



TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Mesa Sherriff, Senior Planner, Planning and Development Services
Peter Huffman, Director, Planning and Development Services
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Ordinance – Adopting Proposed Amendments to Infill Pilot Program – October 13, 2020
DATE: September 29, 2020

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

An ordinance reauthorizing, extending, and modifying the Residential Infill Pilot Program (as Version 2.0), as codified in the Tacoma Municipal Code, Section 13.05.060.

BACKGROUND:

In December 2015 the City Council passed Amended Ordinance No. 28336 enacting the Infill Pilot Program for the following housing types: detached accessory dwelling units in single-family zoning districts; two-family development on corner lots in the R-2 single-family district; small-scale multifamily development in the R-3 district; and cottage housing in most residential districts. Three of each infill housing type were accepted into the Pilot Program and, if approved, allowed to apply for development permits.

The intent of the Pilot Program is to promote innovative residential infill while ensuring that such infill demonstrates high quality building and site design that is responsive to and harmonious with neighborhood patterns and character. The goal of the program is, on a case by case basis, to allow successful and well-regarded examples of infill housing types to be built. Based on the successful implementation of the first version of the Infill Pilot Program, the detached accessory dwelling unit (DADU) typology was implemented into the land use code as an allowed use throughout the city in 2018/2019.

The proposed changes to the Infill Pilot Program (referred to as Version 2.0) are designed to build on the success of the program by allowing it to continue to explore and evaluate new infill housing options while enhancing its effectiveness based on lessons learned from the first iteration. The proposed program changes would:

- Add a new Planned Infill Housing category to the eligible housing types (previously referred to as density-based housing)
- Increase the number of each housing type allowed through the program and better ensure the equitable distribution of projects throughout the City of Tacoma
- Modify design requirements and other standards to improve clarity and effectiveness
- Streamline the permit process while still ensuring individual project review and opportunities for community input

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

The Residential Infill Pilot Program Regulations were adopted through a legislative process that included broad community input. This program update project has also been the subject of an extensive process, including broad community outreach and public meetings and a public hearing before the Planning Commission. The public notice and engagement is documented in the Planning Commission’s Findings and Recommendations Report, available online at www.cityoftacoma.org/infill.



2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Equity and Accessibility:

The Infill Pilot Program is designed to help the City and community respond to what has been broadly identified as a primary issue needing immediate attention – equitable access to affordable housing. The Infill Pilot Program, including this proposed update, is one of many efforts to implement the City’s Affordable Housing Action Strategy (AHAS). The program has been set up to accommodate added density through a diverse range of housing types in areas of the city that have minimal capacity under current zoning. Each project is reviewed on a case-by-case basis to ensure that all impacts are addressed and mitigated to the extent possible. This ordinance establishes updates to the Infill Pilot Program that will expand the capacity of the program to accept applications and allow for added flexibility in the types of projects that can be reviewed through the program.

Economy/Workforce: *Equity Index Score:* Moderate Opportunity

Increase the number of diverse livable wage jobs.

Increase the percentage of people relocating to the city and affordability of housing compared to neighboring jurisdictions.

Civic Engagement: *Equity Index Score:* Moderate Opportunity

Increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on the community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma.

Representation at public meetings will reflect the diversity of the Tacoma community

Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator.

The proposed changes to the Residential Infill Pilot Program are designed to address the evolving landscape of the growth and development of Tacoma’s housing supply. These changes include adding a more flexible Planned Infill Housing category, and making other minor adjustments to the project types currently allowed through the Infill Pilot Program – two-family dwellings in the R2 District, small-scale multifamily development in the R-3 district, and cottage housing in most residential districts. The proposed changes would provide three new spaces for each project type in each of the five Council Districts (for a total of 15 projects per type, or 60 total projects). In addition, the program addresses affordability through the development of additional, smaller units in more restrictively zoned areas of the city that will inherently create more housing choice and reduce per unit costs. The objectives for the current proposal include: allowing the Infill Pilot Program to continue by making new spots available; providing a more equitable distribution of diverse housing options across the Tacoma; providing flexibility to project applicants to address the challenges of their site; and streamlining the review process to improve the oversight for each project, reduce processing time, and increase predictability

ALTERNATIVES:

At the time of authorization, the City Council may consider amendments to the ordinance. However, there are no alternatives under consideration at this time.



City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:

The recommended ordinance is necessitated by the existing Residential Infill Pilot Program having most of its project categories filled and being unable to process additional projects. By expanding the capacity of the program, additional projects can be accepted. Upon reaching capacity going forward, the program will be reevaluated and reworked as deemed appropriate.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Conduct the first reading on October 13, 2020, followed by the final reading on October 20, 2020, to approve the amendments to the Infill Pilot Program.