

## #D-93 REDEVELOPMENT AND EXISTING STRUCTURES

### General Description

In December 2011, the City received a letter regarding a proposed short plat in the Sunset Area. This proposal would add three new single-family homes to a parcel already containing a duplex dwelling unit. Concern was expressed that keeping the existing dwelling unit results in poor design for the new development and preserves outdated and failing structures.

A new approach to R-10 and R-14 development regulations was adopted in 2007. R-10 and R-14 zoning is considered Residential Medium Density, a land use designation with the purpose of promoting unique approaches to providing higher density suburban development through new development and infill. Although pockets of medium density zoning exist throughout the City, there are concentrations of it in the Highlands, Benson, Talbot, and West Hill community planning areas. Prior to adoption, there was discussion of whether existing structures should be kept when new development occurs. Required removal of the existing structure was not included in the final draft of the regulations. The preferred approach was to require the upgrade of existing structures at the time that new development was proposed, but the adopted regulations did not specifically include provisions to implement this policy. Residential design standards adopted in 2010 were applied to new units only.

Due to economic downturn and the resulting slow down in new construction there have been few proposals for infill development since 2007. However, the few applications received to date have planned new development around existing housing. With few standards in place, these proposals consistently advance developments that lack privacy, useable open space, or a coordinated approach to parking and access. It also preserves low quality housing. Not only is this inconsistent with adopted City policy for Residential Medium Density land use and Community Design, but will only perpetuate more low quality housing and dilapidated neighborhoods.

Several approaches to solving this problem were reviewed. Downzoning and creating a higher density "potential" zone that could only be unlocked by removing or upgrading the existing unit could encourage more low density development. Requiring removal of all existing units unless a variance could be obtained could result in unintended consequences given the variety of circumstances on R-10 and R-14 properties in the City. Applying design standards to the whole development, including any existing structures, is the most reasonable approach. Market factors, site conditions, and the condition of the existing housing will determine if it is best to upgrade or remove the structure. Whether the housing remains or is removed, the resulting development will fully comply with the residential design guidelines.

After reviewing several of the site plans for proposed developments, it also clear that a few changes should be made to the site planning and open space standards in the residential design guidelines. These changes are intended to clarify and supplement the current standards to produce high quality new housing. (See attached analysis of changes).

## **Impact Analysis**

### Effect on rate of growth, development, and conversion of land as envisioned in the Plan

This should not significantly affect the rate of growth, development, and conversion of land as envisioned in the Plan. However, it may slow the number of applications for new development until the larger economy recovers because the application received so far have centered around keeping existing development. This change may make it more expensive or less profitable to keep existing development as part of a new development.

### Effect on the City's capacity to provide adequate public facilities

Not applicable.

### Effect on the rate of population and employment growth

This should not effect the rate of population growth and is not applicable to employment growth.

### Whether Plan objectives are being met as specified or remain valid and desirable

This proposal validates multiple objectives of the Comprehensive Plan including:

CD-C: Promote reinvestment in and upgrade of existing residential neighborhoods through redevelopment of small, underutilized parcels with infill development, modification and alteration of older housing stock, and improvements to streets and sidewalks to increase property values.

CD-E: New development and infill patterns should be consistent with a high quality urban form.

CD-F: Ensure privacy and personal space in residential developments.

CD-S: Reduce the impacts of parking and vehicle sotrage in neighborhoods and business areas.

### Effect on general land values or housing costs

The proposal is likely to increase land values by promoting high quality infill development and the upgrade of existing structures. The effect on housing costs is unlikely to be significant, and will be influenced by many other factors that go into each new development.

### Whether capital improvements or expenditures are being made or completed as expected

Not applicable.

