




City Council Public Hearing  
February 26, 2025  
2024 Land Development  
Code Amendments

1

# Background


**#1: Transit-Oriented Development Master Plan**




~2026 Comprehensive Plan Update → ~2027 LDC Amendments

**#2: Technical adjustments and minor fixes**

2024 LDC Amendments



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Signs	<h2>What topics are included?</h2> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Re-write of Sign Regulations</li> <li>2. Adjustment of residential density limits to meet statutory requirements and to reduce barriers to small-scale housing construction</li> <li>3. Adjustment of site, dimensional and design standards for small-scale development</li> <li>4. Changes to stormwater regulations</li> <li>5. Regulation of food trucks</li> <li>6. Correction of technical inconsistencies</li> </ol> 
Density	
Design	
Stormwater	
Food Trucks	
Other	

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Signs	<h2>1. Sign regulations</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• US Supreme Court says municipal sign regulations must be content neutral</li> </ul> <p><i>Reed v. Town of Gilbert, 576 U.S. 155 (2015) and City of Austin, Texas, v. Reagan National Advertising of Austin LLC, et al, 596 US (2022)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign regulations are limited to time, place, or manner restrictions</li> </ul> 
Density	
Design	
Stormwater	
Food Trucks	
Other	

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Signs

Density

Design

Stormwater

Food Trucks

Other

### Before



1. Unless otherwise provided in this article, the total surface area devoted to all wall signs on any lot shall not exceed the limitations set forth in this section.
2. In the Commercial and Industrial Districts, one (1) wall sign per business establishment is allowed, not exceeding five (5) percent of the following area:
  - (a) The size shall be computed as the length of wall multiplied by fifteen (15) feet, or twenty (20) square feet, whichever is greater. If a structure has multiple stories with different business establishments, the facade area shall be calculated by multiplying the length of wall used by each business establishment by vertical floor to ceiling height of each story.
3. No wall sign shall project more than eight (8) inches from the wall to which it is attached, extend beyond the building face on a street or parking lot, or exceed the lowest of the following height limitations:
  - (a) Twenty (20) feet above grade;
  - (b) The cornice line of the building at the building line.
4. In Commercial and Industrial Districts, one (1) business directory wall sign is allowed per principal structure. It must be attached to the principal structure and may not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet or two (2) square feet per business, whichever is less.

**Number of Wall Signs**

1. In Commercial and Industrial Districts, the overall number of wall signs shall not be restricted as long as the total square footage of all wall signs does not exceed the size limitation as listed in Section 714.D.2.
2. In lieu of a freestanding sign an additional twenty (20) square feet of wall signage shall be allowed. However, in no case may a single wall sign exceed the size limitations in Section 714.D.2.
3. In Commercial Districts, if a business is on a corner lot having frontage on two (2) streets, two (2) wall signs shall be allowed, one (1) on the facade facing each street.

### After


**714.L.3: Blade Sign**

**Description**  
This Sign type consists of 1-2 faces, and projects perpendicular from the Building façade on a Primary or Secondary Frontage, or elevation where street frontage is not available.

**Specifications**

Location (max)	within 4-feet of a principal entrance.
Quantity (max)	1 per ground floor tenant
Width, Sign (max)	3-ft
Height, Sign (max)	3-ft
Depth, Sign (max)	6-in
Offset from Building (min/max)	6-in min and 12-in max from the façade



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Signs

Density

Design


Stormwater

Food Trucks


Other

## Notable Changes


- Signs regulated based on time, place, and manner only
  - “Election period signs”
  - “Construction Site Sign”
  - “Real Estate Sign”
- Wall sign size limits for small storefronts slightly increased
- Election Period Signs within Right-of-Way allowed during the 2 weeks leading up to election.



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Signs	<h2>What Remains the Same</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sandwich Boards – no change from existing regulations:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only during open hours</li> <li>• Must be within 15 ft of front door</li> <li>• 8 square ft max</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Density	
Design	
Stormwater	
Food Trucks	
Other	

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Signs	<h2>2. Residential Density Limits</h2> <p>Changes to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• meet statutory requirements</li> <li>• to reduce barriers to small-scale housing construction</li> <li>• enable a smooth density transition between city center and Residential 1 / 2 Zones</li> </ul>
Density	
Design	
Stormwater	
Food Trucks	
Other	

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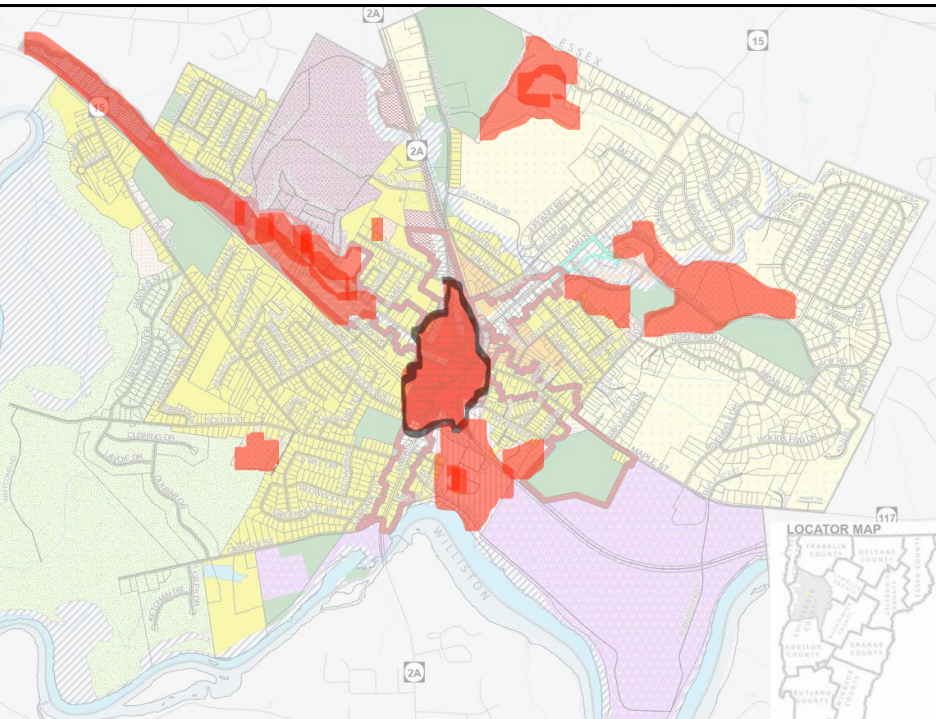
- Signs
- Density
- Design
- Stormwater
- Food Trucks
- Other

# 2023 HOME Act

- *“In areas served by municipal sewer and water, municipalities must allow multiunit dwellings with three or four units to be a permitted use.”*
- Most required changes already implemented during July 2023 LDC Amendments
- MF3 was overlooked- but will be corrected



