

**Department of Community and Economic Development
Planning Division
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY/CODE INTERPRETATION**

**ADMINISTRATIVE
POLICY/CODE**

INTERPRETATION #: CI-93

MUNICIPAL

CODE SECTIONS:

RMC 4-2-110A Residential Development Standards, RMC 4-2-110D
Conditions Associated with Residential Development Standards

REFERENCE:

N/A

SUBJECT:

Modification of Development Standards in the R-4 zone for Small Lot
Cluster Developments.

BACKGROUND:

RMC 4-4-110D.10 states that “small lot clusters of up to a maximum of fifty (50) lots shall be allowed within the R-4 zone, when at least thirty percent (30%) of the site is permanently set aside as “open space” or twenty percent (20%) in unique situations. RMC 4-2-110D.32 permits reductions in lot size, lot width, lot depth, front yard setbacks, side yard setbacks, side yard along a street setbacks, and impervious surface area standards for R-4 zoned properties that comply with the small lot cluster requirements to standards outlined in the R-6 zone. Reductions in the rear yard setback and maximum building coverage are not included. In addition it is not clear if the provisions listed under RMC 4-2-110D.34, which permit the reduction of one lot below the minimum lot size permitted within short plats less than 1 acre in area, would be applicable for cluster development.

JUSTIFICATION:

The purpose of the small lot cluster regulations is to allow an opportunity for R-6 lot development on a site to occur within the R-4 zone, when providing a significant amount of permanent “open space.” In exchange for the provision of open space, the applicant in the R-4 zone is granted the ability to adopt certain development standards from those permitted in the R-6 zone. The development standards currently available for adoption include: lot size, lot width, lot depth, front yard setbacks, side yard setbacks, side yard along a street setbacks, and impervious surface area standards. Reductions in the rear yard setback and maximum building coverage are not included, which appears to be an oversight as there doesn’t seem to be any advantage to selectively omitting certain development standards available for reduction for cluster developments.

In addition, it does not seem appropriate for cluster developments to also be able to utilize RMC 4-2-110D.34, which would permit short plats smaller than 1 acre in area to have one lot that is smaller than the minimum lot size. For developments smaller than 1 acre where the R-6 standards are applicable this would allow one lot to have an area of 6,250 square feet. Developments utilizing the small lot cluster standards are already getting substantial reductions in the minimum lot size requirements for all lots within the development; they should not be permitted to have additional reductions below the minimum lot size.

DECISION: The applicable code sections should be amended as specified below.

**ADMINISTRATOR/
PLANNING DIRECTOR
APPROVAL:**

C. E. "Chip" Vincent

DATE:

**APPEAL
PROCESS:**

To appeal this determination, a written appeal--accompanied by the required filing fee--must be filed with the City's Hearing Examiner (1055 South Grady Way, Renton, WA 98057, 425-430-6515) no more than 14 days from the date of this decision. Your submittal should explain the basis for the appeal. Section 4-8-110 of the Renton Municipal Code provides further information on the appeal process.

**CODE
AMENDMENTS
NEEDED TO
IMPLEMENT
DETERMINATIONS:**

**RMC 4-2-110A DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL ZONING DESIGNATIONS
(PRIMARILY AND ATTACHED ACCESSORY STRUCTURES)**

	RC	R-1	R-4 ^{10, 32}	R-6	R-8	R-10	R-14	RMF
Minimum Net Density (per Net Acre) ^{1, 15}	None			3 dwelling units	4 dwelling units	5 dwelling units ³⁰	7 dwelling units ³⁰	Townhouse Development: n/a Other Attached Dwellings: 10 dwelling units ³⁰
Maximum Net Density (per Net Acre, Except per Net 10 Acres in	1 dwelling unit	1 dwelling unit ³⁶	4 dwelling units	6 dwelling units	8 dwelling units	10 dwelling units ³⁵	14 dwelling units ^{35, 37}	20 dwelling units ²⁹

	RC	R-1	R-4 ^{10, 32}	R-6	R-8	R-10	R-14	RMF
RC) ^{2, 14, 15}								
Maximum Number of Dwellings (per Legal Lot) ²	1 dwelling with 1 accessory dwelling unit ⁷					Detached dwellings: 1 dwelling with 1 accessory dwelling unit Attached dwellings: n/a		Per Maximum Net Density
Minimum Lot Size ^{28, 31}	10 acres	1 acre ^{3, 32}	9,000 sq. ft. ^{10, 32, 34}	7,000 sq. ft. ³⁴	5,000 sq. ft. ³⁴	Detached dwellings: 4,000 sq. ft. Attached dwellings: n/a	Detached dwellings: 3,000 sq. ft. Attached dwellings: n/a	n/a
Minimum Lot Width ³¹	150 ft.	100 ft. ³²	70 ft. ^{10, 32}	60 ft.	50 ft.	40 ft.	30 ft.	Townhouse Development: 25 ft. Other Attached Dwellings: 50 ft.
Minimum Lot Width ³¹ (Corner Lots)	175 ft.	110 ft. ³²	80 ft. ³²	70 ft.	60 ft.	50 ft.	40 ft.	Townhouse Development: 30 ft. Other Attached Dwellings: 60 ft.
Minimum Lot Depth ³¹	300 ft.	200 ft. ^{3, 32}	100 ft. ^{10, 32}	90 ft.	80 ft.	70 ft.	60 ft.	Townhouse Development: 50 ft. Other Attached Dwellings: 65 ft.
Minimum Front Yard ^{4, 5, 6, 31}	30 ft.	30 ft.	30 ft. ^{10, 12, 32, 33}	25 ft.	20 ft. except when all vehicle access is taken from an alley, then 15 ft. ¹¹	20 ft. except when all vehicle access is taken from an alley, then 15 ft. ¹¹	15 ft., except when all vehicle access is taken from an alley, then 10 ft. ¹¹	Townhouse Development: 10 ft. ¹¹ Other Attached Dwellings: 20 ft. ¹¹
Minimum Rear Yard ^{4, 31}	35 ft.	30 ft.	25 ft. ^{10, 32, 33}	25 ft.	20 ft. ³⁹	15 ft. ^{21, 39}	10 ft. ^{21, 39}	Townhouse Development: 10 ft. ¹³ Other Attached Dwellings: 15 ft. ¹³

