Compatible-Scale Infill Housing (R-2 Zones) Project
An Update to Anchorage’s Zoning Rules for Residential Development in the R-2A, R-2D, and R-2M Zoning Districts

PZC Case No. 2019-0009
Public Hearing Draft – Supporting Exhibits

EXHIBIT D:
Policy Guidance from the Comprehensive Plan

Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan Implementation Action 4-4

1/25/2019 Revision: Public Hearing Changed to March 4
Compatible-Scale Infill Housing (R-2 Zones) Project:

The Compatible-Scale Infill Housing (R-2 Zones) project is updating Anchorage’s R-2A, R-2D, and R-2M zoning code rules for the height and bulk of residential development, in order to allow more housing opportunities while ensuring that the scale of new development complements existing neighborhoods.

This project helps carry out implementation Action 4-4 of the Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan’s Goal 4: Housing and Neighborhoods. It is related to other ongoing code amendment projects and actions that seek to achieve the goals of the Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan.

For More Information:

Visit the project website: www.muni.org/Planning/2040actions.aspx

Contact the project team: Tom Davis, 343-7916, davistg@muni.org
Francis McLaughlin, 343-8003, mclaughlinfd@muni.org
Long-Range Planning Division, 343-7921, anchorage2040@muni.org

Public Hearing Draft Documents: (under separate covers; list corrected on 1/25/2019)

- Adopting Ordinance
- Exhibit A: Staff Report
- Exhibit B: Zoning Code Amendments
- Exhibit C: PZC Resolution
- Exhibit D: Policy Guidance from the Comprehensive Plan
- Exhibit E: Public Comments Received
- Exhibit F: Comment Issue-Response
Policy Guidance from the Comprehensive Plan: Introduction

The Anchorage Comprehensive Plan, adopted by the Assembly, establishes the goals, policies, strategies, and actions that guide municipal decisions regarding land use, housing, and growth and development, including proposed changes to the city’s land use regulations in Title 21.

This exhibit lists relevant Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, and implementation strategies and actions that guide the recommendations in the Compatible-scale Infill Housing (R-2 Zones) amendment to Title 21.

Elements of the Comprehensive Plan
This amendment primarily affects the Anchorage Bowl. There are two primary elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the Anchorage Bowl that establish the Bowl-wide policy guidance for land use and development:

- Anchorage 2020/Anchorage Bowl Comprehensive Plan (Anchorage 2020); and
- Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan (2040 LUP).

The Comprehensive Plan also includes neighborhood and district plans that provide relevant area-specific land use and housing policies in neighborhoods currently zoned or designated R-2A, R-2D, and R-2M, including:

- East Anchorage District Plan (EADP);
- UMED District Plan;
- West Anchorage District Plan (WADP);
- Fairview Neighborhood Plan;
- Government Hill Neighborhood Plan;
- Mountain View Targeted Neighborhood Plan; and
- Original Neighborhoods Historic Preservation Plan.

Together these elements of the Comprehensive Plan provide the policy direction for land use decisions and changes to regulations in Title 21. The 2040 LUP describes and illustrates the role of these plans (2040 LUP Section 1.1, Guiding Anchorage’s Growth, pp. 1-6).

Goals and Policies
This Exhibit organizes the policies of these plans around the several most relevant Anchorage 2040 Goals. Goals set broad direction. Policies are principles or guidelines that direct decisions toward achieving the Goals. For each Goal, the related policies of Anchorage 2020 are listed first, and then the related 2040 LUP policies. Related policies from neighborhood and district plans then follow. The policies of the various plans work in conjunction. Only Goals and Policies relevant to this Title 21 amendment project are listed. If the same Policy is listed under more than one Goal in the 2040 LUP, then it is also listed under each Goal here.

Land Use Designations
The Policies direct municipal land use decisions to follow the land use designations of the Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan Map and the constituent neighborhood and district plans. Pages 6 to 8 below provide the guidance for housing types, densities, and neighborhood physical character from the two land use designations that correspond to the R-2A, R-2D, and R-2M zoning districts.

