

Submitted by: Vice Chair Zaletel and Assembly  
Members Volland and Brawley  
Prepared by: Assembly Counsel's Office  
For reading: August 22, 2023

**ANCHORAGE, ALASKA  
AO No. 2023-87**

1 AN ORDINANCE OF THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY ADOPTING THE  
2 "HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE MUNICIPALITY FOR EVERYONE"  
3 (HOME) INITIATIVE BY AMENDING AND REPEALING PORTIONS OF  
4 ANCHORAGE MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTERS 21.04, 21.05, 21.06 AND 21.07 TO  
5 REALIGN THE RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS THROUGHOUT THE  
6 ANCHORAGE BOWL WITH THE STATED GOALS AND INTENTS OF THE  
7 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND ANCHORAGE 2040 LAND USE PLAN,  
8 PROVIDING FOR STAGGERED EFFECTIVE DATES FOR CHANGES TO  
9 GROUPS OF RESIDENTIAL ZONING DISTRICTS, AND WAIVING PLANNING  
10 AND ZONING COMMISSION REVIEW OF THIS ORDINANCE.

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12 **WHEREAS**, the Anchorage Assembly has stated one of its priorities is to increase  
13 housing availability within the Municipality of Anchorage; and

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15 **WHEREAS**, the Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan is the parent of the  
16 Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan ("2040 LUP") and both guide the implementation of  
17 and changes to Title 21 of the Anchorage Municipal Code; and

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19 **WHEREAS**, the 2040 LUP aims to promote sustainable growth and development  
20 within the Anchorage Bowl; and

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22 **WHEREAS**, the 2040 LUP seeks to improve capacity and types of housing to  
23 alleviate costs; and

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25 **WHEREAS**, the 2040 LUP supplements the Anchorage 2020 Comprehensive Plan  
26 and provides a baseline from which land use decisions can proceed, by: providing  
27 greater land use predictability and clearer policy direction, coordinating  
28 recommended land uses from various adopted area-specific plans, and clarifying  
29 the framework for making zoning and development decisions; and

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31 **WHEREAS**, the 2040 LUP recommends future land uses and a range of potential  
32 intensities of use, however, it is zoning that regulates and sets the rules for the use  
33 of property, lot size, setbacks, building heights, and other site attributes; and

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35 **WHEREAS**, changes to the official Zoning Map (rezonings) or to Title 21 land use  
36 regulations are separate public processes that include community input; and

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38 **WHEREAS**, the 2040 Land Use Plan Map is the "blueprint that guides future use,  
39 intensity, and character of growth" and Title 21 Land Use Code is the "action that  
40 carries out the plan by regulating use of property" (2040 LUP, p. 7); and

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42 **WHEREAS**, the 2040 LUP contends that recent Anchorage trends provide a general  
43 picture of the future population, including:

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- Accelerated growth in aging households and smaller households with fewer children.
- Continued evolution into one of the most racially and ethnically diverse communities in the U.S.
- Diverse households and income levels that need more affordable housing options and more transportation choices.
- Talented professionals from all fields that are attracted to Anchorage’s unique setting.
- A growing number of multigenerational families and less transient population (2040 LUP, p. 10); and

**WHEREAS**, the 2040 LUP anticipates that over the next 25 years, more people will be in “starter home,” moderate income, or downsizing households and that, as a result, people will be looking for smaller, more urban residences with walkable neighborhood amenities nearby; and

**WHEREAS**, the majority of the 2040 LUP policies support simplifying and streamlining zoning, it is the intent of the Assembly to do so through this ordinance and subsequent implementing legislation which may be known as the HOME Initiative – Housing Opportunities in the Municipality for Everyone; and

**WHEREAS**, simplifying zoning in support of the 2040 LUP can help address the growing housing demand in Anchorage and provide more affordable housing options for residents while still retaining predictability and continuity with existing neighborhood characteristics; and

**WHEREAS**, simplifying zoning promotes efficient land use by utilizing existing infrastructure, reducing urban sprawl, and minimizing the need for extensive new infrastructure development; and

**WHEREAS**, simplifying zoning can contribute to a more walkable and bikeable community, reducing dependence on private vehicles and promoting healthier lifestyles; and

**WHEREAS**, allowing simplified zoning in residential areas can create diverse and vibrant neighborhoods with a greater mix of housing types, promoting social interaction and community cohesion, support public transit systems by providing a larger customer base, making public transportation more economically viable and accessible, enhance access to amenities such as parks, schools, healthcare facilities, and shopping centers, as these amenities can be located closer to where people live, help preserve natural areas and open spaces by minimizing the need for new development on undeveloped land, help reduce the environmental impact associated with suburban sprawl, including carbon emissions from transportation and the loss of natural habitats; and

**WHEREAS**, allowing for the possibility of more density in residential zoning consistent with the 2040 LUP can encourage the development of mixed-use neighborhoods, where residents have easy access to a variety of services, employment opportunities, and recreational amenities; and

