

**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE**  
**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 2024-020**

A RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING APPROVAL TO THE ANCHORAGE ASSEMBLY OF THE H.O.M.E. INITIATIVE TITLE 21 TEXT AMENDMENTS, SUBJECT TO CERTAIN AMENDMENTS, A REZONING, AND ADDITIONAL REVIEW BY THE PUBLIC AND THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION.

(Case No. 2024-0006)

---

WHEREAS, the *Anchorage 2040 Land Use Plan*, adopted in 2017, forecast the future housing needs of Anchorage and set forth goals to meet the housing needs of residents at all income levels and household sizes; and

WHEREAS, affordable, workforce housing opportunities have continued to become harder to find for current and prospective residents of Anchorage; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Assembly has stated one of its priorities is to increase housing availability within the Municipality of Anchorage; and

WHEREAS, several members of the Assembly brought forward a draft ordinance, A.O. 2023-87(S), known as the *Housing Opportunities in the Municipality for Everyone (H.O.M.E.) Initiative*, that would condense the existing Anchorage Bowl residential zoning districts into a smaller number of consolidated zones and revise their land use regulations to allow more housing and mixed-use; and

WHEREAS, the Planning and Zoning Commission has the advisory role and responsibility pursuant to the Anchorage Municipal Code to review and make recommendations to the Anchorage Assembly regarding Title 21 text amendments; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Assembly referred A.O. 2023-87(S) to the Planning and Zoning Commission on September 26, 2023, for the Commission's review and recommendations; and

WHEREAS, the Assembly sponsors of the H.O.M.E. Initiative provided a more complete, revised version of the draft ordinance, on January 12, 2024; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing notice was published on February 16, and a public hearing was held before the Planning and Zoning Commission on March 18 and continued to May 20, 2024; and

WHEREAS, a concurrent public hearing draft *Comprehensive Plan* amendment to accompany the H.O.M.E. Initiative Title 21 text amendment was noticed on April 26 and brought to the Commission for a public hearing on May 20, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Planning and Zoning Commission held two work sessions with Planning Department staff and the sponsors of the H.O.M.E. initiative on March 18 and May 6, 2024, held deliberations on May 20, 2024, and concluded its deliberations on June 10, 2024.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Anchorage Planning and Zoning Commission that:

- A. The Commission makes the following findings of fact:
1. This case was properly noticed in accordance with AMC 21.03.020H., and a public hearing was held by the Planning and Zoning Commission in accordance with the Title 21 text amendment procedures of AMC 21.03.210.
  2. The intent of the H.O.M.E. Initiative is to implement the Comprehensive Plan, meet the housing needs of the community, consolidate and simplify zoning regulations in the Anchorage Bowl, provide more flexibility in the zoning regulations to integrate residential and non-residential uses, and encourage reinvestment and revitalization.
  3. A combination of real estate market conditions and other factors within Anchorage have resulted in less available housing inventory and increased prices. The Municipality should take actions to mitigate these factors and facilitate the development of more housing. Nationally, zoning regulations that limit what housing is allowed on a lot have been found to be a contributing factor to these problems. Zoning reforms that increase the range of available housing options may help to stabilize these price increases and expand opportunities for infill, reuse, and redevelopment.
  4. The H.O.M.E. Initiative public hearing draft Title 21 text amendment would allow for more housing opportunities in existing single-family zoned areas, which comprise 46% of the urban residential-zoned land in the Anchorage Bowl.
  5. The June 10, 2024, Planning Department Supplementary Recommendations include the broad categories of all the concerns that were brought up over the Commission's multiple work sessions on this case. Although it would be difficult for the Commission to make these recommendations perfect, the Commission has undergone many months of substantial public input and deliberation and is comfortable with where these recommendations have ended up.
  6. The H.O.M.E. Initiative public hearing draft Title 21 text amendments may lead to conversion of lots currently zoned for multifamily residential to zoning designations that allow for commercial-only development without any requirement to provide residences or limit on the intensity of the commercial uses throughout the medium- and high-density multifamily

neighborhoods. There is concern that permitting commercial-only entitlements on land currently zoned for multifamily residential could result in displacement of existing households, higher costs of renting or purchasing a home, greater land acquisition costs for homebuilders, and loss of multifamily-zoned land supply, all of which counteract the goal of boosting housing supply and decreasing housing costs in Anchorage.