### Consistency with GMA, the Plan, and Countywide Planning Policies

This proposal is consistent with two goal of GMA: the preservation of open space to ensure high quality development and to encourage urban growth in areas where public services and facilities already exist. It is also consistent with the Countywide Planning Policies goal for Urban Areas, to accommodate urban growth by creating vibrant, healthy, sustainable communities. In addition to being consistent with the objectives of the Community Design Element of the

Renton Comprehensive Plan as noted above, it is also consistent with the purposes and policies of the Residential Medium Density Land Use Designation in the Land Use Element.

Effect on critical areas and natural resource lands

Not applicable.

Effect on other considerations

This proposal is consistent with the Report and Recommendation of the Highlands Citizen Task force on Land Use and Zoning (November 2006).

**Staff Recommendation**

Amend the Residential Design Standards in RMC 4-2-115 to require existing developments to upgrade when new development occurs. Modify the site design and open space requirements for clarity and to ensure the standards provide adequate privacy and open space to provide a high quality residential environment.

**Implementation Requirements**

Adopt an ordinance amending the Residential Design Standards.

**Analysis of Proposed Changes to Residential Design Guidelines in the R-10 and R-14 zones**

Section	Change	Analysis
Applicability	Add a new section that requires existing homes to comply with residential design standards in the R-10 and R-14 zones if the property is subdivided or dwellings are added.	<p>This is consistent with Objective CD-C from the Comprehensive Plan: to promote investment in existing neighborhoods through infill projects and upgrade of existing housing stock. As density increases, the need for design standards increases in order to provide high quality environments. factor</p> <p>If subject to new development and there was a desire to keep an existing dwelling, remodeling for the existing structure may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Addition of a garage (attached or detached)</li> <li>- Potential re-orientation of the primary entry*</li> <li>- Add a porch or stoop to the primary entry*</li> <li>- Re-roof the dwelling and add eaves*</li> <li>- Modulate the building (may be accomplished by adding porch and/or garage features )</li> <li>- Reframe windows</li> <li>- Add trim and detailing (and probably new paint)</li> </ul> <p>Items indicated with an asterisk (*) may be modified if onerous, with an alternative proposal that meets the intent of the guidelines. This would be reviewed on a case by case basis and approved by the CED Administrator.</p>
Site Design- Lot Configuration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Apply the standard for variation in lots to any development of 9 units or more.</li> <li>2. Require side yards to abut other side yards.</li> <li>3. Prohibit lots that are only accessible through pipestems or access easements.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Applying the standard for variation to any development of 9 units or more will result in more developments being held to this standard. The R-10 and R-14 zones allows new attached development without subdivision, and currently this type of development would not be held to the variation standard.</li> <li>2/3. These standards promote quality site planning and should prevent new dwellings/lots from being crammed onto an existing site in ways that prevent privacy</li> </ol>

		and degrade quality of life. In such case that these standards were onerous, the property owner could request a modification based on the guideline.
Site Design- Garages	Require garages to meet off-street parking requirements.	This is a clarification of the existing standard, which does not allow carports.
Open Space- Standards for Common Open Space	Instead of the standard stating that open space should serve at least four homes, the requirement is changed to open space(s) serving all the units and contiguous to the majority of the units. Areas used for parking, driveways, or alleys will not be counted as open space.	This change is intended to produce meaningful and quality open space that provides an amenity to higher density housing. For existing development it preserves open space with new development, which is an amenity currently enjoyed by residents living in lower density housing zoned R-10 and R-14.
Open Space- Standards for Private Yards	Existing standard is rephrased. Small developments of ground related units (townhomes, single-family houses, cottages) are required to have larger yards. Larger developments may include smaller yards for ground related units, and the “yard” requirement for non ground related units (carriage units, stacked flats) may be added to the common open space requirement.	This is a clarification of the existing standard, not a change.
Residential Design- Primary Entry	Changes the standard to require that attached units must have the primary entries on the same façade.	In order to meet this guideline, some homes may have to remodel an existing home to change the primary entry. In such case that these standards were onerous, the property owner could request a modification based on the guideline.