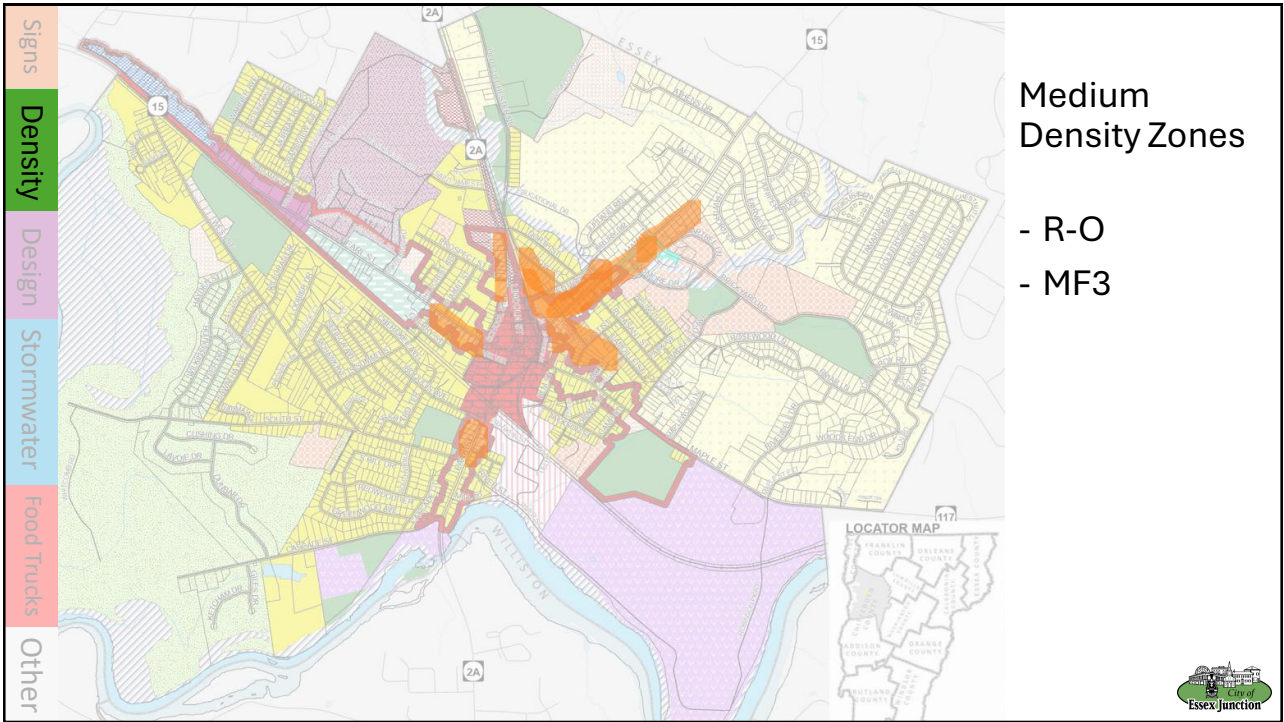
- Signs
- Density
- Design
- Stormwater
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- Other



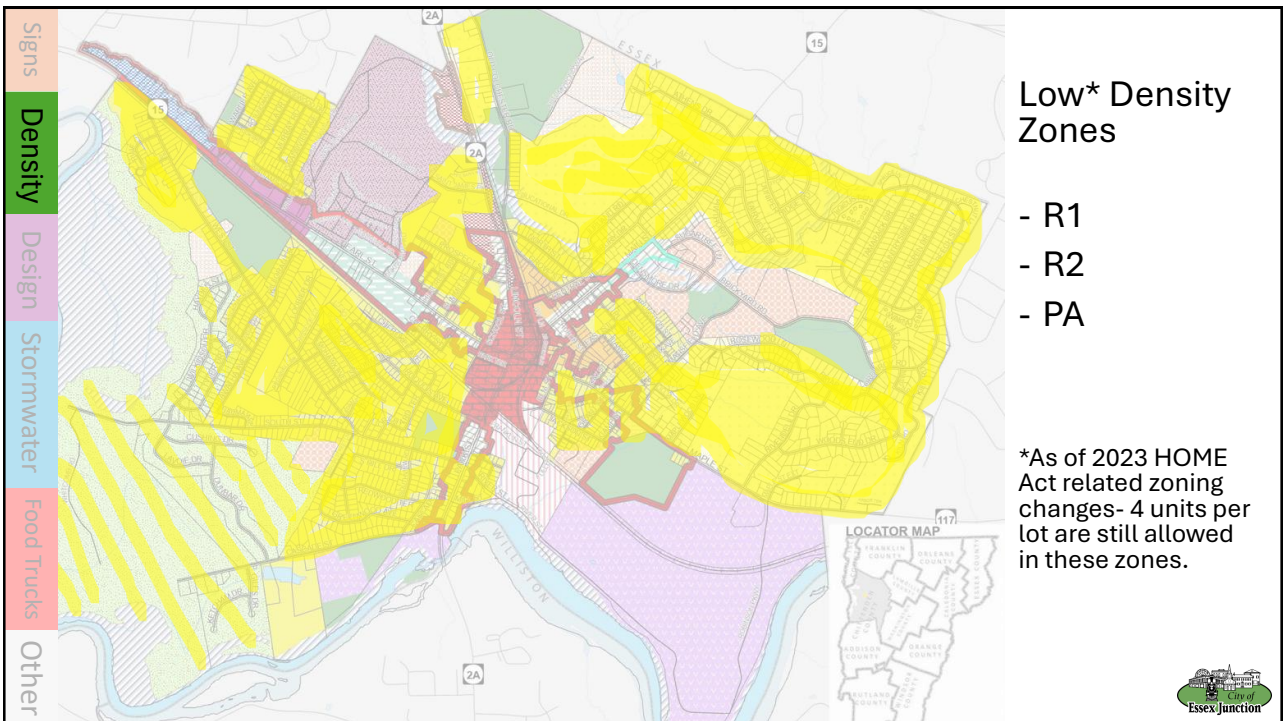
## High Density Zones

- VC
- MF1
- MF2
- MF/MU1
- MF/MU2
- MCU
- TOD
- HA





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- Signs
- Density
- Design
- Stormwater
- Food Trucks
- Other

## MF3 and R-O district currently have incremental lot size requirements

- E.g. “The minimum lot size shall be 7,500 square feet for the first dwelling unit plus 3,000 square feet for each additional dwelling unit”
- For a typical 10,000 square foot lot, you are currently only allowed to have two residential units

• LDC amendments would remove this requirement

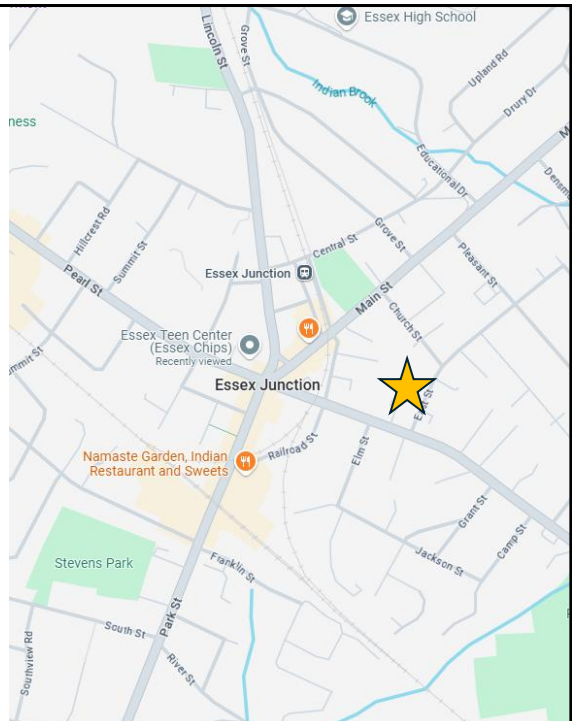


- Signs
- Density
- Design
- Stormwater
- Food Trucks
- Other

## Many properties already exceed this limit

Example A:

- 4 East Street

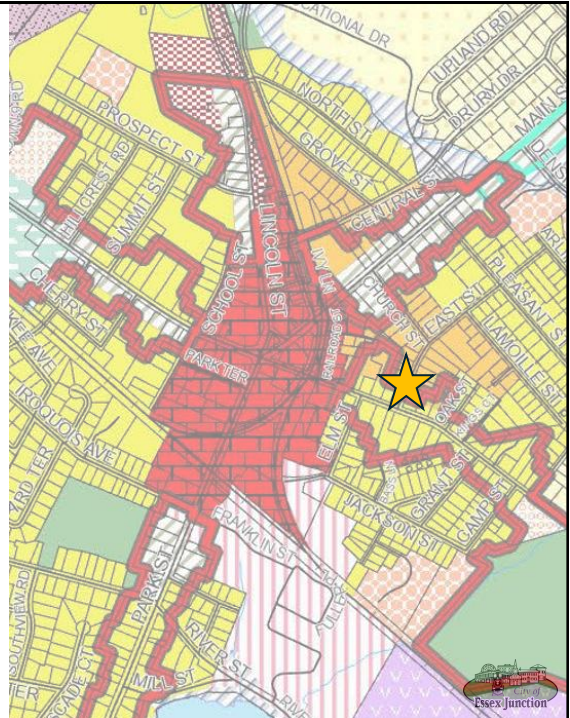


- Signs
- Density
- Design
- Stormwater
- Food Trucks
- Other

Many properties already exceed this limit

Example A:

- 4 East Street



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- Signs
- Density
- Design
- Stormwater
- Food Trucks
- Other

Many properties already exceed this limit

Example A:

- 4 East Street
- Lot size: 6530 sq ft



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Signs

Density

Design

Stormwater

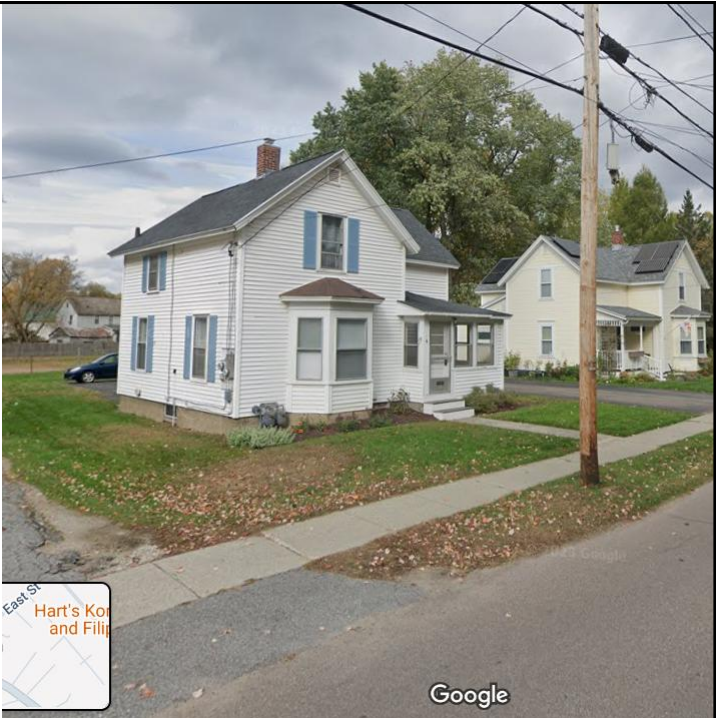
Food Trucks

Other

Many properties already exceed this limit

Example A:

- 4 East Street
- Lot size: 6530 sq ft
- Has **two** units (grandfathered)
- Current regs would only allow **one** unit



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Signs

Density

Design

Stormwater

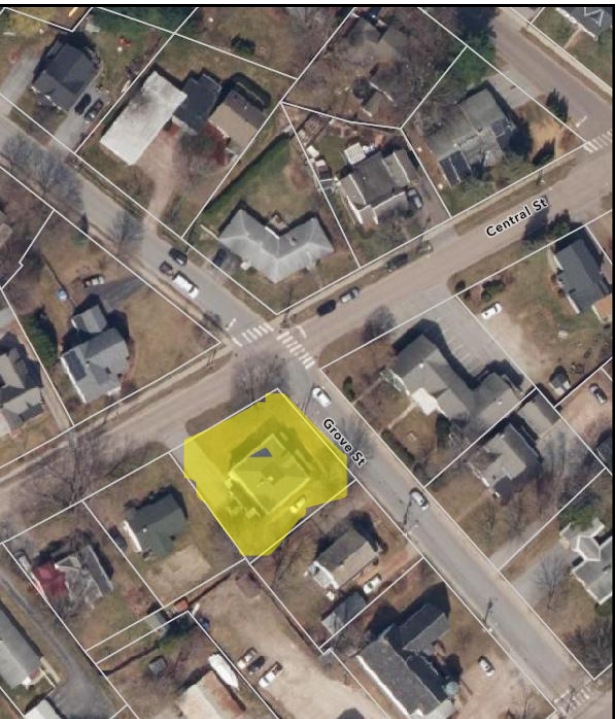
Food Trucks

Other

Many properties already exceed this limit

Example B:

- 6 Grove Street
- Lot size: ~9,150 sq ft



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- Signs
- Density
- Design
- Stormwater
- Food Trucks
- Other

### Many properties already exceed this limit

#### Example B:

- 6 Grove Street
- Lot size: ~9,150 sq ft
  
- Has **two** units (grandfathered)
  
