

TEXT AMENDMENTS TO REDUCE HOUSING BARRIERS

Text & Plan Amendment
P25-00996

PURPOSE

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- Prohousing Designation
 - Fulfill Prohousing Designation commitments to re-establish the City's Designation.
 - Commitments include completing certain projects and Code updates to reduce barriers to housing.
- 2023-2031 6th Cycle Housing Element
 - Adopted by City Council in Dec. 2024 and certified by HCD in Jan. 2025.
 - Program 25: Development Code Amendments for Compliance with State Law and to Reduce Barriers to Housing Development.
- State Law
 - State laws have preempted City zoning regulations, creating the need to update & align the Development Code with current State requirements.

TEXT AMENDMENT

Text Amendment P25-00996 proposes:

1. Allow Tiny Homes on Wheels as a primary home, similar to a manufactured home per the City's prohousing designation;
2. Update certain design standards for manufactured homes used as a primary home per State law;
3. Change "single-family" and "multi-family" to "single-unit" and "multi-unit" to avoid assigning any definition to "family" per the Housing Element;
4. Update the Use Tables to clarify that agricultural labor housing is allowed in the same zones where Crop Cultivation is allowed per State law;
5. Reduce the minimum density of RM-MH zone district (mobile homes) from 12 to 8 du/ac to better match existing density of mobile home parks; and
6. Update regulations pertaining to Accessory Dwelling Units per State law and to improve clarity.

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT CODE UPDATES BY TOPIC

Topic	Reason	Code Sections
1. Allow Tiny Homes on Wheels as a primary home, similar to a manufactured home.	Prohousing	15-2738
2. Update certain design standards for manufactured homes used as a primary home.	State law	15-2738
3. Change “single-family” and “multi-family” to “single-unit” and “multi-unit” to avoid issues with assigning a definition to “family.”	State law	15-107, 15-310, 15-313, 15-404, 15-405, 15-9, 15-901, 15-902, 15-903, 15-904, 15-906, 15-10, 15-1001, 15-1002, 15-1003, 15-1004, 15-1101, 15-1104, 15-1201, 15-1204, 15-1304, 15-1606, 15-1609, 15-2004, 15-2006, 15-2008, 15-2012, 15-2015, 15-2016, 15-2303, 15-2304, 15-2305, 15-2308, 15-2311, 15-2405, 15-2409, 15-2414, 15-2416, 15-2421, 15-2429, 15-2609, 15-2612, 15-2713, 15-2716, 15-2720, 15-2722, 15-2723, 15-2725, 15-2734, 15-2735, 15-2738, 15-2746, 15-2747, 15-2753, 15-2754, 15-2763, 15-3701, 15-3804, 15-3906, 15-4103, 15-4105, 15-4108, 15-4906, 15-4907, 15-5102, 15-6102, 15-6702
4. Update the Use Tables to clarify that agricultural labor housing is allowed in the same zones Crop Cultivation is allowed.	State law; improve clarity	15-902, 15-1002, 15-1302, 15-1402, 15-6707
5. Reduce the minimum density of RM-MH zone district from 12 to 8 du/ac.	Match existing mobile home park density	15-1003
6. Update regulations pertaining to Accessory Dwelling Units.	State law; improve clarity	15-310, 15-802, 15-902, 15-1002, 15-1102, 15-1202, 15-1502, 15-2004, 15-2409, 15-2723, 15-2753, 15-2754, 15-4907, 15-6702

1. Tiny Homes as Primary

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Add Subsection E to §15-2738.

E. A Tiny House on Wheels (THOW) may be considered a manufactured home and therefore used as a primary dwelling unit. THOWs shall comply with Subsections A, B, C.6, C.7, and D above. THOWs must additionally be ANSI certified and be placed on an engineered foundation system.

Subsection A: General Requirements

Subsection B: Underlying Districts

Subsection C.6: Skirting

Subsection C.7: Building Orientation

1. Tiny Homes as Primary

The Fresno Municipal Code defines a tiny house on wheels (THOW) as a structure intended for separate, independent living quarters for one household that meets these six conditions:

- i. Is licensed and registered with the California Department of Motor Vehicles and meets ANSI 119.2 or 119.5 requirements;
- ii. Is towable by a bumper hitch, frame-towing hitch, or fifth-wheel connection. Cannot (and is designed not to) move under its own power. When sited on a parcel per requirements of this Code, the wheels and undercarriage shall be skirted;
- iii. Is no larger than allowed by California State Law for movement on public highways;
- iv. Has at least 100 square feet of first floor interior living space;
- v. Is a detached self-contained unit which includes basic functional areas that support normal daily routines such as cooking, sleeping, and toiletry; and
- vi. Is designed and built to look like a conventional building structure.