## 4-2-115 RESIDENTIAL DESIGN AND OPEN SPACE STANDARDS

### B. APPLICABILITY:

1. This Section shall apply to all new dwelling units in the following zones: Resource Conservation (RC), Residential One Dwelling Unit per Acre (R-1), Residential Four Dwelling Units per Acre (R-4), Residential Eight Dwelling Units per Acre (R-8), Residential Ten Dwelling Units per Acre (R-10), and Residential Fourteen Dwelling Units per Acre (R-14). The standards of the Site Design subsection are required at the time of subdivision application. The standards of Residential Design subsection are required at the time of application for building permits. The standards of Residential Design are required for the building for which the building permit is being issued.

2. Additions and/or expansions to detached or attached dwellings that are valued at fifty percent (50%) or greater of the most recent assessment or appraisal shall require that the entire dwelling or structure comply with the standards of the Residential Design subsection.

3. When new dwelling units are created in the Residential Ten Dwelling Units per Acre (R-10) and Residential Fourteen Dwelling Units per Acre (R-14) zone, whether by subdivision or other means, any existing dwelling units included in the development shall comply with the standards of this section.

### F. REQUIREMENTS:

#### 1. Site Design:

**LOT CONFIGURATION: Variety in the configuration of lots enhances the image of variety of housing stock and helps minimize perceptions of monotony.**

**Guidelines:** Developments shall create pedestrian oriented environments and amplify the mutual relationship between housing units, roads, open space, and pedestrian amenities, while also protecting the privacy of individuals. Lots shall be configured to encourage variety within the development.

#### **Standards:**

R-10 and R-14	Developments of more than nine (9) <del>detached</del> dwellings shall incorporate a variety of home sizes, lot sizes, and unit clusters.  <u>Dwellings shall be arranged to ensure privacy so that side yards abut other side yards (or right of way) and do not abut front or back yards.</u>  <u>Lots accessed by easements or pipestems shall be prohibited.</u>
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**GARAGES: The minimization of the visual impact of garages contributes to creating communities that are oriented to people and pedestrians, as opposed to automobiles.**

**Guidelines:** The visual impact of garages shall be minimized, while porches and front doors shall be the emphasis of the front of the home. Garages shall be located in a manner that minimizes the presence of the garage and shall not be located at the end of view corridors. Alleyway access is encouraged. If used, shared garages shall be within an acceptable walking distance to the housing unit it is intended to serve.

**Standards:**

R-10  
and R-  
14

Garages are required to meet off-street parking requirements and may be attached or detached. Shared garages are also allowed, provided the regulations of RMC [4-4-080](#) are met. Carports are not allowed.

One of the following is required; the garage must be:

1. Recessed from the front of the house and/or front porch at least eight feet (8'), or
2. Detached.

Additionally, all of the following is required:

1. Garage design shall be of similar design to the homes, and
2. A minimum eighteen feet (18') driveway length from the face of the garage to the back of the sidewalk or access easement/lane is required, unless accessed by an alley, and
3. If sides of the garage are visible from streets, lanes, sidewalks, pathways, trails, or other homes, architectural details shall be incorporated in the design.

If shared garages are allowed, they may share the structure with other homes and all of the following is required:

1. Each unit has garage space assigned to it, and

	<p>2. The garage is not to be located further than one hundred sixty feet (160') from any of the housing units to which it is assigned, and</p> <p>3. The garage shall not exceed forty-four feet (44') in width, and shall maintain an eight foot (8') separation from any dwellings.</p>
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**2. Open Space:**

**OPEN SPACE: Open space is a significant element in the development of livable communities and creates opportunities for good health.**

**Guidelines:** All open space shall be designed to preserve existing trees. Except for Native Growth Protection Areas, all common open space areas shall be designed to accommodate both active and passive recreational opportunities and be visible and open to the street. Pocket parks shall be designed to serve four (4) to ten (10) homes. Private yards are located at the rear or side of homes and can include trees, planting beds, and privacy fences. Reciprocal use easements can provide greater usability of private yards.