- Current regs would only allow **one** unit

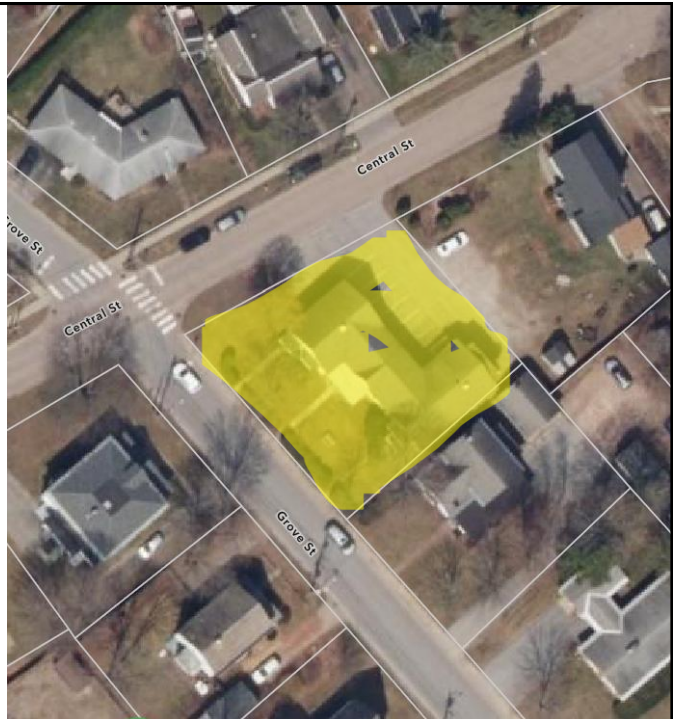


- Signs
- Density
- Design
- Stormwater
- Food Trucks
- Other

### Many properties already exceed this limit

#### Example C:

- 5 Grove Street
- Lot size: ~11,300 sq ft



Signs

Density

Design

Stormwater

Food Trucks

Other

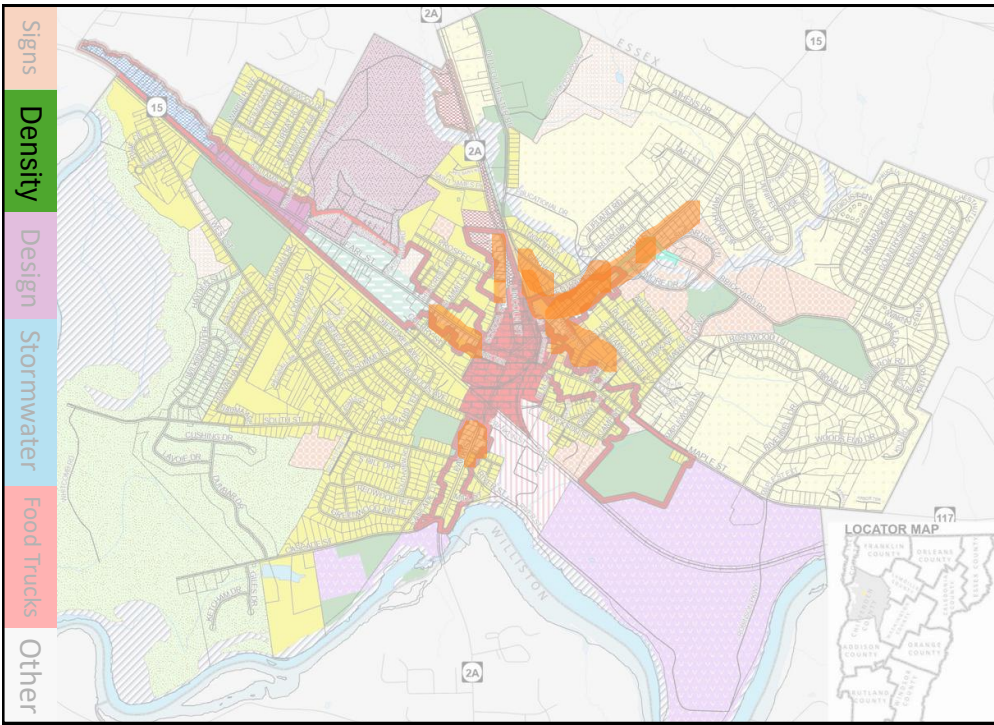
Many properties already exceed this limit

Example C:

- 5 Grove Street
- Lot size: ~11,300 sq ft
- Has **eight** units (grandfathered)
- Current regs would only allow **two** units



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Max units per lot increased from 4 to 6 in:

- R-O
- MF3

To enable smooth density transition



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- Signs
- Density
- Design
- Stormwater
- Food Trucks
- Other

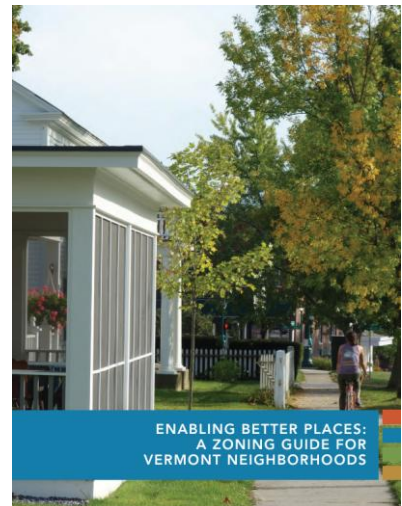
### 3. Adjustment of site, dimensional and design standards for small-scale development



- Signs
- Density
- Design
- Stormwater
- Food Trucks
- Other

#### Enabling Better Places (2020)

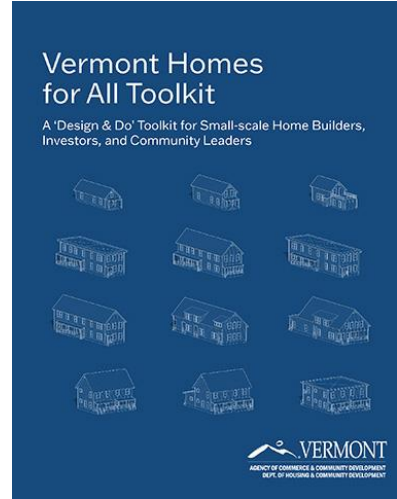
- **Guide for municipalities to support local bylaw updates for homes in walkable places.**
- Recommends incremental changes to bylaws ; sample language



Signs  
Density  
Design  
Stormwater  
Food Trucks  
Other

## Vermont Homes for All Toolkit

- Provides prototype unit design for 2, 3, and 4 unit homes
- Examples fits Vermont architectural norms



Signs  
Density  
Design  
Stormwater  
Food Trucks  
Other

Statewide Toolkit Launch & Trainers Summit

## Missing Middle Homes Design Guide

### Discovered Typologies

Starting with existing Vermont typologies observed during our initial site walks, we developed idealized versions.



Age-in-Place

Narrow Lot

Village

Side-by-Side

"Telescoping Home" Aggregation Pattern



Statewide Toolkit Launch & Trainers Summit

# Example of Prototype Unit Design

## Side-by-Side Plus One Plus Prototype

Signs

Density

Design

Stormwater

Food Trucks

Other

Vermont Homes for All Toolkit

March 14, 2024 22

ESSEX/JUNIOR

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Statewide Toolkit Launch & Trainers Summit

# Neighborhood Infill Case Studies

## Rutland City

Signs

Density

Design

Stormwater

Food Trucks

Other

### Site Plan & Buildout Visualization

- The building matches front setback norms along South Street
- Efficient side parking layout has an integrated ramp to the rear accessible unit and ample usable open space for each unit with potential for south-facing kitchen gardens.
- Other potential customizations: (1) deeper front porches to support a more social neighborhood front porch culture and/or (2) rear-facing second floor outdoor decks extending over the rear unit on the first floor.

Vermont Homes for All Toolkit

March 14, 2024 29

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Signs

Density

Design


Stormwater

Food Trucks

Other

## 3. Adjustment of site, dimensional and design standards for small-scale development

- Reduced minimum front yard setback to 15 feet in the MF1, MF3, R-0, and MCU districts
- Clarify and adjust design requirements for triplexes and fourplexes in R1 and R2 zones
- Allow up to two principal residential structures per lot



Signs

Density

Design

Stormwater


Food Trucks

Other

## Reduced minimum front yard setback in the MF1, MF3, R-0, and MCU districts.

“Neighborhood” Zone Recommendations from Enabling Better Places

Setbacks	
Front	<b>8'</b> min., <b>12'</b> max.
Side	<b>5'</b> min.
Rear	<b>3'</b> min. with rear lanes or <b>12'</b> min.



- Signs
- Density
- Design
- Stormwater
- Food Trucks
- Other

## Reduced minimum front yard setback in the MF1, MF3, R-0, and MCU districts.

Some setback requirements in Essex Junction:

	Transition				Neighborhood	
	MF1	MF2	MF3	R-O	R2	R1
Front	30'	15'	30'	20'	15'	20'
Side	10'	10'	10'	10'	8'	8'
Back	10'	10'	10'	10'	25' (principal) 15' (accessory)	25'



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- Signs
- Density
- Design
- Stormwater
- Food Trucks
- Other

## Reduced minimum front yard setback in the MF1, MF3, R-0, and MCU districts.

Residential-Office (R-O) District

	R-O
Front	20'
Side	10'
Back	10'



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- Signs
- Density
- Design
- Stormwater
- Food Trucks
- Other

## Reduced minimum front yard setback in the MF1, MF3, R-0, and MCU districts.

### Residential-Office (R-O) District

	R-O
Front	20'
Side	10'
Back	10'



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- Signs
- Density
- Design
- Stormwater
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- Other

## Reduced minimum front yard setback in the MF1, MF3, R-0, and MCU districts.

### Multi-Family 3 (MF3) District

	MF3
Front	30'
Side	10'
Back	10'



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Signs

Density

Design

Stormwater

Food Trucks

Other

# Reduced minimum front yard setback in the MF1, MF3, R-0, and MCU districts.

Multi-Family 3 (MF3) District

	MF3
Front	30'
Side	10'
Back	10'



Signs

Density


Design

Stormwater

Food Trucks

Other

Proposed amendments would standardize front yard setback to 15 ft.