7. Reforming Title 21 to be more flexible to integrate more commercial uses and housing types into residential neighborhoods could be greatly beneficial and respond to social, demographic, and economic trends; however, it should be a thoughtful, transparent, and well-informed effort accompanied by measures to mitigate impacts on residential neighbors, such as glare, noise, parking, and traffic, as well as limits to the intensity of commercial uses or conversion of residential property to non-residential use.
  8. The HOME Initiative constitutes a rezoning because by condensing the Anchorage Bowl's current 15 residential zoning districts down to fewer residential zoning districts, thousands of parcels with zoning designations that will be eliminated from the land use code will be assigned new zoning designations, changing the set of land use regulations that apply to those parcels. A parcel's zoning designates the set of rules that apply to it, such as allowable uses, dimensional standards, and design standards. When a parcel is assigned a different zoning designation, a new set of land use rules applies to the parcel, and it has been rezoned. Furthermore, assigning different zoning classifications to parcels changes the boundaries of each existing residential zoning district and Official Zoning Map. Thus, the H.O.M.E. Initiative Title 21 Text Amendment should be accompanied by an amendment to the Official Zoning Map accomplished through the rezoning procedure established in AMC 21.03.160 or any then-existing procedure for areawide rezonings in code.
- B. One of three commissioners in opposition to approval of the H.O.M.E. Initiative Title 21 text amendments provided the following findings of fact:
1. There were items brought up throughout the deliberations for this case that raised questions regarding the public noticing and clarity of what exactly was referred to the Commission and public for review, in that there were multiple versions of the proposed ordinance, and Supplementary Recommendations memos which were not available until after the public hearing had closed.
  2. There remain questions regarding how many residential units to allow by right on all residential lots, as discussed in the Staff

Report. This is a higher-level policy question that needs more areawide input, without which it is not possible to determine the appropriate number of units.

3. It is inappropriate to amend district and neighborhood plans without first providing public notice and getting input or consent from those neighborhoods. The recommendation to make those plans conform to the H.O.M.E. Initiative Title 21 text amendment is backwards; a public process to amend those plans should be first.
4. Given the nature of the H.O.M.E. Initiative and a lot of the questions and issues the community is having, it is appropriate to consider if a complete 20-year review of the Comprehensive Plan is in order.

C. The Commission recommends to the Anchorage Assembly approval of Case No. 2024-0006, subject to amendments 1 through 8 on pages 1 and 2 of the June 10, 2024, Planning Department Supplementary Recommendations, included as follows:


1. Postpone consolidation of the Hillside zoning districts (R-6 through R-10) and changes to their land use regulations as part of the H.O.M.E. Initiative Title 21 text amendment until evaluation of the effects to hazard-prone areas, drinking water availability and quality, wildland fire risk, vehicular access, and other health and safety considerations is completed, and differences in the districts' minimum setbacks are resolved, to inform changes to zoning on the Hillside.
2. Establish code provisions in the H.O.M.E. Initiative Title 21 text amendment to limit or avoid increases in allowed densities in areas with natural or technological hazards, critical environmental areas, or areas with inadequate infrastructure, where such increases would otherwise result from the consolidation of residential zoning districts.
3. Include minimum residential requirements and upper limits to the intensity of allowed commercial and employment uses within the medium and high density Compact Mixed-Residential Districts, to preserve the minimum intended residential densities and encourage the development to the maximum intended residential densities, minimize potential displacement of existing households, and avoid a net loss of supply of multifamily zoned residential land and housing.
4. Accompany the consolidation of zoning districts that allow more intensive residential or commercial uses into existing residential neighborhoods with improvements to the Title 21 standards for

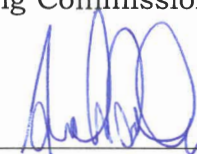
mitigating impacts and nuisances such as glare, noise, traffic, hours of operation, and parking.

5. Postpone the removal of Special Limitations (SLs) as part of the H.O.M.E. Initiative's consolidation of zoning districts until an evaluation of existing SLs imposed on zoning districts is completed, as Special Limitations may be imposed to address numerous factors specifically mentioned in code and it may be appropriate to maintain them under specific circumstances.
6. Provide a revised, more completed version of the public hearing draft H.O.M.E. Initiative Title 21 text amendment for testing and review by the Commission and public prior to final consideration. Given the magnitude and effects of these changes, the Commission strongly recommends that a more collaborative public process that follows the best practices of the American Planning Association (APA) and International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) be incorporated to better involve the public during the final drafting and testing process so they feel engaged, empowered, heard, and respected throughout its development.
7. Amend the Official Zoning Map to reflect the consolidated zones and new boundaries of the zoning districts accordingly through an areawide rezoning.
8. Evaluate the need to establish a formal areawide rezone entitlement procedure in the municipal code that will provide an appropriate amount of public notice, public engagement, Department review, and PZC review processes for broad rezones that may affect entire neighborhoods, districts, or the Municipality.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Planning and Zoning Commission on the 10th day of June 2024.

ADOPTED by the Anchorage Planning and Zoning Commission this 21st day of June 2024.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Craig H. Lyon  
Secretary

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Andre Spinelli  
Chair

(Case 2024-0006)