**Landscaping:**

R-10 and R-14	See RMC <a href="#">4-4-070</a> .
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**Standards for Parks:**

R-10 and R-14	<p><b>For developments that are less than ten (10) net acres:</b> No park is required, but is allowed.</p> <p><b>For developments that are greater than ten (10) net acres:</b> A minimum of one one-half (.5) acre park, in addition to the common open space requirement, is required.</p>
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**Standards for Common Open Space:**

R-10 and R-14	<p><b>Developments of three (3) or fewer dwelling units:</b> No requirement to provide common open space.</p> <p><b>Developments of four (4) or more units:</b> Required to provide common open space as follows:</p>
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For each unit in the development, three hundred fifty (350) square feet of common open space shall be provided.</li> <li>2. Open space shall be designed as a park, common green, pea-patch, pocket park, or pedestrian entry easement in the development and shall include picnic areas, space for small recreational activities, and other activities as appropriate.</li> <li>3. Open space shall be located in a highly visible area and be easily accessible to the neighborhood.</li> <li>4. Open space(s) shall be <u>contiguous to the majority of the dwellings in the development and accessible to all dwellings</u>, <del>serve a minimum of four (4) homes</del>, and <u>shall be at least twenty feet (20') wide</u>.</li> <li>5. A pedestrian entry easement can be used to meet the <u>access</u> requirements if it has a minimum width of twenty feet (20') with a minimum five feet (5') of sidewalk.</li> <li>6. Pea-patches shall be at least one thousand (1,000) square feet in size with individual plots that measure ten feet by ten feet (10' x 10'). Additionally, the pea-patch shall include a tool shed and a common area with space for compost bins. Water shall be provided to the pea-patch. Fencing that meets the standards for front yard fencing shall surround the pea-patch with a one foot (1') landscape area on the outside of the fence. This area is to be landscaped with flowers, plants, and/or shrubs.</li> <li>7. Grass-crete or other pervious surfaces may be used in the common open space for the purpose of meeting the one hundred fifty feet (150') distance requirement for <u>Emergency Vehicle Access but shall not be used for personal vehicle access or to meet off-street parking requirements</u>.</li> <li>8. Storm ponds may be used to meet the common open space requirement if designed to accommodate a fifty (50) year storm and to be dry ninety percent (90%) of the year.</li> </ol>
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**Standards for Private Yards:**

<p>R-10 and R-14</p>	<p><b>Developments of three (3) or fewer <del>detached or townhouse</del> dwelling units:</b> Each individual <del>lot</del> <u>dwelling</u> shall have a private yard that is at minimum six hundred (600) square feet in size. Backyard patios and reciprocal use easements may be included in the calculation of private yard.</p>
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	<p><b>Developments of four (4) or more <del>detached or townhouse</del> dwelling units:</b> Each individual <del>lot</del> <u>ground related dwelling</u> shall have a private yard that is at least two hundred fifty (250) square feet in size with no dimension less than eight feet (8') in width. <u>An additional two hundred fifty (250) square feet of open space per unit shall be added to the required amount of common open space for each unit that is not ground related.</u></p> <p><b><del>Development of attached dwelling units (other than townhouses):</del></b> For developments that <del>do not provide private yards, an additional two hundred fifty (250) square feet of open space per unit shall be provided. This open space is in addition to the required amount of common open space.</del></p>
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**Common Open Space or Park Substitutions:**

R-10 and R-14	See RMC <a href="#">4-1-240</a> .
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**3. Residential Design:**

**PRIMARY ENTRY:** Homes with a visually prominent front entry foster the sense that the community is oriented to pedestrians. Features like porches and stoops at the front entry provide opportunity for social interaction and can contribute to a sense of place for residents. Additionally, porches work to minimize the appearance of bulk by breaking up the facade.