Strategies and Actions
Strategies provide the details for how to meet the Goals and Policies. Anchorage 2040 includes 12 Strategies; this Exhibit focuses on the most relevant of these, Strategy #9. Anchorage 2040 also has a checklist of Actions. Actions are specific measures that carry out the policies and strategies. Page 9 below details Strategy #9 and several of the most relevant Actions that the R-2 Zones amendment project carries out.
List of Relevant Goals and Policies

Anchorage 2040 Goals 1, 2, 4, and 7 and their related policies show the range of objectives for housing and the need for tradeoffs between these objectives. A couple of these Goals clearly work together, such as Goal 2 (infill and redevelopment) and Goal 4 (housing). Others, such as Goal 7 (compatibility), may seem in apparent conflict with the others. The Anchorage 2040 LUP acknowledges the potential for conflicts between multiple objectives and does not prioritize its Goals in order of importance. Instead, the Plan calls for actions that bring these Goals together, to carry out all of its Policies. In its discussion of Goal 7, the Plan “recognizes that compatible design is a key part of growing successfully through infill and redevelopment” in neighborhoods.

Goal 1: Plan for Growth and Livability

Anchorage achieves residential and commercial growth, which improves community resiliency and citizens’ quality of life as it supports their vision for the future expressed in the Comprehensive Plan.

Discussion of Goal 1 is provided on page 16 of the 2040 LUP.

2040 LUP Policies that support or relate to Goal 1:

- **LUP 1.1.** Use the Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan in concert with area-specific plans as a framework to guide decisions on future development patterns, land uses, and allocation of growth.
  
  *(Note: LUP 1.1 is here referring to the Land Use Plan Map. Its land use designations that are relevant to the R-2 zones are provided on pages 6-8.)*

- **LUP 1.2.** Employ land use and development strategies for the Anchorage Bowl to accommodate the forecast number of additional residents, households, and jobs through 2040.

Goal 2: Infill and Redevelopment

Infill and redevelopment meet the housing and employment needs of residents and businesses in Anchorage.

Discussion of Goal 2 is provided on page 17 of the 2040 LUP.

2040 LUP Policies that support or relate to Goal 2:

- **LUP 2.3.** Remove barriers to desired infill development and incorporate flexibility in development requirements to promote adaptive reuse of older buildings and compact infill/redevelopment, including that which reflects traditional urban neighborhood design contexts.

- **LUP 4.2.** Allow and encourage innovative compact housing types and a variety of housing options that respond to changing preferences.

- **LUP 7.1.** Preserve, accommodate, and contribute to the character, scale, and identity of established neighborhoods as new infill housing and mixed-use development occurs. Protect and restore the natural environment as development occurs in these neighborhoods.
**Goal 4: Neighborhood Housing**

Anchorage’s neighborhoods provide a range of places to live, meeting the housing needs of residents at all income levels, household sizes, interests, ages, abilities, and races and ethnicities.

Discussion of Goal 4 is provided on pages 19 and 20 of the **2040 LUP**.

**Anchorage 2020** Policies that relate to Goal 4:

- **Policy 11.** Mixed-density residential development shall be permitted in identified zoning districts provided the development maintains or improves the functional and aesthetic characteristics of the surrounding development and maintains or improves adjacent transportation access and traffic flow.
- **Policy 14.** Conservation of residential lands for housing is a high community priority. New residential development at densities less than identified in the Neighborhood or District Plans is discouraged. […]
- **Policy 15.** Accessory housing units shall be allowed in certain residential zones.
- **Policy 16.** Adopt standards to ensure that new residential development provides for a variety of lot sizes and housing types for a range of households and age groups.
- **Policy 57.** Encourage the maintenance and upkeep of existing housing in order to extend its useful life and neighborhood stability.
- **Policy 58:** Encourage more affordable housing, including home ownership opportunities for low-income residents.

**2040 LUP** Policies that support or relate to Goal 4:

- **LUP 2.3.** Remove barriers to desired infill development and incorporate flexibility in development requirements to promote adaptive reuse of older buildings and compact infill/redevelopment, including that which reflects traditional urban neighborhood design contexts.
- **LUP 4.2.** Allow and encourage innovative compact housing types and a variety of housing options that respond to changing preferences.
- **LUP 4.3.** Promote balanced neighborhoods with diverse infill housing, and provide opportunities for development of affordable and accessible housing that avoids creating areas of concentrated low-income housing.
- **LUP 4.4.** Encourage property owners to preserve, rehabilitate, or redevelop properties in ways that minimize housing displacement and maintain affordability, health, and safety for residents.
- **LUP 7.1.** Preserve, accommodate, and contribute to the character, scale, and identity of established neighborhoods as new infill housing and mixed-use development occurs. Protect and restore the natural environment as development occurs in these neighborhoods.