	RC	R-1	R-4 ^{10, 32}	R-6	R-8	R-10	R-14	RMF
Minimum Side Yard ^{4, 31}	25 ft.	15 ft.	Combined 20 ft. with not less than 7.5 ft. on either side.	Combined 15 ft. with not less than 5 ft. on either side.	5 ft.	Detached Units: 4 ft. Attached Units: 4 ft. for unattached side(s), 0 ft. for the attached side(s). ²³	Detached Units: 4 ft. Attached Units: 4 ft. for unattached side(s), 0 ft. for the attached side(s). ²³	Nonconforming Lot Width: 5 ft. ¹³ Lot Width Exceeding Minimum: setback is increased by one foot (1') (not to exceed 12') for every 10' of lot width beyond 50' ¹³
Minimum Side Yard ^{4, 5, 31} (along a Street)	30 ft.	30 ft.	30 ft. ^{40, 12, 32, 33}	25 ft.	15 ft. ¹¹	15 ft. ¹¹	15 ft. ¹¹	Nonconforming lot width: 10 ft. ^{11, 13} Conforming lot width: 20 ft.
Maximum Building Coverage (including Primary and Accessory)	10%	20%	35%	40%	50%	55%	65%	Townhouse Development: 70% Other Attached Dwellings: 35% A maximum coverage of 45% may be allowed through the Hearing Examiner site development plan review process.
Maximum Impervious Surface Area	15%	25%	50%	55%	65%	70%	80%	75%
Maximum Number of Stories	3			2				
Maximum Wall Plate Height ^{8, 9, 12, 18, 19}	32 ft.			24 ft.			24 ft., increase up to 32 ft. possible subject to administrative conditional	32 ft.

	RC	R-1	R-4 ^{10, 32}	R-6	R-8	R-10	R-14	RMF
							use permit approval	
Maximum Number of Units per Building	n/a					No more than 4 units per building.	No more than 6 units per building.	n/a
Minimum Tree Density	2 significant trees per 5,000 sq. ft. See RMC 4-4-130 .					Attached units: 4 significant trees per 5,000 sq. ft. See RMC 4-4-130 .		n/a
Minimum Freeway Frontage Setback	10 ft. landscaped setback from the street property line.							
Maximum Wireless Communication Facilities Height (including Amateur Radio Antennas)	See RMC 4-4-140 , Wireless Communication Facilities. Amateur radio antennas are allowed a maximum height of 6 feet without a Conditional Use Permit. Larger structures will have a maximum height determined by the Conditional Use Permit process, RMC 4-9-030 , Conditional Use Permits.							
Design Standards	See RMC 4-2-115 , Residential Design and Open Space Standards.							
Landscaping	See RMC 4-4-070 , Landscaping.							
Exterior Lighting	See RMC 4-4-075 , Lighting, Exterior On-Site.							
Screening	See RMC 4-4-095 , Screening and Storage Height/Location Limitations.							
Exception for Pre-Existing Legal Lots	See RMC 4-10-010 , Nonconforming Lots.							

4-2-110D CONDITIONS ASSOCIATED WITH DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS TABLE FOR RESIDENTIAL ZONING DESIGNATIONS

10. Cluster development, with a maximum of fifty (50) lots, shall be allowed within the R-4 zone when at least thirty percent (30%) of the site is permanently set aside as “open space,” as defined in RMC [4-11-150](#). Such open space shall be situated to act as a visual buffer between lot clusters and other development in the zone. The percentage of required open space may be reduced to twenty percent (20%) of the site when:

- a. Public access is provided to open space; and
- b. If soft surface trails are provided within critical areas or critical area buffers pursuant to RMC [4-3-050](#); and

c. All portions of a site that are not dedicated to platted single family lots, a dedicated right-of-way, or utility improvements shall be set in a separate tract and/or tracts to preserve existing viable stands of trees or other native vegetation. The tract may also be used as a receiving area for tree replacement requirements in accordance with RMC 4-4-130H. Such tracts shall be shown and recorded on the face of the plat to be preserved in perpetuity. Such tracts may be included in contiguous open space for the purposes of qualifying for cluster development. Where trees are removed, they shall be replaced in accordance with RMC 4-4-130H.

32. When cluster development is allowed, specified development standards are allowed to be reduced, as indicated below:

- a. R-1 Zone: Ten thousand (10,000) square feet minimum lot size. Minimum lot width and minimum lot depth shall apply the standards of the R-4 zone.
- b. R-4 Zone: ~~Minimum lot size, minimum lot width, minimum lot depth, minimum front yard, minimum side yard, minimum side yard along a street, and impervious surface area~~ shall apply adhere to the development standards of the R-6 zone.

34. For short plats of parcels smaller than one acre, one parcel may be allowed to be smaller than the required minimum lot size indicated in subsection A of this Section, Residential Development Standards. If all other parcels meet the required minimum lot size standard of the zone, one parcel may be allowed to meet the following reduced minimum lot size (not applicable for cluster development):

- a. R-4: Eight thousand (8,000) square feet.
- b. R-6: Six thousand two hundred fifty (6,250) square feet.
- c. R-8: Four thousand five hundred (4,500) square feet.