



MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 11, 2019
TO: Chairperson Carter, Members of the Planning Commission, and Administrator Meyer
FROM: Cynthia Smith Strack, Community Development Director
RE: Agenda Item 6.1: Residential Density

REQUEST: Discussion Residential Densities

GENERAL INFORMATION

The EDA established the following 2019 goal: *joint meeting of City Council, Planning Commission, and EDA in first quarter 2019 with purpose of plotting efforts to increase rooftops*. City Administrator Dawn Meyer recommends the discussion be held Monday, March 18th during a planned work session of the City Council.

Accommodating a range of potential densities is a well-known strategy to increase dwelling units and address goals for providing a complete housing stock (a variety of types, styles, sizes, and values). At the February meeting the Commission received information pertaining to residential density requirements. The information was provided for background in advance of future discussion pertaining to minimum lots sizes as well as to inform decisions on future residential developments. Information presented at the February Planning Commission meeting is attached.

In addition to the PC's discussion pertaining to residential density, the following information has been shared with various groups:

- Several properties have been the subject of conversation pertaining to residential development.
- 2040 Comprehensive Plan update provides adequate land for new residential use – high, medium, and low densities. Official zoning map will be updated to be consistent with planned land use.
- Affordable and workforce housing is needed in Belle Plaine and across Scott County.
- Belle Court Apartments – 72 units – are proposed, previous most recent general occupancy market rate apartments built in 1980.
- A total of 33 vacant residential lots (non-infill) remain.
- No active conversations pertaining to new single family (one family detached) residential plats are ongoing.
- Local builders are responsible for vast majority of new housing starts over previous five years.
- Cost of bringing new residential lots to market (land purchase, fees, cost to improve land, soft costs) is higher than resulting appraised value.
- Take down schedule for creation of new lots is also a concern.
- Increasing residential units in/close to Downtown a priority along with revitalization.

Potential focal points for the joint meeting include:

1. Strategies to encourage new residential subdivisions: allow higher density, new bldg. permit incentive, financing of trunk fees, more builders, increase City 'it' factor, etc.
2. Strategies to encourage new multiple family units. Site acquisition, reduce zoning public hearings, consider financial assistance, etc.

3. Strategies to encourage increased residential use in Downtown and revitalization: site acquisition, local 4d housing program for existing downtown rentals, financial assistance, identify target area, target hsg unit type – i.e. lofts, studios, find public-use partnership for mixed commercial/residential redevelopment etc.
4. Prioritize specific target areas, developments, strategies, etc.

In advance of the joint session, staff would like to ensure the Commission is comfortable with contributing to a discussion specifically pertaining to potential residential density adjustments, including but not limited to: adjusting minimum lot size requirements in certain districts, minimum lot width in certain districts, and building height limitations in certain districts.

Residential District	Minimum Lot Size	Minimum Lot Width	Maximum Net Density (w/ ROW)	Maximum Height
R-1 Single Family	12,000 sf	85, 100	2.5 du/ac	35
R-2 Single Family	20,000 sf	100	1.5 du/ac	35
R-3 One & Two Fam	8,000 sf	70,85	3.8 du/ac	35
R-7 Mixed Housing	10,500 (4) + 2,000	75, 100	14 du/ac	35

ACTION:

Provide direction on potential adjustments to the R-1, R-2, R-3, and R-7 Districts.

Residential



Density





Residential Density Discussion

- Receive information for future discussion purposes
- Adjustment may or may not be pursued
- Most important: Provide perspective on future residential development review – flexibility & openness
- Cross check/control - TCMC



Net Residential Density (DU/AC)

- Metropolitan Council prescribes minimum net density for residential development.
 - Belle Plaine minimum net density: 3 du/ac
- City must provide for its share of affordable housing need allocation (min. density 12+)
- Rationale
 - Manage the form and pace of growth
 - Maximize public's investment in local/regional systems
 - Provide for affordable dev'l & housing
 - Preserve prime agricultural lands



Net Residential Density (DU/AC)

- Net density minimum required = **3 du/ac**

- Net density calculation:

gross acres platted – undevelopable acres = net acres

net acres ÷ dwelling units = net density

- Undevelopable area = bluffs, wetlands, protected waters, & floodplain
- Roads, storm ponds, easements, trails, & parks are **developable areas**
- City code doesn't include minimum or maximum density rqmts
- City code does include minimum lot size which functions as max density limit
- Some cities require minimum densities for resid. development



R-1 District

- R-1 Single Family Low Density District

- Minimum lot size = 12,000 sf

- Maximum Net Density = 2.54 du/ac

- = $43,560 - \text{sum}(43,560 \times .3)$ result is 30,492

- Net density maximum = $30,492 \div 12,000$

- Minimum net density (3 du/ac) may be achievable if non-developable areas are present

- Alternative = PUD





R-2 District

- R-2 Single Family Low Density District
 - Minimum lot size = 20,000 sf
 - Maximum Net Density = 1.52 du/ac
= $43,560 - \text{sum}(43,560 \times .3)$ result is 30,492
Net density maximum = $30,492 \div 20,000$
 - Alternative = PUD (mixed residential classes)
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R-3 District

- R-3 Single and Two Family Low to Medium Density
 - Minimum lot size one family = 8,000 sf
 - Maximum Net Density = 3.81 du/ac
= $43,560 - \text{sum}(43,560 \times .3)$ result is 30,492
Net density maximum = $30,492 \div 8,000$
 - Tops out at less than 4 du/ac
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R-3 District

- R-3 Single and Two Family Low to Medium Density
 - Minimum lot size two family = 5,250 sf
 - Maximum Net Density = 5.81 du/ac
 - = $43,560 - \text{sum}(43,560 \times .3)$ result is 30,492
 - Net density maximum = $30,492 \div 5,250$
 - Tops out at less than 6 du/ac – minimum density for areas intended to fulfill affordable housing need must be greater than 6 and some greater than 12 du/ac
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R-7 District

- R-7 Mixed Housing District
 - Minimum lot size
 - 2,625 for first four du
 - 2,000 for each du thereafter
 - Maximum Net Density = approx. 14 du/ac
 - = $43,560 - \text{sum}(43,560 \times .3)$ result is 30,492
 - Net density (first four) = 11.62 du/ac
 - Net density (remaining) = 15.25 du/ac
 - Presumably building up equates to less area devoted to roads, easements, storm, etc.
 - PUD to accommodate higher density
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