

Proposed Zoning Text Amendment

Lot Width Reduction for Infill Development

City Commission – Committee of the Whole Presentation

Kristin Turkelson, Planning Director
March 15th, 2022

Overview

- Set March 29th, 2022, as the date to consider a Zoning Text Amendment
- Proposed amendment is to allow a reduction to the lot width requirement for single and two-family dwellings
- Planning Commission held public hearing on February 24, 2022 and recommend approval of the amendment

Background

- Amendment was submitted by the Fulton Group. Their objective was:
 - Provide opportunity for additional housing supply
 - Assist in eliminating the need for a dimensional variance for vacant lots
 - Support in the reinvestment of the city's neighborhoods
 - Support the preservation of existing housing structures
- Collaborative effort between Planning Department staff, Ms. Lynee Wells of Aligned Planning (The Fulton Group representative) and Mr. Ryan Kilpatrick of Housing Next.
- Together we further develop the proposed ordinance language so that could be appropriately integrated into the current Zoning Ordinance.

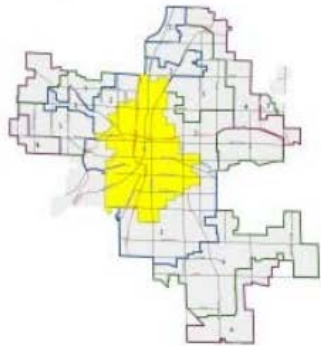
Overview of Text Amendment

- Allow for the reduction of lot widths for newly created lots supporting single and two-family
 - Lots without alley access: may be reduced to 36 feet minimum.
 - Lots with alley access: may be less than 36 feet, but no less than the original plat.
- Review process for lot width reduction is consistent with review process for new use:
 - Single-family dwellings - staff review
 - Two-family dwellings – Planning Commission for LDR zone districts and staff review for MDR zone districts.
- Facilitate infill development on smaller vacant and underutilized side yards,
- Meet Administrative Departure review standards including compatibility of adjacent properties within the neighborhood.
- May not be used in conjunction with any demolition thus preserving existing residential structures.

Neighborhood Development

Neighborhood Patterns

Turn of the Century Neighborhood



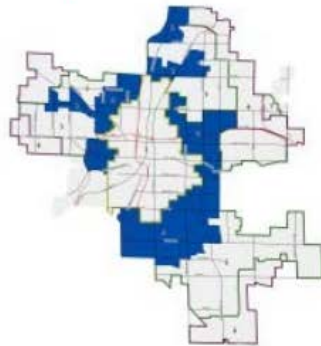
Development Era
Built between 1850 and 1900 in and around the central city.

Street Pattern and Block Size

- Straight connected streets, with alleys and sidewalk predominant.
- Grid
- Smaller blocks (400 feet or less).



Early 20th Century Neighborhood



Development Era
Approximately 1900 to 1945. Developed around street car lines.

Street Pattern and Block Size

- Straight connected streets, with sidewalks predominant.
- Grid, introduction of curvilinear
- Smaller and medium sized blocks (400-600 feet).



Post War Neighborhood



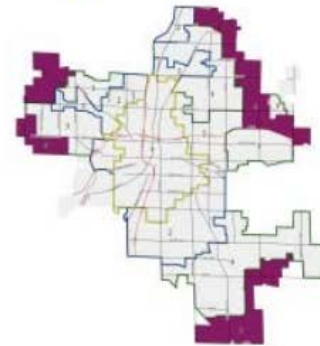
Development Era
Built after World War II, approximately 1945 to 1970.

Street Pattern and Block Size

- Curvilinear streets, introduction of cul-de-sacs. May or may not have sidewalks.
- Medium (400-600 feet) to large blocks (600 feet or more).



Late 20th Century Neighborhood



Development Era
1970 to present. mately 1945 to 1970.

Street Pattern and Block Size

- Curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs. Few sidewalks.
- Large blocks (600 feet or more) and superblocks (½ - 1 mile).