Signs  
Density  
Design  
Stormwater  
Food Trucks  
Other

## Special Design Standards in R1 / R2

ok

Not allowed

Principal Building

Principal Building

Driveway/ Parking

Driveway/ Parking

20 ft

Street

Street

**From existing LDC:**  
Parking shall not take up more than thirty (30) percent or 20 (twenty) feet of the linear frontage of the lot, whichever is less.

Problem: If interpreted strictly, this rule makes triplexes and fourplex conversions impossible on most properties

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Signs  
Density  
Design  
Stormwater  
Food Trucks  
Other

## Special Design Standards in R1 / R2

Area C: < 30% Parking unless screened from view

Area B: < 30% Parking

Area A: 20' Driveway Max\*

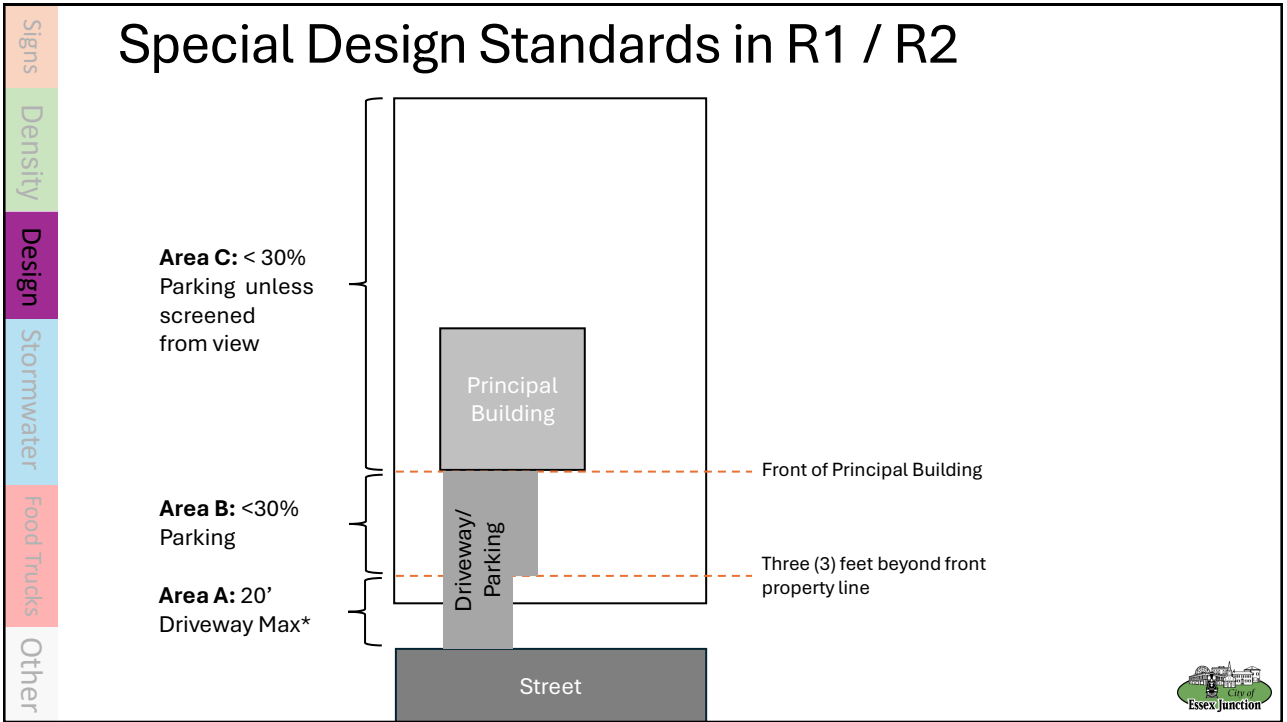
Principal Building

Front of Principal Building

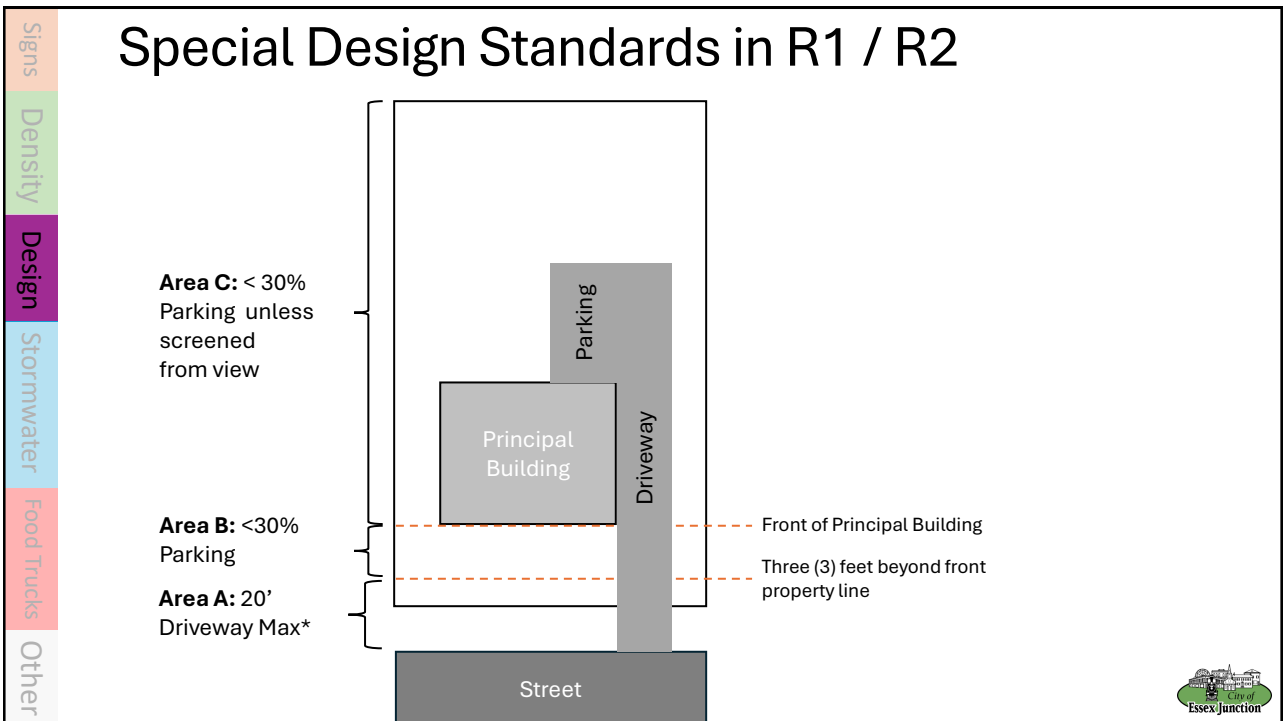
Three (3) feet beyond front property line

