



ATTACHMENT 3:

DUPLEXES: PROPOSED CONCEPT AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

What are duplexes?

In Durham's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), a duplex is a two-family dwelling in a single structure on a single lot. Individual units can be located on separate floors or side-by-side.

Durham Examples

Side-by-Side Duplex: 904 N Gregson



Stacked Duplex: 2508 Englewood



Double Frontage Duplex: 620 W Markham



Detached Duplex: 442-444 W Markham



Existing Inventory of Duplexes

- There are 1,890 duplex buildings throughout the City and County, amounting to roughly three percent of Durham's total housing
- Duplexes already exist in neighborhoods where current zoning would not permit new duplexes to be built. Older duplexes are now considered non-conforming uses.
 - 191 duplexes exist in the RU-5 district
 - 25 duplexes already exist in the RS-8 and RS-10 districts in the Urban Tier

Recent Trends

- According to available building permit records, only 22 new duplex buildings have been built since 2007
- Median Assessed Property Value: \$294,629
- Median Building Size: 2,774 SF (or 1,387 per unit)
- Before 2010, construction of duplexes was more common in East Durham; since then, it has been more common in West Durham
- Local market-rate builders have been responsible for almost all duplex creation since 2010

Summary of Existing Zoning Regulations

- Duplexes are limited to the RU-5(2), RU-M, RC, and RS-M zoning districts with by-right approvals, amounting to 6,179 acres, or three percent of the City and County;
- Each residential unit is required to have two parking spaces, although if there is sufficient linear street frontage, one parking spot may be accommodated on-street;
- Lots developed as duplexes are not allowed an accessory dwelling unit;
- Within the Urban Tier it is likely that standards for Infill Development will supersede the base zoning dimensional standards.
 - If the project is located on a site of less than four acres in a residential district, then infill standards apply. *For rows highlighted in green, infill standards may apply.*
 - Per Dwelling Unit standards shown below result in requiring a larger lot than a single-family house, even if the structure size would be the same.

URBAN TIER				
	RS-M	RU-5(2)	RU-M	RC
Site Area (min. square feet)				
Per Dwelling Unit	3,750	3,500	3,500	3,500
Lot Dimensions (min.)				
Lot Width (feet)	60	50	50	50
Yards (min. feet)				
Street Yard	25 ^{1,2}	15 ¹	15 ¹	15 ¹
Street Yard with Front Vehicular Access (from ROW)	25 ^{1,3}	20 ¹	20 ¹	20 ¹
Street Yard with Rear Vehicular Access (from alley)	5	5	5	5
Side Yard	8	8	8	8

Rear Yard	25	25	25	25
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1 Yard modifications can be required pursuant to a neighborhood protection overlay, or through application of infill regulations (Sec. 6.8, Infill Development in Residential Districts).

2 Yards can be reduced to as little as 15 feet if the structures are located interior to a project and do not front on a street classified as a collector or greater.

3 Front vehicular access can be reduced to as little as 20 feet if the structures are located interior to a project and do not front on a street classified as a collector or greater.

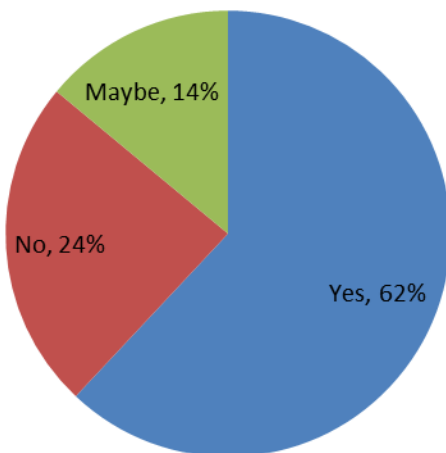
- If the property is in a Local Historic District, the Historic Properties Local Review Criteria require additional consideration of form, bulk, massing and architectural detail;
- If the property is in a Neighborhood Protection Overlay, additional standards may apply or supersede base zoning.

Case Study Comparisons

- Olympia, WA. In the most equivalent zoning district to RU-5(2), minimum lot width = 40 ft. and minimum lot area for a duplex = 6,000 SF (total, not per unit)
- Richmond, VA. In the most equivalent zoning district to RU-5(2), minimum lot width = 50 ft. and minimum lot area = 6,000 SF
- Asheville, NC. In the most equivalent zoning district to RU-5(2) (*RM-8*), minimum lot width = 40 ft. and minimum lot area = 4,000 SF

Summary of Survey Results Comment to Date (July 6, 2018)

Question 1: Would you be comfortable with duplexes in your neighborhood? (830 responses)



Additional Considerations

- Duplexes can add discreet, low impact density to neighborhoods and can mimic the form and rhythm of single family houses.

- Allowing duplexes by-right in more areas, especially in the Urban Tier and parts of the Suburban Tier, takes advantage of areas generally well-served by existing city and county services, including transit service. This reverses a historic trend of reducing zoning allowances for duplexes.
- There are justifiable concerns about encouraging teardowns, particularly in neighborhoods with relatively small homes. However, market forces are already incentivizing this trend. In many neighborhoods where smaller homes are replaced with larger ones, there is no alternative but to rebuild a large house that accommodates just one family. This modification would allow a similar size structure, but accommodate two families instead of one.
- Duplexes, unless in a historic district, cannot have design and aesthetic regulations, but can be regulated through mass, scale, and other typical zoning parameters.
- Rental price points for duplexes are often less than an equivalent single-family house.
- If duplexes are allowed, will they be built? An unknown is the financial feasibility/profitability of building a duplex over an equivalent size single-family house.
- Planning staff has received several comments that Accessory Dwellings should be allowed on lots with two-units (duplexes). Staff has not included this in initial proposed concepts, but would like additional feedback. Cross reference: Attachment 2.

Summary of Proposed Concept: Modify Existing Regulations

- Consider amending the UDO to allow duplexes in other zoning districts.
- Consider other types of duplexes, such as detached duplexes or double-frontage duplexes to allow for more creativity and choice.
- Review other ancillary standards that may have the effect of restricting the allowance of a duplex.
- Consider modifying lot dimensional and height standards to encourage more consistency in the fabric of the neighborhood.