

Small House/Small Lot



What are Small Houses?

A Small House is a proposed new housing type under Section 7.1 of the UDO. It could be a single or two-family unit, but is limited in size and height. Small houses are proposed to be allowed on smaller lots.

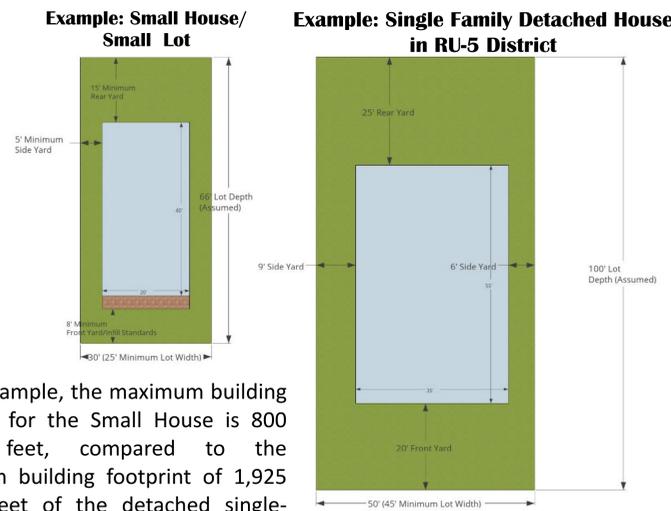
Small houses are not necessarily “Tiny Houses,” which have recently been defined in the International Building Code as “a dwelling with 400 square feet or less in floor area, excluding lofts”.

A “Cottage Court” or “small house pocket neighborhood” version will also be considered, where additional shared green space, along with shared parking, would be required.



Proposed Dimensional Standards

Building Standards (maximums)	
Unit Size	1,200 square
Building Footprint	800 square feet
Height	25 feet
Lot Dimensions (minimums)	
Site Area	2,000 SF
Lot Width	25 feet
Street Yard	8 feet
Side Yard	5 feet
Rear Yard	15 feet



In this example, the maximum building footprint for the Small House is 800 square feet, compared to the maximum building footprint of 1,925 square feet of the detached single-family house on a standard lot in the RU-5 zoning district. In both examples, the maximum building footprint is approximately 40% of the site area.

Small Flag Lot

Current Rule • Properties are allowed to be subdivided into flag lots (see below) with a minimum flag pole width of 20 feet

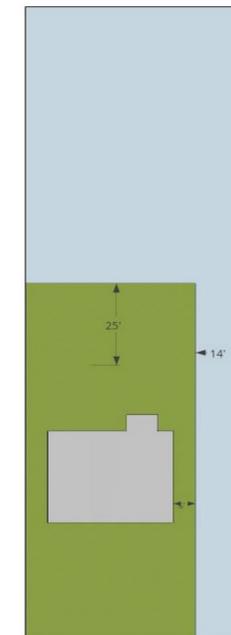
• Non conforming lots cannot be created. Both resulting lots must meet dimensional standards of the zoning district, however, the front setback of the flag lot is equivalent to the side yard setback

Proposal • In the Urban Tier, and for lots with RU zoning in the Suburban Tier, reduce the required minimum flag pole width to 12 feet

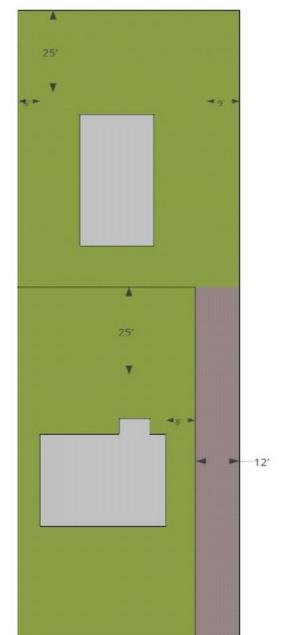
• If the pole width is less than 20 feet, restrict the unit size, building footprint, and height of the structure on the flag lot

Rationale • Allows potentially underutilized deep lots to be used for housing

Current Rules (20' Pole)



Proposed Rules (12' Pole)



• Current rules would prevent this 11,500 square foot lot from subdividing into a flag lot, leaving over 6,500 square feet of land underutilized (from a housing perspective).

• The creation of a flag lot cannot make the parent lot non-conforming. Therefore, current rules would require a six foot set back, in addition to the 20 foot pole. Taking the setback into consideration, only 14 feet remain.

• Reducing the pole width to 12 feet would make it possible to create a new flag lot with a small house.

Opportunities and Challenges

- The cost of land is a significant driver of development costs and affordability; allowing for smaller homes on smaller lots could reduce overall expense
- Small homes can offer in neighborhood alternatives for aging in place, or for people with a variety of life circumstances
- Small houses can provide an alternative to an Accessory Dwelling Unit, especially for property owners unable or uninterested in building, maintaining or leasing
- Could help people who are “land rich” but “cash poor” have access to some of the equity in their home
- Size and height restrictions must be memorialized on at least a recorded plat in order to prevent future additions that would exceed the size and height standards
- Common issues raised with other proposed items would include a possibly reduced tree canopy and additional parking and traffic concerns

Where Would Small Houses be Allowed?

Current Rule Small Houses are a new housing type in the UDO.

Proposal

- Allow by right in all residential zoning districts in the Urban Tier, and by right in RU districts in the Suburban Tier
- Not restricted by density limits
- Would still require adherence to infill standards
- *Pocket Neighborhood Version* may be considered a more suburban infill type of development, and thus may be more appropriate in the Suburban Tier.

Rationale

- The lot standards will limit the amount able to be created within a development. This housing type would pilot the idea of letting the dimensional standards govern without the additional layer of a density limit.

- Small houses and lots could be created through certain planned zoning districts, but these require rezoning approval. The proposed housing type provides a by-right option. They can also be created as a type of apartment in RU-M or RS-M, but individual lots of record would not be permitted and a density cap applies.