Street

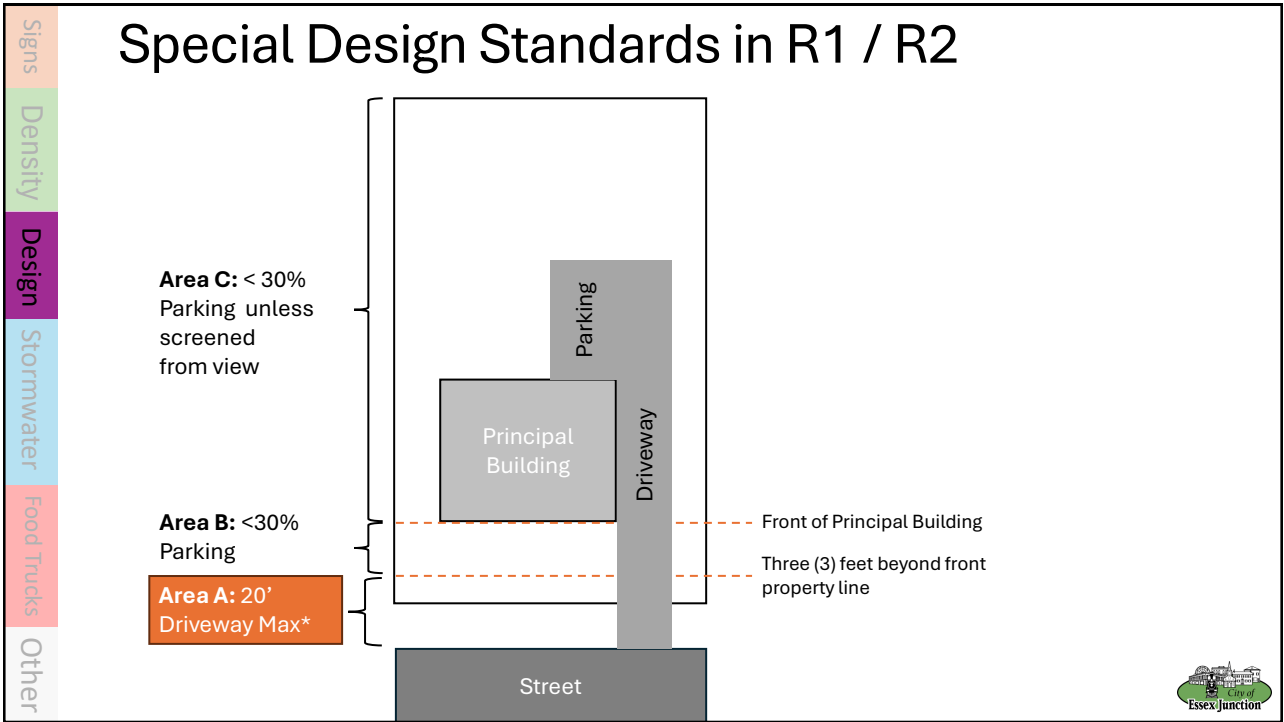
38



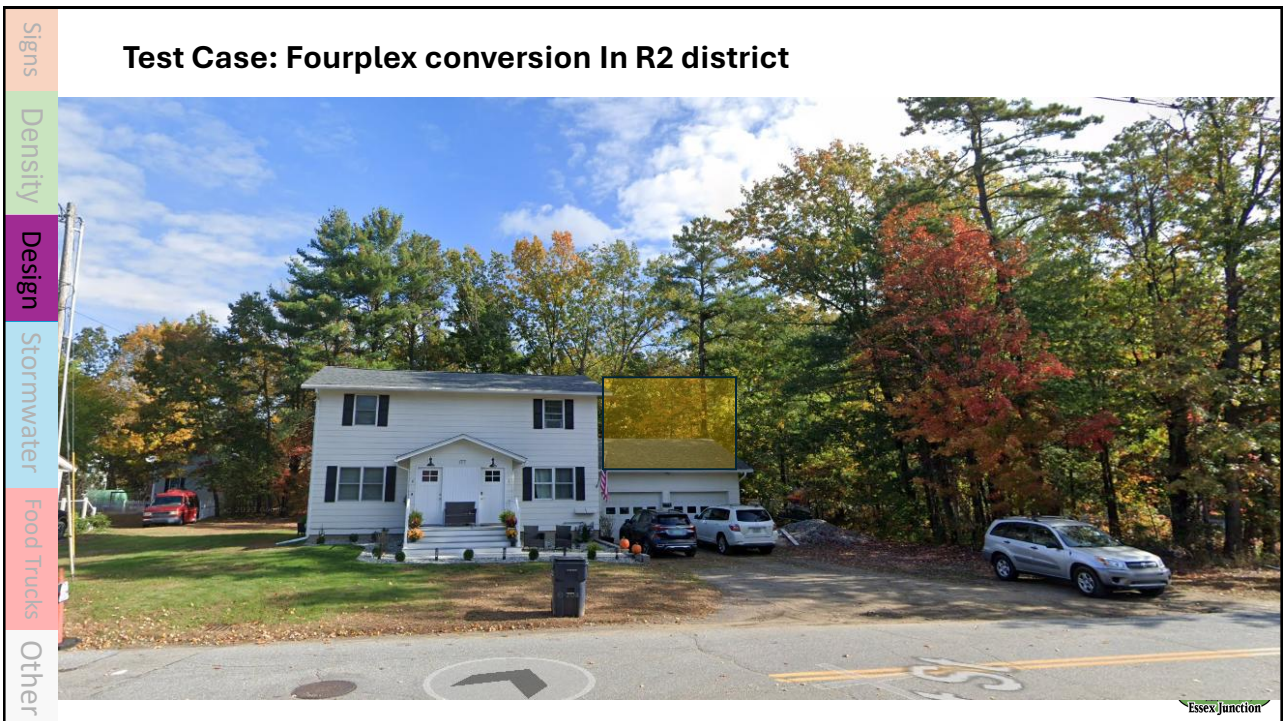
39



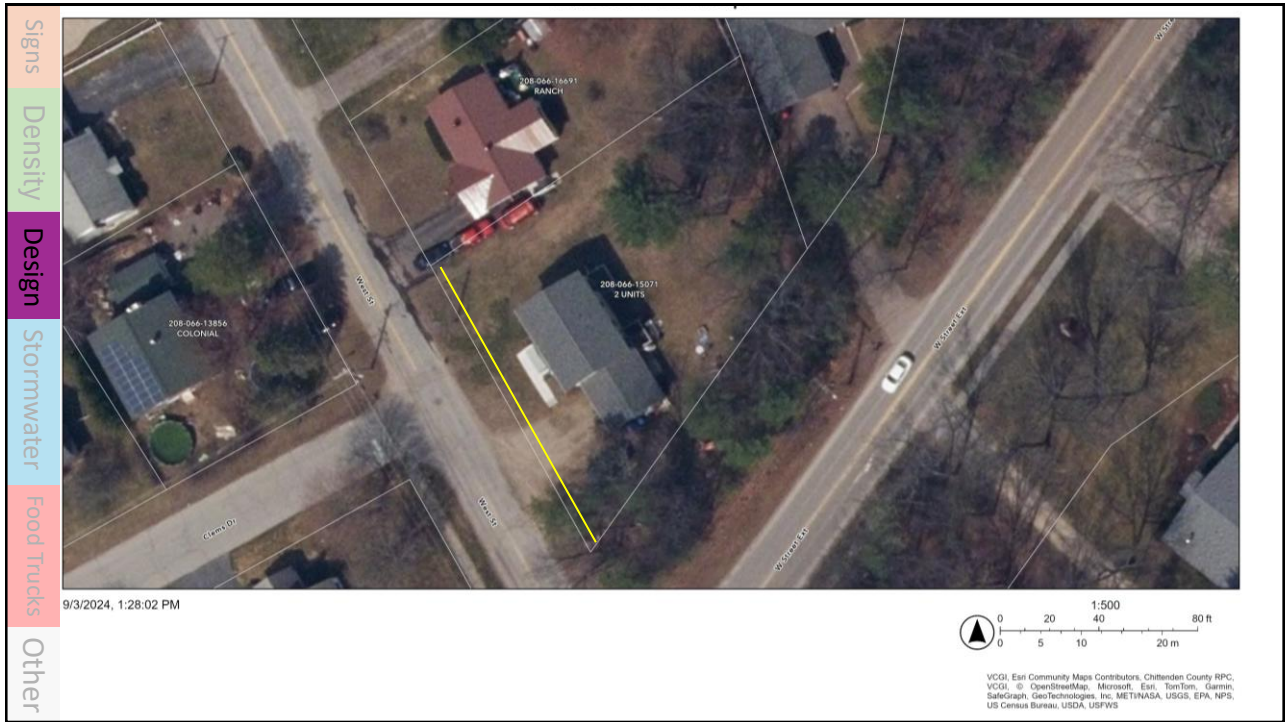
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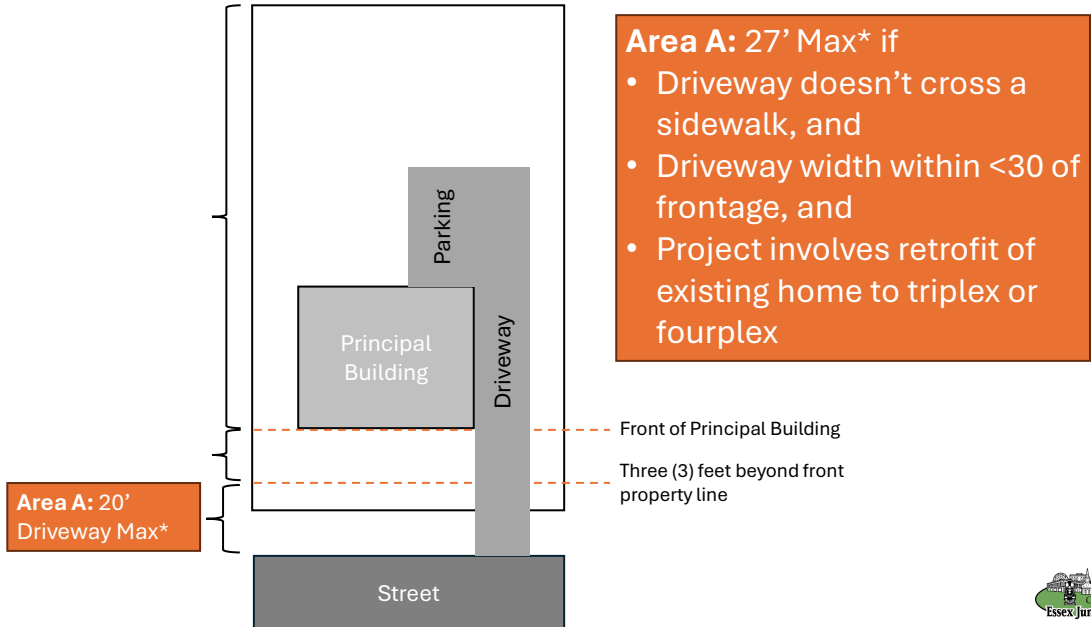
45



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- Signs
- Density
- Design
- Stormwater
- Food Trucks
- Other

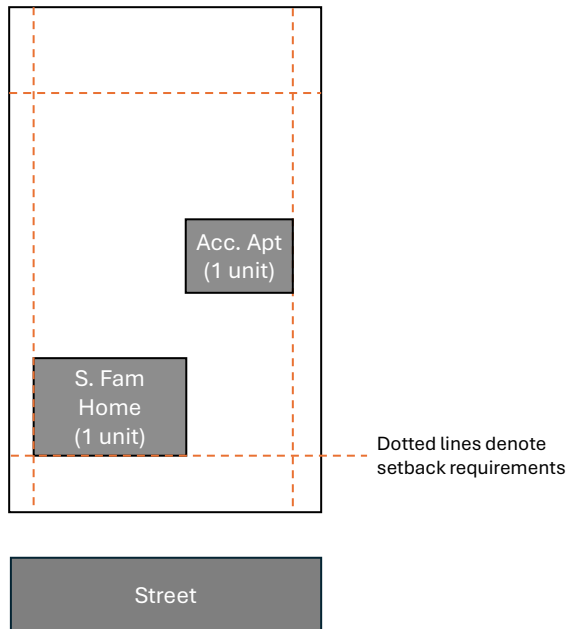
# Special Design Standards in R1 / R2



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- Signs
- Density
- Design
- Stormwater
- Food Trucks
- Other

# Allowing up to 2 Principal Residential Structures per Lot

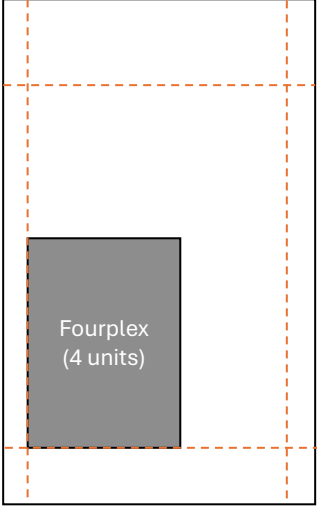


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Signs  
Density  
Design  
Stormwater  
Food Trucks  
Other

# Allowing up to 2 Principal Residential Structures per Lot




Fourplex (4 units)

Street

Dotted lines denote setback requirements

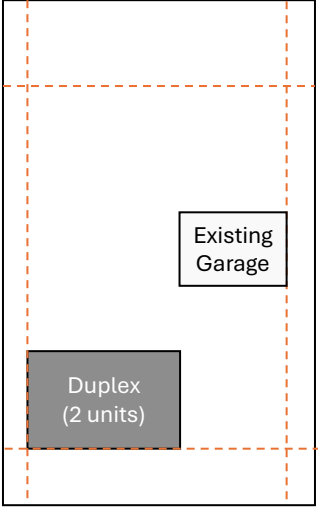
Since 2023 HOME Act / LDC amendments, up to 4 units are allowed on one lot in Residential Zones



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Signs  
Density  
Design  
Stormwater  
Food Trucks  
Other

# Allowing up to 2 Principal Residential Structures per Lot




Existing Garage

Duplex (2 units)

Street

Dotted lines denote setback requirements




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Signs  
Density  
Design  
Stormwater  
Food Trucks  
Other

## Allowing up to 2 Principal Residential Structures per Lot

The diagram shows a rectangular lot with a dashed orange border. Inside the lot, there are two grey rectangular structures. The larger one is labeled 'Duplex (2 units)' and is positioned in the lower-left area. The smaller one is labeled '1 Unit' and is positioned in the upper-right area. The text 'Not Currently Allowed' is centered in the upper-left portion of the lot. Below the lot is a grey rectangular area labeled 'Street'.