Area-specific plan Policies related to Goal 4:

- **EADP Strategy 1.3.** Promote housing that reflects changing needs and preferences.
  - 1.3.1. Respond to changing housing needs and preferences.
  - 1.3.2. Reevaluate and amend Title 21 as needed to ensure that it allows for the variety of new housing types recommended in this plan.
- **WADP Land Use Objective 2.** Maintain an adequate supply of residential housing of varying densities and affordability levels that promote quality residential living and stable long-term land values.
- **Fairview Goal 1.** Protect and Improve Neighborhood Character
  1.1. Identify and provide a range of housing densities, serving a range of incomes and ages.
Goal 7. Compatible Land Use

Infill development is compatible with the valued characteristics of surrounding properties and neighborhoods.

Discussion of Goal 7 is provided on page 23 of the 2040 LUP.

Anchorage 2020 Policies that relate to Goal 7:

- **Policy 11.** Mixed-density residential development shall be permitted in identified zoning districts provided the development maintains or improves the functional and aesthetic characteristics of the surrounding development and maintains or improves adjacent transportation access and traffic flow.
- **Policy 41.** Land use regulations shall include new design requirements that are responsive to Anchorage’s climate and natural setting.
- **Policy 46.** The unique appeal of individual residential neighborhoods shall be protected and enhanced in accordance with applicable goals, policies, and strategies.
- **Policy 49.** Site plan layout and building design for new development shall consider the character of adjacent development. The Municipality may require layouts and designs to incorporate the functional and aesthetic character of adjacent development.
- **Policy 52.** Site and design residential development to enhance the residential streetscape and diminish the prominence of garages and paved parking areas.

2040 LUP Policies that support or relate to Goal 7:

- **LUP 2.3.** Remove barriers to desired infill development and incorporate flexibility in development requirements to promote adaptive reuse of older buildings and compact infill/redevelopment, including that which reflects traditional urban neighborhood design contexts.
- **LUP 4.3.** Promote balanced neighborhoods with diverse infill housing, and provide opportunities for development of affordable and accessible housing that avoids creating areas of concentrated low-income housing.
- **LUP 7.1.** Preserve, accommodate, and contribute to the character, scale, and identity of established neighborhoods as new infill housing and mixed-use development occurs. Protect and restore the natural environment as development occurs in these neighborhoods.

Area-specific plan Policies related to Goal 7:

- **EADP Strategy 1.1:** Maintain and strengthen existing neighborhoods by creating places where residents want to stay and new residents are attracted to live.
  - **1.1.1.** Use the policies of this Plan to guide development, rezoning, subdivision and zoning decisions to ensure that new development does not compromise the unique characteristics and stability of existing neighborhoods.
- **WADP Land Use Objective 4.** Preserve and enhance the physical character of land uses valued by the local community, including established residential neighborhoods, proximity to natural open space, and the historic Spenard Road corridor.
- **WADP Neighborhoods Objective 1.** Protect neighborhood character and quality of life through context sensitive planning of road improvements, enforcing improved residential and commercial design standards, and maintaining convenient access to recreation/open space opportunities.
• **WADP Neighborhoods Objective 2.** Ensure that multi-family housing is appropriately located, well-designed and built, energy efficient, properly landscaped, and consistently maintained so that it will make a positive, long-term contribution to the community.

• **WADP Neighborhoods Objective 3.** Ensure that new developments are compatible with their surroundings and responsive to the Alaskan environment and outdoor lifestyle. (Note: Title 21 Rewrite addressed this objective, including with the 2.5-story height limit.)

• **Fairview Neighborhood Plan Goal 1.** Protect and Improve Neighborhood Character
  - 1.2. Identify and provide a range of housing densities, serving a range of incomes and ages.