2. Manufactured Home Design Standards

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Update Subsection C.7 of §15-2738.

C.7. Building Orientation. The home, including the primary entrance, shall face the street, if required by the underlying zone district.

3. “Family” to “Unit”

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Change all instances of “single-family” and “multi-family” in Development Code to “single-unit” and “multi-unit.”

Example

5. ***Planned Development Districts.*** For requirements in single-~~family~~[unit] residential development see Residential Single-~~Family~~[Unit] Districts, for multi-~~family~~[unit] and mixed-use development see Residential Multi-~~Family~~[Unit] and Mixed-Use Districts, and for commercial and employment development see Commercial and Employment Districts above.

4. Agricultural Labor Housing

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Add “Agricultural Labor Housing” as a Permitted Use to the Use Tables under § 15-902, § 15-1002, § 15-1302, § 15-1402.

Update the definition of “agricultural labor housing” under § 15-6707 to include a reference to the California Health and Safety Code.

Agricultural Labor Housing. Living accommodations for employees and their immediate families employed for the exclusive purpose of agricultural pursuits either on the premises or off site. It includes single or multi-unit dwellings, including mobile homes and dormitories. [See California Health and Safety Code Sections 17021.5 and 17021.6.](#)

5. RM-MH Zone District Minimum Density

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Reduce the minimum density for the RM-MH Zone District from 12 dwelling units per acre to 8 dwelling units per acre.

6. Accessory Dwelling Units

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- Update terminology from “Second Dwelling Units, Backyard Cottages, and Accessory Living Quarters” to “Second/Accessory Dwelling Units.”
- Remove references to covenants that limit ADU development.
- Update § 15-2754 with new version.
- New version will match State law, carry over some allowable provisions from existing Code, and minor added flexibility.

If adopted, required to submit to HCD for review.

6. Accessory Dwelling Units

Existing Version

Three types: Second Dwelling Unit, Backyard Cottage, and Accessory Living Quarters

Contains out-of-date restrictions re: min. lot size and coverage, subjective design standards, setbacks, etc.

Allows Tiny Homes on Wheels as a Backyard Cottage

Largest unit allowed = 1,250 sq. ft.

1 parking space for 1 bd second dwelling unit and 2 spaces for 2+ bd. None required for backyard cottages or accessory living quarters

Prohibits conversions from an accessory structure

Setbacks are per the underlying zone district

Does not allow conveyance

Requires owner occupancy of one unit; only one unit may be rented at a time

New Version

Two types, the same as referenced in State law: ADU (detached and attached) and JADU. Both are a Second Dwelling Unit

Removes restrictions that are now unenforceable due to preemption by State law

Allows Tiny Homes on Wheels as a detached ADU

Largest unit allowed = 1,400 sq. ft. or 50% of primary, whichever is greater

No additional parking required, in alignment with State law

Permits conversions, in alignment with State law.

Setbacks = 4 ft. or less, if the underlying zone district is less or if fronting an alley (compliant with State law)

Allows conveyance pursuant to State law and the Development Code

Removes owner-occupancy requirement, in alignment with State law. Requires rental terms of 30+ days, in alignment with State law

PLAN AMENDMENT

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Amend Table 3-1: Citywide Standards for Density and Development Intensity of the Fresno General Plan to include the following note:

“The minimum density of the RM-MH Zone District (within the Medium High Density Land Use designation) is 8 units per acre.”

TABLE 3-1: CITYWIDE STANDARDS FOR DENSITY AND DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY

Land Use	Minimum to Maximum Residential Density (du/net acre) ^{1,2,3}	Maximum Floor Area Ratio
Buffer	Max = 0.05 (1 unit per 20 net acres)	-
Residential		
Low Density	Min = 1 unit per 5 acres Max = 3.5 units per acre	-
Medium Low Density	Min = 3.5 units per acre Max = 6 units per acre	-
Medium Density	Min = 5 units per acre Max = 12 units per acre	-
Medium High Density	Min = 12 units per acre ⁴ Max = 16 units per acre	-
Urban Neighborhood Density	Min = 16 units per acre Max = 30 units per acre	-
High Density	Min = 30 units per acre Max = 45 units per acre	-
Commercial		
Main Street		1.0
Community		1.0
Recreation		0.5
General		2.0
Highway & Auto		0.75
Regional		1.0
Mixed-Use		
Neighborhood Mixed-Use	Min = 12 units per acre Max = No Limit	1.5
Corridor/Center Mixed-Use	Min = 16 units per acre Max = No Limit	1.5
Regional Mixed-Use	Min = 30 units per acre Max = No Limit	2.0
Downtown		
Downtown Neighborhood	Min = No limit Max = No limit	No limit
Downtown General	Min = No limit Max = No limit	No limit
Downtown Core	Min = No limit Max = No limit	No limit
Employment		
Office	-	2.0
Business Park	-	1.0
Regional Business Park	-	1.0
Light Industrial	-	1.5
Heavy Industrial	-	1.5