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**WHEREAS**, allowing for the possibility of more density in residential zoning consistent with the 2040 LUP aligns with the goals of creating a more inclusive and equitable city by providing housing options for people of different income levels and lifestyles and can foster a sense of belonging and community pride, as residents have more opportunities to engage with their neighbors and participate in local activities; and

**WHEREAS**, simplifying residential zoning to allow for predictable development in a streamlined manner is a proactive and forward-thinking approach that supports the long-term growth and sustainability of Anchorage as outlined in the Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, changes to Residential Zoning District types will require additional updates to Title 21, so the effective date of this ordinance is staggered between January 1, 2024 and January 1, 2025 to create a phased implementation which will allow work on the necessary additional changes within code or the comprehensive plan to conform to and fully implement this ordinance and be enacted before the changes go into effect; now, therefore,

**THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY ORDAINS:**

**Section 1.** Anchorage Municipal Code Chapter 21.04 is hereby amended to read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

**21.04.010 General provisions.**

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**A. Districts Established; Zoning Map**

1. *Purpose.* The municipality is divided into zoning districts in order to achieve the purposes of this title established in chapter 21.01, which include implementation of the comprehensive plan, and its land use plan map.
2. Zoning districts established. The following zoning districts are established:

**TABLE 21.04-1: ZONING DISTRICTS ESTABLISHED**

<b>District Type</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>District Name</b>
<b>Residential Districts</b>	STFR[R-1]	Single and Two Family Residential[SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL]
	[R-1A]	[SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (LARGER LOT)]
	[R-2A]	[TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (LARGER LOT)]

**TABLE 21.04-1: ZONING DISTRICTS ESTABLISHED**

District Type	Abbreviation	District Name
	[R-2D]	[TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL]
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 (AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2017-176 , § 2, 1-9-18; AO No. 2020-38 , § 4, 5-28-20)

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**21.04.020      Residential districts.**

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B.      STFR: Single and Two Family Residential district:  
     1.      Purpose. The STFR district provides for a variety of low-density urban/suburban residential neighborhoods with gross densities between three and eight dwelling units per acre. Most areas have well-developed infrastructure, public water and sewer, and municipal services.

**Section 2.** Anchorage Municipal Code section 21.05.010E., Table 21.05-1: Table of Allowed Uses is hereby amended as shown in Exhibit A (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

**21.05.010      Table of allowed uses.**  
 Table 21.05-1 below lists the uses allowed within all base zoning districts in the Anchorage Bowl except for the Downtown (DT) Districts. (See Chapters 21.09, 21.10, and 21.11 for regulations specific to Girdwood, Chugiak-Eagle River, and the Downtown (DT) Districts, respectively.) Each of the listed uses is defined in Sections 21.05.030 through 21.05.060.

AO No. 2020-38 , § 6, 5-28-20; AO No. 2020-56 , § 2, 6-23-20; AO No. 2021-54 , § 1, 6-22-21)

**Section 3.** Anchorage Municipal Code Chapter 21.04 is hereby amended to read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

**21.04.010** **General provisions.**

- A. Districts Established; Zoning Map
1. *Purpose.* The municipality is divided into zoning districts in order to achieve the purposes of this title established in chapter 21.01, which include implementation of the comprehensive plan, and its land use plan map.
  2. Zoning districts established. The following zoning districts are established:

TABLE 21.04-1: ZONING DISTRICTS ESTABLISHED		
District Type	Abbreviation	District Name
	***	***    ***    ***
Residential Districts	<u>CMR-LIR-2M</u>	<u>Compact Mixed Residential - Low</u>
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 (AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2017-176 , § 2, 1-9-18; AO No. 2020-38 , § 4, 5-28-20)

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**21.04.020** **Residential districts.**

- C. CMR-L: Compact Mixed Residential -Low[RESERVED].
1. Purpose. The CMR-L district is intended primarily for residential areas that allow for a variety of single-family, two-family, and multifamily dwellings, with gross densities between five and 15 dwelling units per acre, with 8 or more near Centers or Transit-supportive Development corridors. The CMR-L district provides residential neighborhoods with a greater diversity of housing by allowing a mix of both detached and a variety of attached

dwelling types in close proximity to each other, rather than separated into different zoning districts. The CMR-L district is to be located in areas that are accessible to major streets without travel through less-intensive uses and provide a transition from more intense uses or traffic volumes to lower intensity residential areas. The design of new development, such as building scale and setbacks, parking facility size and location, and yard landscaping, should be complementary to the existing neighborhood and mix of dwelling types.

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F. Reserved.

(AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO No. 2015-100, § 1, 10-13-15 ; AO No. 2017-176 , § 3, 1-9-18; AO No. 2019-58 , § 2, 5-7-19; AO 2022-36 , § 2, 4-26-22; AO No. 2022-80(S) , § 1, 11-22-22)

**Section 4.** Anchorage Municipal Code Chapter 21.04 is hereby amended to read as follows (*the remainder of the section is not affected and therefore not set out*):

**21.04.010      General provisions.**

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A. Districts Established; Zoning Map

1. *Purpose.* The municipality is divided into zoning districts in order to achieve the purposes of this title established in chapter 21.01, which include implementation of the comprehensive plan, and its land use plan map.
2. Zoning districts established. The following zoning districts are established:

**TABLE 21.04-1: ZONING DISTRICTS ESTABLISHED**

<b>District Type</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>District Name</b>
	***	***      ***      ***
<b>Residential Districts</b>	<u>CMR-M[R-3]</u>	<u>Compact Mixed Residential - Medium</u>
	[R-3A]	[RESIDENTIAL MIXED-USE]

**TABLE 21.04-1: ZONING DISTRICTS ESTABLISHED**

District Type	Abbreviation	District Name
	UR-H[R-4]	Urban Residential – High[MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL]
	[R-4A]	[MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL MIXED-USE]
	LLR[R-5]	Large Lot Residential[LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL]
	[R-6]	LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (1 ACRE)
	R-7	SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (20K)
	R-8	LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (4 ACRES)
	R-9	LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (2 ACRES)
	R-10	LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL, ALPINE/SLOPE]
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 (AO 2012-124(S), 2-26-13; AO 2013-117, 12-3-13; AO No. 2017-176 , § 2, 1-9-18; AO No. 2020-38 , § 4, 5-28-20)

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**21.04.020      Residential districts.**

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 D. CMR-M: Compact Mixed Residential – Medium[RESERVED].

1. Purpose. The CMR-M district is a multifamily residential district with gross densities between 10 and 30 dwelling units per acre, with 15 or more near Centers or Transit-supportive Development corridors. It is intended primarily for multifamily, apartments, condominiums, and townhouse dwellings characterized by low-rise multistory buildings. It allows a higher percentage of lot coverage than the CMR-L zone, while also maintaining the residential living environment with landscaping, private/common open spaces, and other amenities for residents. This district provides greater housing opportunities and efficient use of residential land near commercial, community activity centers, town centers, and areas well served by transit.

2. District-specific standard. The maximum length of a townhouse-style building elevation shall be 250 feet.

E. UR-H: Urban Residential – High[RESERVED].

1. Purpose. The UR-H zone provides for urban living opportunities close to major employment centers and contributes to the vitality of city centers by concentrating new housing nearby. It is intended primarily for apartment buildings, condominiums, and townhouses but also allows for compact single and two-family and mixed-density projects, as well as limited ground floor commercial space within residential projects to make efficient use of public infrastructure and lands near city centers.

F. LLR: Large Lot-Residential [RESERVED].

1. Purpose. The LLR district is intended primarily for single- and two-family residential areas with gross densities of one housing unit or less per gross acre, and up to three dwelling units per acre in areas designated by approved district plans. This district preserves natural vegetation, hillside topography, environmental constraints, and adjacent natural open spaces that contribute to the overall rural character and, where feasible, make use of “conservation subdivisions” that cluster homes to preserve natural features and shared open spaces. The availability of infrastructure and municipal services is varied. Mobile homes on individual lots are allowed in this district.

**Section 5.** Upon passage of this ordinance by the Assembly, the Planning Department shall initiate the procedure under AMC 21.03.070. to amend the comprehensive plan to be consistent with this ordinance, if the Department



determines there are any inconsistencies of this ordinance with the comprehensive plan.

**Section 6.** The Assembly hereby petitions the Planning Department to initiate and expedite a text amendment ordinance to Title 21 under AMC section 21.03.210 by evaluating what amendments are needed to the dimensional standards in AMC chapter 21.06 and to other provisions of the Anchorage Municipal Code necessary to give effect to Sections 1 and 2 of this ordinance; drafting an ordinance or ordinances that do so; and providing it and a staff report to the Planning and Zoning Commission for its review and recommendation to be forwarded to the Assembly for action.

**Section 7.** The Planning Department shall report to the Assembly by information memorandum at the September 26, 2023 regular meeting the status of its review, its determination, and the timeline for a comprehensive plan amendment if such is needed, and text amendment ordinance(s), pursuant to Sections 5 and 6 of this ordinance.

**Section 8.** It is the intent of the Assembly that it shall, through subsequent ordinance(s), make any additional amendments to the Anchorage Municipal Code necessary to give effect to Sections 3 and 4 of this ordinance by the effective dates for those respective sections, after the Planning Department staff report and Planning and Zoning Commission's review and recommendation in accordance with AMC section 21.03.210.

**Section 9.** Notwithstanding AMC section 21.03.210, this ordinance shall not require Planning and Zoning Commission review prior to Assembly action, and the 21-day published notice requirement of AMC subsection 21.03.020H.4. is waived; this ordinance shall comply with Charter § 10.01(b) notice requirements.

**Section 10.** This ordinance and the subsequent ordinance and legislation necessary to implement it shall be known as the Housing Opportunities in the Municipality for Everyone (HOME) Initiative.

**Section 11.** This ordinance shall have the following effective dates:

- Sections 1 and 2 of this ordinance shall be effective on January 1, 2024.
- Section 3 of this ordinance shall be effective on June 1, 2024.
- Section 4 of this ordinance shall be effective on January 1, 2025.
- The remainder of this ordinance shall be effective upon passage and approval by the Assembly.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Assembly this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

Chair \_\_\_\_\_

ATTACHED