• **Mountain View Targeted Neighborhood Plan Policy 5.2.** Build new high quality housing units that fit the neighborhood’s character and needs

• **Historic Preservation Plan (HPP) Vision 5.** Manage growth and change to historic neighborhood elements and character through development and implementation of the Municipality-wide Historic Preservation Plan, the HPP [Anchorage Original Neighborhoods Historic Preservation Plan], and Neighborhood and District plans. Adopt relevant policies, regulations, and best practices that will support and reinforce historic character and historic preservation goals, and that will aid in avoiding transportation, infill, redevelopment, or other large infrastructure projects that do not support neighborhood character.
  - **HPP Policy 5.5.** Mitigate to the greatest extent possible any transportation and infrastructure, redevelopment, and infill projects, whether large or small, that does not enhance and support the existing neighborhood character, or does not follow proposed and adopted preservation plans for that neighborhood.
    - **5.11. SA** (South Addition). New construction should reinforce existing scale and character.
    - **5.11.1. SA.** Create neighborhood-specific design guidelines that focus on ground-area coverage and setbacks. These guidelines would be developed when a historic district is designated or a historic overlay zone is created, and would require additional input from property owners and decision-makers at such time.
    - **5.11.2. SA.** Discourage demolition of buildings that provide cohesive neighborhood character.

• **HPP Vision 7: Procedures & Regulations.** Implement and administer historic preservation policies and review procedures, and resolve conflicts between preservation and existing regulations:
  - **HPP Policy 7.6.** Create neighborhood-specific design guidelines to influence future development and infrastructure projects and ensure the continued preservation of neighborhood character and historic resources.
    - **7.6.1.** Create a series of design guidelines that focus on historic character, architectural context, and issues most important in each neighborhood. These guidelines would be developed when a historic district is designated or a historic overlay zone [policy 7.4] is created, and would require additional input from property owners and decision-makers at such time. When structuring these design guidelines, consider the following (see HPP p. 154).
    - **7.12. SA.** Create zoning and land-use policies that maintain the unique character and scale of existing streetscape in South Addition.
    - **7.12.1. SA.** Introduce zoning and design guidelines that focus on ground-area coverage and front yard setbacks. These guidelines would be developed when a historic district is designated or a historic overlay zone is created, and would require additional input from property owners and decision makers at such time.
## Relevant Anchorage 2040 Land Use Designations

### Single-family and Two-family *(2040 LUP, pp. 37-38)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overview</th>
<th>This designation provides for a variety of low-density urban/suburban residential neighborhoods...</th>
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</table>
| **Corresponding Area-specific Designations** | • East Anchorage District Plan: Low Intensity Residential (Attached and Detached)  
• UMED District Plan: Residential Low Intensity Attached and Detached  
• West Anchorage District Plan: Residential Low-Intensity Attached and Detached  
• Government Hill Neighborhood Plan: Residential Low-Intensity Attached and Detached |
| **Zoning Districts** | • R-1 and R-1A districts (in single-family areas).  
• R-2A and R-2D in (single-family) attached and two-family areas. |
| **Uses** | • Single-family subdivisions with homes on lots 6,000 square feet or larger.  
• Accessory dwelling units may also occur.  
• Compatible forms of two- to three-unit townhome structures may be allowed on transition lots next to higher intensity uses, such as commercial districts.  
• Includes some neighborhood areas with more compact forms of single-family homes, such as attached single-family structures, patio homes, “small-lot” housing, and two-unit structures. Lot size for a single dwelling may be reduced in a small-lot housing subdivision. Compact housing forms and the efficient use of land will support affordable housing opportunities in these areas.  
• East Anchorage District Plan further specifies, “The predominant land use consists of conventional single-family detached and attached houses on lots generally between 2,000 and 20,000 square feet or more in size.”  
• West Anchorage District Plan and Government Hill Neighborhood Plan further specify “cluster” and “townhome” types of single- and two-family uses. |
| **Character** | • Residential building scale, lot coverage, landscaped setbacks, and low traffic volumes contribute to a low-intensity residential environment.  
• Accessory dwelling units have compatible character and intensity of use.  
• Some neighborhoods may be more isolated, such that residents must drive to nearby shopping and employment destinations; a more integrated pattern of uses is encouraged for new or redeveloping areas. |
| **Density Ranges** | • 5 to 8 units in two-family areas. |
| **Location Criteria** | • Areas with established single-family development patterns;  
• Areas not severely impacted by incompatible land uses or development intensities;  
• Areas with low through traffic;  
• Areas outside of redevelopment/mixed-use areas, town centers and transit-supportive development corridors  
• Areas away from employment and services, where low-density development helps avoid traffic congestion; and  
• Areas of attached single-family and two-family development. |
**Compact Mixed Residential—Low** *(2040 LUP, pp. 38-39)*