Turn of the Century neighborhoods and Early 20th Century neighborhoods

- Developed between 1850 and 1945
- The predominate lot widths (for residential areas) measure between 33 to 50 feet

Post War neighborhoods

- Developed after World War II, between 1945 and 1970
- The lot widths (for residential areas) measure between 40 to 90 feet, with some multi-family lots measuring up to 150 feet

Late 20th Century neighborhoods

- Developed after 1970
- The lot widths (for residential areas) measure between 60 to 120 feet, with multi-family lots measuring between 150-800 feet in width

Practical Application

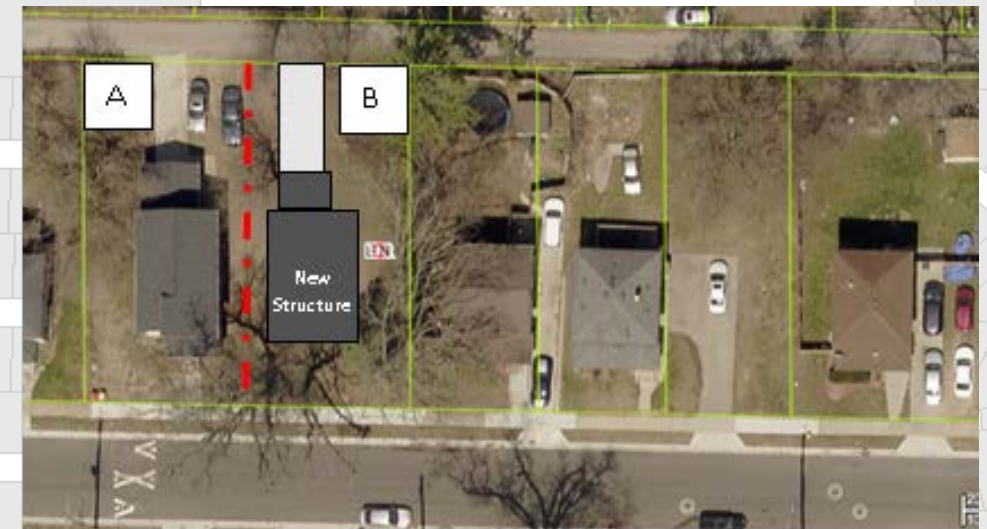
Extra wide" side yards.

- Example of an existing lot that has an “extra wide” side yard.
- Proposed amendment would allow the property owner to seek a lot width reduction, allowing for the creation of two new lots and facilitate the construction of a new single or two-family dwelling.

If the lot width reduction was approved:

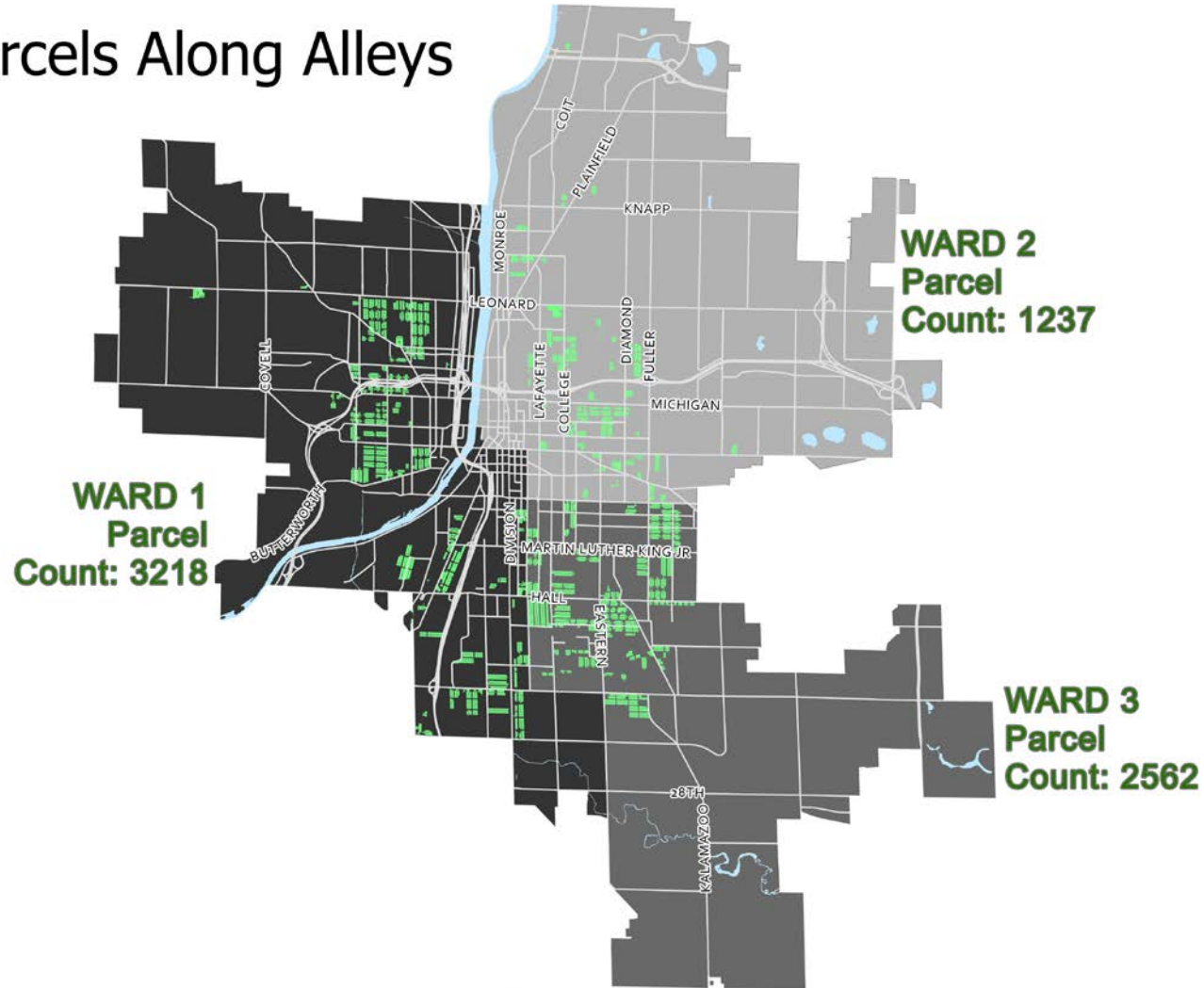
- Existing lot could be split and developed with two structures (1 existing and 1 new).
- Lot A would keep the existing structure and Lot B becomes a new infill buildable lot.

