



PREPARED FOR THE PLAN COMMISSION

Proposal: Zoning Text Amendment

Legistar File ID #: [89916](#) (Minimum Lot Area & Lot Width, Rear Setbacks)

Prepared By: Zoning and Planning Staff

[89916](#) – This code change modifies minimum lot width and minimum lot area requirements in various residential districts. It also makes some reductions to rear setbacks, particularly for alley-accessed lots and single family attached dwellings.

Changes to minimum lot width and lot area are intended to allow a modest increase in the opportunity for division of existing oversized lots or consolidation of multiple lots to build additional housing and to allow for some design flexibility, while also maintaining existing residential zoning districts and the differences between them. Earlier this year, [code changes](#) were made to enable more deep residential lots, or backyard lots, to be created for housing, and this code change opens up more opportunities for backyard lots.

Here are two examples of how these changes may enable more lot divisions for housing:

- Many lots in the SRC1 district were originally platted at 65' wide or greater, which aligned with the requirements of the zoning code in place at the time. The proposed reduction of minimum lot width to 55' in this current code change could allow an existing 65' wide lot to potentially be divided into a 55' wide front lot, providing the 10' wide street frontage required to create the access to a backyard lot. Many lots in this district already greatly exceed the lot width minimum and some may have options for subdivision.
- The reduction of minimum lot area proposed in this code change, when paired with the reduction of minimum lot depth to 75' in a code change adopted earlier in 2025, may enable the division of some large corner lots.

In the TR-R district, in addition to a reduction in minimum lot area, district-specific limits on accessory structure size and detached garages are removed to make the standards in the district consistent with other residential zoning districts. Maximum lot coverage is increased to bring the district closer to maximum lot coverage allowed in other low density residential districts, while maintaining that the district has the lowest maximum lot coverage.

Changes to decrease the minimum lot area per dwelling unit in the TR-V1 and TR-V2 districts are intended to legalize existing density in those districts.

In multiple residential districts, the lesser of a percentage of lot depth option for minimum rear setback is adjusted so that the percentage aligns with the non-percentage number.

The code change also decreases rear setbacks on alley accessed lots. Alley lots have been used relatively sparingly in Madison but are an option. The proposed code change expands an existing provision, which allows for reduced rear setbacks for alley accessed lots in some districts, to additional residential zoning districts. Most of the current allowances for reduced rear setbacks are limited to alley loaded one-story

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attached garages, with the intent of allowing greater flexibility in lot development and the same rear setback for one-story attached garages as for detached garages. Some districts have an existing rear setback of 2' that is proposed to change to 3' to better align it with the existing 3' rear setback for detached garages, better meeting the original code intent.

Additionally, the rear setback reduction is expanded to the single family attached use, better known as townhomes, to further enable this type of housing.

A change to non-residential maximum lot coverage and maximum building coverage in the SR-C1 district is made to correct an error made in a previous code change.

Staff supports this amendment.