



Planning Commission

Summary of 2021 Building Permits Issued for New Residential Units in Low Density Neighborhoods

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Title

Summary of 2021 Building Permits Issued for New Residential Units in Low Density Neighborhoods

Recommended Action

Information only. No action requested.

Report

Issue:

Discussion on the 2021 Building Permits Issued for New Residential Units in Low Density Neighborhoods.

Staff Contact:

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Presenter(s):

Joyce Phillips, Principal Planner, Community Planning and Development

Background and Analysis:

Background

In December 2020, the Housing Options ordinance was approved, increasing the variety of housing types allowed in several zoning districts. The code language was written to implement provisions in state law (RCW 36.70A.600) to encourage an increase in residential building supply. One such provision was that multiple unit structures (e.g. duplexes and triplexes) would be allowed on "each" parcel where single family homes are permitted. For that reason, the minimum lot size needed to build a duplex or triplex does not increase with the number of units proposed.

The majority of the city and its urban growth area are designated as Low Density Neighborhood on the Future Land Use Map in the Comprehensive Plan. Our plan identifies that Low Density Neighborhoods will generally be of a density of twelve units per acre or less. There was some concern that achieved density could potentially exceed the density allowed because the minimum lot sizes needed to build multiple unit residences does not specifically increase with the number of units proposed.

To address that concern, staff proposed code language requiring the City look at residential building permits issued in the zoning districts that implement the Low Density Neighborhood areas of the city on an annual basis. This was adopted and is in Section 18.04.080(A)(6) of the Olympia Municipal Code. By regularly looking at the data and achieved density, the City should have time to make any adjustments needed to ensure development occurring in low density neighborhoods is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Building Permit Date (2021)

In 2021, there were ninety-three (93) building permits issued for new residences in the six zoning districts that implement the Low Density Neighborhood designation. Of these, seven (7) were for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). The other eighty-six (86) permits issued were for single family homes, most of which were in a recently approved subdivision on the westside called Wellington Heights. A map showing the distribution of these building permits across the City is attached.

Staff also looked at the number of permits issued by zoning district and areas of activity associated with the permits. Most permits were issued for a recently approved subdivision (Wellington Heights) and on vacant lots of record on Allen Road, near 18th Ave SE. For the general distribution of the permits, see the attached map.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

Staff anticipated that some members of the community will be interested to know how many permits were issued for new residences in the low density zoning districts, where the permits were issued, and the type of residences that are being constructed. Over time, as more permits are issued, the interest is expected to include achieved density in Olympia's residential neighborhoods.

Options:

Information only - No action requested.

Financial Impact:

None.

Attachments:

Permits Issued Summary
Map of Issued Permits