- Detached Accessory Apartment has to be appurtenant to Single Family Home
- Additional unit would have to be considered principal structure
- Currently only 1 Principal Structure allowed per lot




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Signs  
Density  
Design  
Stormwater  
Food Trucks  
Other

## Allowing up to 2 Principal Residential Structures per Lot

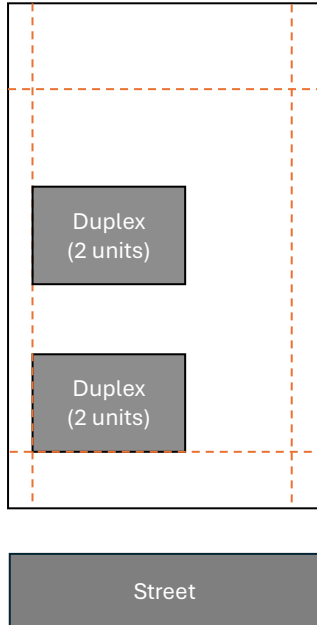
The diagram shows a rectangular lot with a dashed orange border. Inside the lot, there are two grey rectangular structures. The larger one is labeled 'Fourplex (4 units)' and is positioned in the lower-left area. The smaller one is positioned in the upper-right area. The text 'Currently Allowed' is centered in the upper-left portion of the lot. Below the lot is a grey rectangular area labeled 'Street'.



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- Signs
- Density
- Design
- Stormwater
- Food Trucks
- Other

# Allowing up to 2 Principal Residential Structures per Lot



- Proposed: allow 2 Principal structures per lot

- Max of 4 units per lot\*
- Lot Coverage, Setback, Height limits would still apply

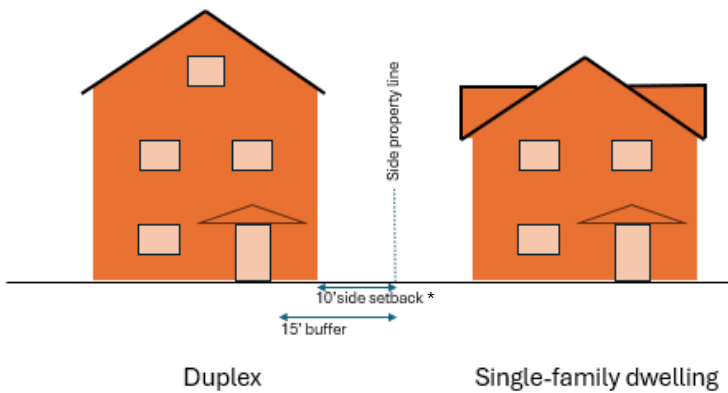
\*In R1 and R2 zoning district



- Signs
- Density
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- Stormwater
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- Other

# Relaxing buffering requirements for triplex and fourplex

OK



Buffer requirement applies to all multi-family homes.

Multi-family is defined as anything beyond a duplex

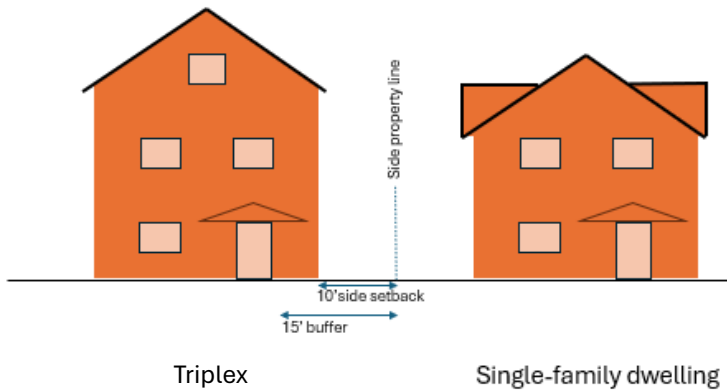
\*8' allowed in some districts



- Signs
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# Relaxing buffering requirements for triplex and fourplex

**Not Currently Allowed**

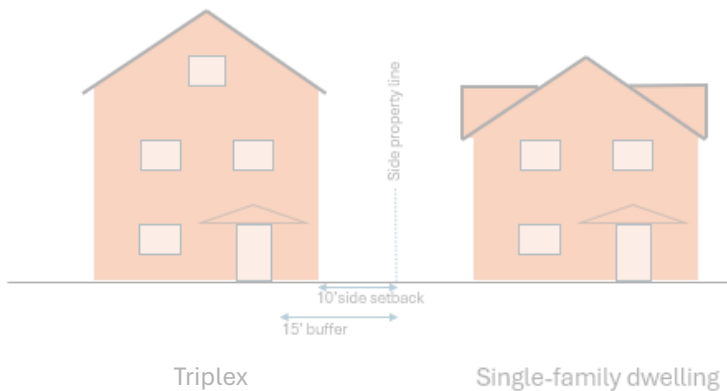


Current rules prevent a Triplex at the same location and of the same size as a Duplex which is otherwise allowed.



- Signs
- Density
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- Food Trucks
- Other

# Relaxing buffering requirements for triplex and fourplex



**Proposed change:** exclude triplexes and fourplexes from the definition of “multi-family dwelling”



Signs  
Density  
Design  
Stormwater  
Food Trucks  
Other

# Waiver option buffering requirements for Multi-Family Dwellings

**OK**

Multi-Family dwelling (in a zoning district multi-family allowed)

Single-family dwelling

10' side setback

15' buffer

Side property line

Current buffer requirements address shadow and massing impacts on single-family homes...

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Signs  
Density  
Design  
Stormwater  
Food Trucks  
Other

# Waiver option buffering requirements for Multi-Family Dwellings

**Not allowed – building is within buffer zone**

Multi-Family dwelling (in a zoning district multi-family allowed)

Single-family dwelling

10' side setback

15' buffer

Side property line

... but they don't necessarily reflect actual impacts.

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Signs
Density
Design
Stormwater
Food Trucks
Other

## Waiver option buffering requirements for Multi-Family Dwellings

**Proposed change:** allow DRB to grant waiver to buffering requirements if they find no “undue adverse impacts” to neighbors

Multi-Family dwelling  
(in a zoning district multi-family allowed)

Single-family dwelling

Signs
Density
Design
Stormwater
Food Trucks
Other

## 4. Changes to Stormwater Regulations

- Most stormwater regulations in the LDC are being moved to a separate stormwater ordinance

Signs

Density

Design

Stormwater


Food Trucks

Other

## 5. Food Trucks on Private Property

Currently:

- Only allowed where restaurants in zones where restaurants are allowed
- Currently permitted as “Temporary Uses” on private property
- Cannot be at the same place for >6 mo. per year
- City has not been strict on this limit since COVID



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Signs

Density

Design

Stormwater


Food Trucks

Other

## 5. Food Trucks on Private Property

Proposed:

- Officially allow for the year-round operation
- Use of gasoline / diesel generators would be prohibited under most circumstances




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Signs  
Density  
Design  
Stormwater  
Food Trucks  
Other

## 6. Correction of technical Inconsistencies / Other Changes

- Specified how uses not defined in the Use Chart are to reviewed.
- Allow for administrative review of triplexes / fourplexes
- Added provision to enable the use of Planned Unit Development (PUD) review process so for proposals involving multi-family structures




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Signs  
Density  
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Other

## 6. Correction of technical Inconsistencies / Other Changes

- Definition of “lot coverage” has been clarified to exclude stormwater permeable driveways
- Removed limits on unrelated persons living together in the same dwelling unit
- Zoning map correction
- 50-foot setback for outdoor cannabis cultivations, as enabled by Act 166 of 2024 (H.612), starting on January 1, 2025.



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**City Council Public Hearing**

February 26, 2025

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