1. Based on Net Acreage.

2. Residential density refers to the ratio of residential dwelling units per acre (43,560 square feet) of land which is calculated by dividing the number of existing or proposed residential dwelling units by the land area of the property designated for, or proposed for development with, a residential use. The residential land area includes property upon which the residential and ancillary structures are located, together with yards and other private or common open spaces, and includes vehicle access drives and parking areas together with public and private roadways. The residential land area does not include major streets or State Routes designated by Figure MT-1: General Plan Circulation Diagram, and does not include schools or regional trails.

3. Additional density may be allowed for affordable housing or provision of community benefits (pursuant to California Government Code Sections 65915 – 65918, as may be amended).

4. The minimum density of the RM-MH Zone District (within the Medium High Density Land Use designation) is 8 units per acre.

PROJECT REVIEW & PUBLIC NOTICE

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Date	Review	Comments
5/8/25	Council District 1	THOWs: motivation and allowances. Manufactured homes: design requirements. Ag labor housing location and changes to ADUs.
4/22/25	Council District 3	THOWs: build quality; infrastructure; not group/commercial settings; appropriate fees. THOWs & ADUs: design standards.
4/15/25	Council District 4	THOWs/ADUs: Technical & financial assistance for affordability.
5/14/25	Council District 6	Family to Unit: motivation and scope. Minimum Density: motivation and impact.
5/6/25	Tower District Design Review	No quorum 05/06. Scheduled to meet 01/03.

Council Districts 2, 5, and 7 did not have established committees at the time of routing.

Notice published in Fresno Bee on May 30, 2025.

- Also posted to Clerk's notices page and sent to notices email list.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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- ☐ Review of public comments received

RECOMMENDATION & ACTION

1. **ADOPTION** of a finding set forth in Environmental Assessment No. P25-00996 dated May 12, 2025 that the environmental determination that Plan & Text Amendment Application No. P25-0096 is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines.
2. **BILL** (for introduction) amending the following sections of the Fresno Municipal Code:
 - a. Section 15-2738, updating regulations pertaining to tiny houses on wheels (THOW) and design standards for manufactured homes;
 - b. Section 15-903, updating regulations pertaining to minimum density in the RM-MH zone district;
 - c. Sections 15-310, 15-802, 15-902, 15-1002, 15-1102, 15-1202, 15-1502, 15-2004, 15-2409, 15-2723, 15-2753, 15-2754, 15-4907, and 15-6702 of the Fresno Municipal Code, updating regulations pertaining to accessory dwellings units;
 - d. Sections 15-902, 15-1002, 15-1302, 15-1402, and 15-6707, updating regulations pertaining to where agricultural labor housing is permitted; and
 - e. Sections 15-107, 15-310, 15-313, 15-404, 15-405, 15-9, 15-901, 15-902, 15-903, 15-904, 15-906, 15-10, 15-1001, 15-1002, 15-1003, 15-1004, 15-1101, 15-1104, 15-1201, 15-1204, 15-1304, 15-1606, 15-1609, 15-2004, 15-2006, 15-2008, 15-2012, 15-2015, 15-2016, 15-2303, 15-2304, 15-2305, 15-2308, 15-2311, 15-2405, 15-2409, 15-2414, 15-2416, 15-2421, 15-2429, 15-2609, 15-2612, 15-2713, 15-2716, 15-2720, 15-2722, 15-2723, 15-2725, 15-2734, 15-2735, 15-2738, 15-2746, 15-2747, 15-2753, 15-2754, 15-2763, 15-3701, 15-3804, 15-3906, 15-4103, 15-4105, 15-4108, 15-4906, 15-4907, 15-5102, 15-6102, and 15-6702, updating language from “single-family” and “multi-family” to “single-unit” and “multi-unit.”
3. **RESOLUTION** amending Chapter 3, Table 3-1, of the Fresno General Plan: Citywide Standards for Density and Development Intensity, pertaining to minimum density of the RM-MH Zone District.