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<tr>
<th>Overview</th>
<th>This designation provides for a compatible, diverse range of single-family, attached, and smaller-scale apartment housing choices in the same neighborhood.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Corresponding Area-specific Designations</strong></td>
<td>• East Anchorage District Plan: Low/Medium Intensity Residential</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• UMED District Plan: Residential Low/Medium Intensity</td>
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<td>• West Anchorage District Plan: Residential Low-Medium Intensity</td>
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<td>• Fairview Neighborhood Plan: Residential Low-Medium Intensity</td>
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<td>• Government Hill Neighborhood Plan: Residential Low-Medium Intensity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Mountain View Targeted Neighborhood Plan: Low/Medium Intensity Residential</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Zoning Districts</strong></td>
<td>• <strong>R-2M primarily;</strong></td>
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<td>• R-2D to assist transition areas between different zoning districts.</td>
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<td>• Fairview Neighborhood Plan also includes the R-3 zoning district and a future overlay zone in the East Fairview area.</td>
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<td><strong>Uses</strong></td>
<td>• Single-family detached homes on standard-sized single-family lots.</td>
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<td>• Accessory dwelling units may also occur.</td>
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<td>• Small-lot single-family homes, two-family, and other kinds of compact housing.</td>
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<td>• Townhomes and smaller apartment structures that are consistent with the area’s scale and intensity.</td>
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<td>• A neighborhood-wide mix of housing types, unit sizes, and household incomes</td>
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<td>• Compatible infill on vacant or underutilized lots is encouraged.</td>
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<td>• East Anchorage District Plan further specifies attached single-family and cottage housing types. West Anchorage District Plan and Government Hill and Mountain View Neighborhood Plans also further specify attached single-family.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Character</strong></td>
<td>• Lots generally 6,000 square feet or larger.</td>
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<td>• Lot size for a single dwelling may be reduced in small-lot housing, attached single-family, and townhomes.</td>
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<td>• Retains the characteristics of single-family neighborhoods, such as front and rear yards, front entries, driveways, and building height.</td>
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<td>• The building scale, appearance, and street orientation of new multi-unit/attached housing development is compatible with a neighborhood built environment that includes single-family homes and invites walking.</td>
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<td>• <strong>Infill Design Principles</strong> <em>(page 35 of Anchorage 2040)</em> for to enhance connections and pedestrian access apply, including:</td>
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<td>o Sidewalks and trails that are safe, comfortable, and attractive in all seasons.</td>
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<td>o Building orientation and scale that frames a welcoming walking environment.</td>
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<td>o Windows and entrances of active uses, such as stores, offices, or living spaces, address the street and public realm.</td>
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<td>o Parking located behind building frontages, with fewer driveway curb cuts across sidewalks.</td>
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*continued...*
- **Infill Design Principles** (page 35 of Anchorage 2040) for relationship to surrounding neighborhoods apply, including:
  - New developments that provide a transition to existing smaller-scale, lower-density neighborhoods.
  - Incorporation of lower-intensity housing types or buildings along a shared street frontage.
  - Infill and redevelopment that is compatible with height, scale, and massing of adjacent homes and the overall character of the street frontage.
  - Protecting front-, side-, and rear-yard setbacks to provide open space, play space, landscaping, and sunlight access.

- West Anchorage District Plan and Government Hill Neighborhood Plan also state: “When located in a neighborhood environment which includes any nearby single-family homes, the physical scale, appearance, and street orientation of multi-family/attached housing development should be compatible.”

