



ATTACHMENT 6:

COTTAGE COURT: PROPOSED CONCEPT AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

What are Cottage Courts?

Cottage courts are not currently defined in Durham's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). A Cottage Court is a group of small, detached homes clustered around a central outdoor common space. Typically, some of the homes face the common space, while others might face the street. The cottages in the court are small—typically less than 1000 square feet. Each cottage frequently has its own small yard and covered porch, and they share a central outdoor common space. Other names include Pocket Neighborhood or Bungalow Court.

Non Local Examples

Emerald Village, Eugene OR



Third Street Cottages, Langley WA



Summary of Existing Zoning Regulations

- Although not specifically defined in the UDO as a housing type, a cottage court *could* be built through the following methods, although there are no specifications for design/placement of common open space, orientation of the homes or location of parking. Current models also require frontage along a maintained right-of-way for individual lots.
 - **PDR Zoning.** PDR districts do not require a minimum lot size, only that building separation standards (10 ft.) are met and that setback standards are met. Recent changes to the UDO have eliminated the minimum overall project area in the Urban Tier, meaning that this option can be used more broadly; however, a re-zoning with a development plan is still required. Stormwater requirements would likely come into play.
 - **Apartment/Condo.** Multifamily would need to be a permitted use within the zoning district, but the UDO does not specify the "Apartment" housing type as being attached or detached; it only says that there are three or more units on a single parcel. These could be either for-sale condominiums or rental apartments.

The commercial building code and stormwater requirements would likely come into play.

Case Study Comparisons

Numerous cities in North Carolina (Raleigh, Pittsboro) and nationally permit versions of Cottage Courts. While there is a lot of variation in the specific standards, there are similarities in terms of what is regulated. For example, minimum open space per unit, maximum building footprint, and the minimum number of dwellings are often regulated.

Considerations

- This proposed new housing type appears similar to the small house/small lot concept. Consideration of needing one or both methods will be required.
- As previously noted, this type of development would impact other development aspects such as impervious surface and tree canopy.

Summary of Proposed Concept

- Develop Cottage Court as a new housing type with the following principles including, but not limited to:
 - The number of lots and/or units.
 - Specific open space parameters.
 - Size and orientation of units.
 - Parking.
 - Frontage requirements.
- Explore by-right vs. special approval, and thresholds for each, if necessary.