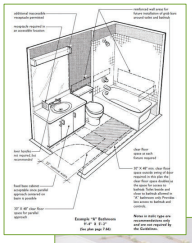


Source: Vinculum Architecture, 2025

Affordable and Accessible Bonus Units

HMC 157.156 [new]

- Allow "bonus" units for middle housing based on affordability or accessibility levels.
- Bonuses for both allowed simultaneously.
- Caps on the total number of units:
  - Single-unit & ADU, Duplexes, and Triplexes – 1 unit.
  - Quadplex, Townhouses, and Cottage Clusters – 2 units.
- Recommend adopting DLCD's model code module.



Source: Abadi Accessibility (2024)



Source: Carleton Hart Architecture

Specific Residential Uses on Commercial Lands and Emergency Shelter Siting

HMC 157.157 [new] and 157.158 [new]

- New sections specifying standards for residential uses on commercial lands and emergency shelter siting.
- Emergency Shelter:
  - Remove redundant temporary shelter requirements.
  - City Council review, ultimately court decision.
- Residential Uses on Commercial Lands (By Right Affordable Housing):
  - Allows two definitions of affordable housing and conversion of commercial to residential use.
  - Only subject to clear and objective residential standards of base zone or equivalent residential zone.
  - No zone change or analysis related to economic development can be required.



Source: Restore Oregon (2024)

Manufactured Housing

HMC 157.145, 157.146, 157.026

- Manufactured Housing cannot have any required standards that would not apply to a site-built home.
- Updated definitions.
- Manufactured Dwelling Parks are required to be an allowed use in medium-density zones on 1-acre lots.
  - Now an allowed use in R-2 and above.

Source: Dwell, Len's Home Center, Reality Homes







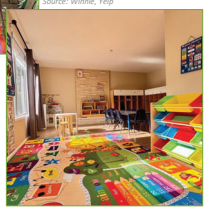
Child Care

HMC 157.002, 157.025, 157.040, 157.041, 157.055

- Family Child Care Homes and Child Care Centers are treated as a residential use and permitted in all residential zones.
  - Also allowed in commercial zones.
  - Child Care Centers allowed in Light Industrial zone.



Source: Winnie, Yelp



Summarized Chapter 157 Zoning Changes

- Allow all middle housing types and single room occupancies in all residential zones with associated dimensional standards.
- Standards for manufactured housing matched to single-unit requirements.
- Allow certain residential uses in commercial and light industrial zones with paired residential standards.
- Create separate administrative review, middle housing design standards, emergency shelter, and affordable housing and commercial conversions sections.
- Remove residential uses as allowed within Planned Unit Development.
- Amendments to non-conforming use section.
- Replace “family” with “unit” to describe housing.

Discussion Points

Code Amendment Discussion

- Residential and Commercial Allowances
- Residential Dimensional Standards
- Residential Design Standards

Allowed Uses – Residential Zones

HMC 157.136

1. ADUs must be allowed on lots with single-unit or duplexes. Should they be allowed on lots with triplexes or quadplexes?
   - Example: Single-unit house has been split into three apartments with an ADU in the backyard.



Source: Google Streetview (2025)

Allowed Uses – Residential Zones

HMC 157.026 and 157.027

2. Generally, because conditional uses are discretionary, housing types cannot be conditional uses.
   - **Recommended:** Allow multi-unit apartments (5 or more units) as an allowed use in the R-2, rather than conditional.
   - **Alternative:** Could limit the scale of allowed multi-unit in the R-2, and allow all multi-unit apartments in R-3 and above? E.g., up to 10 units in the R-2.
3. With single room occupancies as an allowed use, should boarding and rooming houses be removed from the code?



Source: Tower Apartments

Allowed Uses – Commercial Zones

HMC 157.040

1. Two types of affordable housing are now required to be allowed in commercial zones. As discussed, housing cannot be a conditional use, including market-rate multi-unit housing, in the commercial zones.
   - **Recommended:**
     - Allow market-rate multi-unit apartments in the C-1, subject to R-3 standards.
     - Allow all middle housing multi-unit types (above duplex) in the NCO, subject to R-3 standards.
   - Should ground-floor residential be limited? Currently limited only in the DCO.

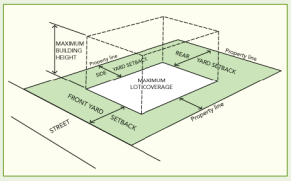


Source: City of Hermiston

Residential Dimensional Standards

HMC 157.025 through 157.029

1. Scaled rear setback (an additional 1 foot of setback for every foot of building height above 15 feet) limits housing development and results in middle housing adjustments.
   - Minimum lot depth is decreasing by 5' to accommodate the townhouse minimum lot size.
   - **Recommendations:** 10-foot setback for one-story, 15-foot for two-story across R-1 through R-4. RR already only requires a 10-foot setback for all structures, regardless of height.

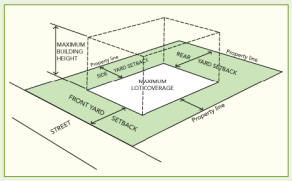


Source: City of Walnut Creek

Residential Dimensional Standards

HMC 157.025 through 157.029

2. Minimum lot sizes for multi-unit development are now restrictive because of additional middle housing types. Minimum lot size largely the same across R-3, R-4, and RR.
   - **Recommendations**:
     - Aligned (7,000 sq. ft.) with minimum lot size requirements for middle housing. Could require an additional area per unit beyond the first five units in lower-density zones?
     - Flat 7,000 sq. ft. minimum lot size requirements in the denser R-4 and RR zones.

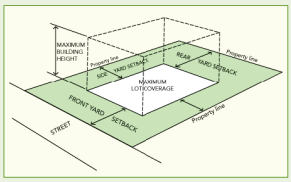


Source: City of Walnut Creek

Residential Dimensional Standards

HMC 157.025 through 157.029

3. Maximum lot coverage requirements also restrictive because of middle housing types. Minimum lot size largely the same across all residential zones (40% to 45%).
   - **Recommendations**:
     - Scale maximum lot coverage requirements in accordance with zone density.
     - Typical requirements:
       - Low density (R-1) – 40% to 55%
         Recommended: 40%
       - Medium density (R-2, R-3) – 50% to 70%
         Recommended: 55%
       - High density (R-4, RR) – 65% to 80%
         Recommended: 70%



Source: City of Walnut Creek

Residential Design Standards

HMC 157.154 [new]

1. Hermiston currently has lenient residential design standards. This will remain broadly true for middle housing.
   - **Recommendation:**
     - Regulate windows and doors for all plexes, townhouses, and multi-unit.
     - Avoids proposals that look too "blocky" and improves safety through "eyes on the street."



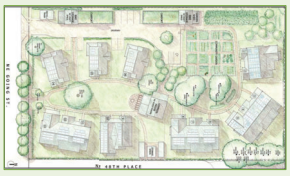


Source: DLCD, Age+

Residential Design Standards

HMC 157.155 [new]

2. Cottage Clusters are recommended to have slightly more development standards given their more unique design.
   - **Recommendations:**
     - Cottage orientation
     - Common courtyard design
     - Community buildings
     - Pedestrian access
     - Windows and doors
     - Existing structures
     - Trash storage





Source: Cully Grove and 1000 Friends of Oregon

THANK YOU!

Planning Commission Work Session

City of Hermiston, Oregon

Wednesday, September 9, 2026

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