- Fairview Neighborhood Plan states: “Sustains the primarily single-family detached/duplex residential character of the east side of the Fairview neighborhood through an improved development review and development standard process with option for rezoning in specific locations...The anticipated future overlay zoning for this area is intended to provide relevant design standards to ensure that future development will be a good fit within the neighborhood’s predominately single-family character supporting safe walkable streets.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Density Ranges</th>
<th>5 to 15 housing units per gross acre, with 8 or more near Centers or Transit-supportive Development corridors.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location Criteria</td>
<td>Areas with a mix of single-family and low-intensity multi-family housing; Areas that provide a transition from more intense uses or traffic volumes to lower-intensity residential areas; Areas in a quarter-mile walking distance of schools, parks, transit, and local services; Areas accessible to major streets without travel through less-intensive uses; and Areas distant from less-intensive uses, such as City Centers, and that have developed with smaller lot sizes and lower-than-medium housing densities.</td>
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**Applicability of Land Use Designations**

The land use designations direct the future housing types, intensities, and physical character (or “form”) in the residential neighborhoods. Taken together, these aspects shape and define the urban form and growth to take place over the coming years (2040 LUP, Section 2.1, Creating Great Places, pages 29-30).

- **Uses** identifies the intended range of appropriate land use and housing types.
- **Zoning Districts** identifies the corresponding zoning districts which implement the land use designation.
- **Density Ranges** guides the densities of dwellings per gross acre of the entire neighborhood, including streets and non-residential parcels. While this provides context for what may be appropriate densities on individual parcels, it does not apply directly to developments on individual lots. See page 30 of the Plan.
- **Character** describes the key physical characteristics of the land use designation, because “Good urban design is central to the successful accommodation of additional housing ... in already-built neighborhoods” (page 29). The “Shared Infill Design Principles” listed on pages 34-35 are also applicable, and serve to “guide targeted amendments to development regulations.”
Relevant Anchorage 2040 Strategies and Actions

Strategy 9: Infill Housing Development Regulations

Strategy 9 drives the Actions that the R-2 amendment carries out. This Strategy supports amending Title 21 and other regulations to allow infill housing of many types, and include design standards and address neighborhood compatibility.

Strategy 9 includes considering provisions for innovative housing types, such as small-lot housing, accessory dwellings, and townhouses. It may also include building flexibility in some site development standards that may be obstacles to compact, walkable housing in policy priority areas.

Strategy 9 also includes exploring compatible ways to allow additional units on small- to medium-sized lots near Town and City Centers as well as other housing priority areas. For example, this may be examining how an additional dwelling on a lot or an additional story may be allowed and under what compatibility standards (e.g., building massing and scale, design, lot coverage, setbacks, and access).

Actions

The 2040 LUP Actions Checklist (Fig. 3-5 in the Plan) includes a series of code amendments to foster innovative infill housing projects that fit into the neighborhood context. The Compatible-scale Infill Housing (R-2 Zones) amendment carries out a part of the following Actions 4-4, 4-10, and 7-2.

- **Action 4-4:** Amend Title 21 to allow compact housing on R-2M or R-3 zoned lots near designated Centers. May include increased height or allowed units per lot, subject to additional urban design and neighborhood compatibility standards, such as for building massing and scale, lot coverage, setbacks, and vehicle access. Determine appropriate measures through a public process including collaboration with neighborhoods and stakeholders. Time Frame: 1-3 years.

- **Action 4-10:** Amend title 21 to reduce restrictions that currently deter construction of compact housing types; and expand provisions that allow for compact housing types, including small-lot housing, cottage houses with shared courtyards, townhouses, and small-scale garden apartments. Determine appropriate measures through a meaningful, collaborative public process and make subject to site development standards including standards for neighborhood compatibility. Time Frame: 1-3 years.

- **Action 7-2:** Incorporate neighborhood compatibility standards in compact housing amendments in Actions 3-4, 4-3, 4-4, 4-6, 4-7, and 4-10. Time Frame: Now/1-3 years.

Not all of the activities described in the Actions above are within the scope of the R-2 zones amendment project. Other recent, current, and upcoming projects to amend Title 21 are carrying out other parts of the above actions as well as other housing-related 2040 LUP Actions.