**Guidelines:** Entrances to homes shall be a focal point and allow space for social interaction. Front doors shall face the street and be on the facade closest to the street. When a home is located on a corner lot (i.e., at the intersection of two roads or the intersection of a road and a common space) a feature like a wrapped porch shall be used to reduce the perceived scale of the house and engage the street or open space on both sides.

**Standards:**

R-10 and R-14	<p>Both of the following are required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The entry shall take access from and face a street, park, common green, pocket park, pedestrian easement, or open space, and</li> </ol>
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	<p><u>2.</u>     <u>The primary entries for attached units shall be located on the same façade, and</u></p> <p><del>2-3.</del>    The entry shall include one of the following:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a.        Stoop: minimum size four feet by six feet (4' x 6') and minimum height twelve inches (12") above grade, or</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">b.        Porch: minimum five feet (5') deep and minimum height twelve inches (12") above grade.</p> <p>Exception: in cases where accessibility (ADA) is a priority, an accessible route may be taken from a front driveway.</p>
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**FACADE MODULATION: The modulation of facades creates an appearance of variety, as well as visual breaks that help to create visual interest.**

**Guidelines:** Buildings shall not have monotonous facades along public areas. Dwellings shall include articulation along public frontages; the articulation may include the connection of an open porch to the building, a dormer facing the street, or a well-defined entry element.

**Standards:**

<p>R-10 and R-14</p>	<p>Both of the following are required:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">1.        The primary building elevation oriented toward the street or common green shall have at least one articulation or change in plane of at least two feet (2') in depth; and</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">2.        A minimum one side articulation that measures at least one foot (1') in depth shall occur for all facades facing streets or public spaces.</p>
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**WINDOWS AND DOORS: Windows and front doors are an integral part of the architectural character of a home and when they incorporate architectural elements of the home, they contribute to the overall balance and integration of the building form. Additionally, when they represent a significant amount of the facade of a home, they amplify the sense that the community is oriented to people.**

**Guidelines:** Windows and front doors shall serve as an integral part of the character of the

home. Primary windows shall be proportioned vertically rather than horizontally. Vertical windows may be combined together to create a larger window area. Front doors shall be a focal point of the dwelling and be in scale with the home. All doors shall be of the same character as the home.

**Standards:**

<p>R-10 and R-14</p>	<p>All of the following are required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Primary windows shall be proportioned vertically, rather than horizontally, and</li> <li>2. Vertical windows may be combined together to create a larger window area, and</li> <li>3. All doors shall be made of wood, fiberglass, metal, or glass and trimmed with three and one half inches (3 1/2") minimum head and jamb trim around the door, and</li> <li>4. Screen doors are permitted, and</li> <li>5. Primary entry doors shall face a street, park, common green, pocket park, or pedestrian easement and shall be paneled or have inset windows, and</li> <li>6. Sliding glass doors are not permitted along a frontage elevation or an elevation facing a pedestrian easement.</li> </ol>
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**SCALE, BULK, AND CHARACTER: Residential communities are intended for people and homes that have appropriate scale and bulk contribute to the sense of orientation to people. Variety in the character of homes helps to minimize visual monotony while helping to foster a perception of uniqueness of place.**

**Guidelines:** A diverse streetscape shall be provided by using elevations and models that demonstrate a variety of floor plans, home sizes, and character. Neighborhoods shall have a variety of home sizes and character.

**Standards:**

<p>R-10 and R-14</p>	<p>All of the following are required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The primary building form shall be the dominating form and elements such as porches, principal dormers, or other significant features shall not dominate, and</li> <li>2. Primary porch plate heights shall be one story. Stacked porches are allowed, and</li> <li>3. To differentiate the same models and elevations, different colors shall be used, and</li> <li>4. For single-family dwellings, no more than two (2) of the same model and elevation shall be built on the same block frontage and the same model and elevation shall not be abutting.</li> </ol>
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**ROOFS: Roof forms and profiles are an important component in the architectural character of homes and contribute to the massing, scale, and proportion of the home. Roofs also provide opportunity to create variety, especially for homes of the same model.**

**Guidelines:** Roofs shall represent a variety of forms and profiles that add character and relief to the landscape of the neighborhood. The use of bright colors, as well as roofing that is made of material like gravel and/or a reflective material, is discouraged.

