

TO: UDC Update Advisory Committee Members
FROM: Freese and Nichols, Inc.
SUBJECT: April 6 Discussion Topics: Zoning District Strategy and Housing Types
DATE: 3/26/2026
PROJECT: Pflugerville Unified Development Code Update

Purpose

This memorandum provides background and policy direction on three key topics in the draft Unified Development Code (UDC):

1. Residential district strategy and housing variety
2. Single-Family Residential (SF-R) district standards
3. Detached condominiums and build-to-rent development

The purpose of this memo is to prepare the Advisory Committee for discussion and obtain direction on several policy choices that influence how the UDC implements the Comprehensive Plan. These topics reflect areas where multiple approaches are possible and where the consultant and City staff have worked together to identify a preferred direction for consideration.

Overall Context

The draft UDC builds on the City's 2040 Aspire Comprehensive Plan, the diagnostic assessment, and ongoing staff input. The overall approach is to refine and modernize the code while maintaining predictability for residents and applicants.

In general, the draft UDC:

- Maintains the core structure of the existing districts where they are functioning well
- Introduces targeted tools to expand housing variety
- Focuses on clear, implementable standards rather than discretionary processes
- Seeks to balance flexibility with compatibility

Topic 1: Residential District Strategy and Housing Variety

Background

The Comprehensive Plan calls for a broader range of housing types, including “missing middle” housing, while maintaining compatibility with existing neighborhoods. The diagnostic assessment similarly identified opportunities to expand housing options and simplify the district structure.

Some recommendations in the assessment report included:

- Allowing additional housing types within existing districts
- Eliminating or consolidating certain districts, including SF-E and 2-F

Discussion

The draft UDC expands housing options while maintaining the established expectations of existing neighborhoods.

Rather than broadly modifying existing districts, the proposed strategy:

- Retains existing districts for stability and predictability
- Introduces new districts (NFR Neighborhood Flex Residential and N-MU Neighborhood Mixed-Use) to accommodate additional housing types
- Uses targeted tools instead of widespread changes to existing neighborhoods

Key elements include:

- SF-E District
 - Retained as a zoning tool for potential future use. The district is not currently mapped but remains available if needed.
- 2-F and NFR Districts
 - Instead of allowing duplexes broadly:
 - The 2-F district is retained, and
 - The NFR district is introduced
 - This provides targeted locations for duplexes and similar housing types while maintaining predictability in existing single-family areas.
- N-MU District
 - Provides an additional option for a mix of residential types and limited neighborhood-serving non-residential uses in appropriate locations.

Key Questions

1. Does the City support retaining the SF-E district as a zoning tool for potential future use?
2. Does the City support maintaining the 2-F district and introducing the NFR district as targeted tools, rather than permitting duplexes broadly in existing single-family districts?

Topic 2: Single-Family Residential (SF-R) District Standards

Background

The SF-R district is intended to accommodate suburban single-family neighborhoods while allowing a range of lot sizes within a coordinated subdivision design. This district supports the Comprehensive Plan by expanding housing options and price points while maintaining overall neighborhood character.

Discussion

The draft UDC introduces a structured approach to lot variety within SF-R developments. Rather than relying on multiple zoning districts, the district allows a mix of lot sizes within a single subdivision. This approach provides flexibility in neighborhood design while ensuring that development remains cohesive, intentional, and compatible with surrounding areas.

1. Integrated Lot Variety Approach

The SF-R district includes three lot types within a single development framework:

- Large lots (minimum 7,500 sq ft)
- Standard lots (minimum 6,250 sq ft)
- Small lots (minimum 4,500 sq ft)

Each lot type has corresponding dimensional standards, including lot width, depth, and setbacks, allowing flexibility in how subdivisions are designed.

To ensure that a range of housing options is provided within each neighborhood, the district also includes lot mix requirements:

- Standard lots may comprise up to 50 percent of the total lots
- Small lots may comprise up to 25 percent of the total lots
- Small lots may be concentrated on individual blocks under certain conditions

In addition, all small lots are required to be alley-loaded, which helps improve streetscape design and reduces the visual prominence of garages and driveways.

2. Design and Layout Standards

- Development must occur as part of a coordinated subdivision (minimum 10 acres)
- Alley-loaded requirements for smaller lots:
 - Improve pedestrian orientation
 - Reduce driveway conflicts
 - Support more cohesive neighborhood design

Key Question

Does the City support this approach of allowing and requiring a mix of lot sizes within SF-R subdivisions to promote a broader range of housing options while maintaining a single-family neighborhood character?

Topic 3: Detached Condominiums and Build-to-Rent Development

Background

Detached condominiums and build-to-rent (BTR) developments are increasingly common in suburban communities. These developments:

- Appear similar to conventional single-family neighborhoods
- Function differently in terms of ownership and site design

As noted in national research, these housing types often “hide in plain sight” within traditional subdivision forms.

Discussion

The City’s current zoning framework does not clearly accommodate these development types, which fall between traditional single-family and multi-family categories. As a result, they are often addressed through workarounds or discretionary approvals.

The draft UDC proposes a more direct and consistent approach by establishing a unified development framework for these housing types. This framework provides a clear and predictable path that aligns zoning standards with how these developments are built in practice, while maintaining compatibility with single-family neighborhoods and avoiding reliance on discretionary processes.

1. Unified Development Type

The draft UDC introduces “Single-Unit Detached Residential Development” as a single framework that applies to:

- Detached condominiums
- Build-to-rent communities
- Conventional fee simple subdivisions

This approach focuses on the physical form of development rather than ownership structure, allowing flexibility while maintaining a consistent neighborhood pattern.

2. Application of Base District Standards

Development is required to comply with SF-S dimensional standards, ensuring that:

- The scale and layout are consistent with single-family neighborhoods
- Development remains compatible with surrounding areas
- A new or separate dimensional framework is not required

3. Alley-Loaded Incentive Option

An optional incentive allows for up to a 20 percent reduction in lot size and setbacks when:

- Dwellings are served by rear-loaded access (alleys or shared drives)
- Parking is located behind buildings
- Pedestrian access is maintained

This option is intended to:

- Encourage improved streetscape design

- Reduce the visual prominence of garages
- Support more walkable neighborhood environments

4. Long-Term Flexibility and Layout

Development may be:

- Subdivided into individual lots
- Established as condominium units
- Maintained under common ownership

Regardless of ownership structure, sites are designed to function similarly to a conventional subdivision. This allows development to adapt over time, including the potential to replat into individual lots in the future.

Key Question

Does the City support defining and regulating these developments as a unified development type using SF-S standards with an optional alley-loaded incentive?