**Standards:**

<p>R-10 and R-14</p>	<p>Both of the following are required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Primary roof pitch shall be a minimum six to twelve (6:12). If a gable roof is used, exit access from a third floor must face a public right of way for emergency access, and</li> <li>2. A variety of roofing colors shall be used within the development and all roof material shall be fire retardant.</li> </ol>
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**EAVES: The design of eaves and overhangs act as unifying elements in the architectural character of a home. When sized adequately and used consistently, they work to create desirable shadows that help to create visual interest especially from blank, unbroken**

<b>wall planes.</b>	
<b>Guidelines:</b> Eaves should be detailed and proportioned to complement the architectural style of the home.	
<b>Standards:</b>	
R-10 and R-14	The following is required: Eaves shall be at least twelve inches (12") with horizontal fascia or fascia gutter at least five inches (5") deep on the face of all eaves.
<b>ARCHITECTURAL DETAILING: Architectural detailing contributes to the visual appeal of a home and the community. It helps to create a desirable human scale and a perception of a quality well designed home.</b>	
<b>Guidelines:</b> Architectural detail shall be provided that is appropriate to the architectural character of the home. Detailing like trim, columns, and/or corner boards shall reflect the architectural character of the house.	
<b>Standards:</b>	
R-10 and R-14	<p>All of the following are required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Three and one half inches (3 1/2") minimum trim surrounds all windows and details all doors, and</li> <li>2. At least one of the following architectural details shall be provided on each home: shutters, knee braces, flower boxes, or columns, and</li> <li>3. Where siding is used, metal corner clips or corner boards shall be used and shall be at minimum two and one half inches (2 1/2") in width and painted. If shutters are used, they shall be proportioned to the window size to simulate the ability to cover them, and</li> <li>4. If columns are used, they shall be round, fluted, or strongly related to the home's architectural style. Six inches by six inches (6" x 6") posts may be allowed if chamfered and/or banded. Exposed four inches by four inches (4" x 4") and six inches by six inches (6" x 6") posts are prohibited.</li> </ol>

<p><b>MATERIALS AND COLOR: The use of a variety of materials and color contributes to the sense of diversity of housing stock in the community.</b></p>	
<p><b>Guidelines:</b> A diversity of materials and color shall be used on homes throughout the community. A variety of materials that are appropriate to the architectural character of the neighborhood shall be used. A diverse palette of colors shall be used to reduce monotony of color or tone.</p>	
<p><b>Standards:</b></p>	
<p>R-10 and R-14</p>	<p>All of the following are required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Acceptable exterior wall materials are: wood, cement fiberboard, stucco, stone, and standard sized brick three and one half inches by seven and one half inches (3 1/2" x 7 1/2") or three and five eighths inches by seven and five eighths inches (3 5/8" x 7 5/8"). Simulated stone, wood, stone, or brick may be used to detail homes, and</li> <li>2. When more than one material is used, changes in a vertical wall, such as from wood to brick, shall wrap the corners no less than twenty-four inches (24"). The material change shall occur at an internal corner or a logical transition such as aligning with a window edge or chimney. Material transition shall not occur at an exterior corner, and</li> <li>3. Multiple colors on buildings shall be provided. Muted deeper tones, as opposed to vibrant primary colors, shall be the dominant colors. Color palettes for all new structures, coded to the home elevations, shall be submitted for approval.</li> <li>4. Gutters and downspouts shall be integrated into the color scheme of the home and be painted, or of an integral color, to match the trim color.</li> </ol>