*As a reminder, no new lot may be less than 36 feet in width, unless accessible by an alley. In that instance, the lots may be less than 36 feet, but no less than the original plat.



Where are the Alley Lots?

Parcels Along Alleys



Neighborhood	Count of Parcels on Alleys
Alger Heights	257
Baxter	40
Belknap Lookout	232
Black Hills	144
Creston	135
Downtown	0
East Hills	117
Eastern-Burton	26
Eastgate	0
Easttown	462
Fulton Heights	0
Garfield Park	876
Grandville	261
Heritage Hill	126
Highland Park	219
John Ball Park	925
Ken-O-Sha Park	0
Lake Eastbrook	0
Leffingwell-Twin Lakes	0
Michigan Oaks	7
Midtown	351
Millbank	0
North End	19
North Park	16
Northeast	0
Oldtown-Heartside	0
Ottawa Hills	0
Richmond-Oakleigh	5
Ridgemoor Park	0
Roosevelt Park	118
Shangrai-La	0
Shawmut Hills	43
Shawnee Park	0
Southeast Community	866
Southeast End	856
Southwest	37
West Grand	879

Planning Support

- Supports the goals and objectives of the 2002 Master Plan, several Area Specific Plans, the 2020 Grand Rapids/Kent County Housing Needs Report, the 2015 Great Housing Strategies and the 2018 Housing NOW! report.

Grand Rapids/Kent County, Michigan Housing Needs Assessment

Prepared For:
Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce
250 Monroe Avenue NW, Suite 150
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503



Prepared By:
Bowen National Research
Author: Patrick M. Bowen, President
155 E. Columbus Street, Suite 220
Pickerington, Ohio 43147
(614) 833-9300
patrickb@bowennational.com

Effective Date
May 29, 2020
Revised: July 13, 2020
Job Reference Number
19-555



Housing NOW!
NEIGHBORS • OPPORTUNITY • WORTH

Topic: Housing Choices
Issue: Limited choice in the type of homes
A city with a diverse base of housing styles that integrates housing for people of all incomes and generates pride in our community.

Vision Statement

Picture/Symbol
Wade-Tries Team

Why Are Great Neighborhoods Important?

The citizens of Grand Rapids expressed the following beliefs in what makes a great neighborhood.

- Diversity helps to build strong neighborhoods.
- Housing choices should be made available to people of different ages, ethnicity and income levels.
- Neighborhoods should be convenient to shopping, jobs and other services.
- Neighborhoods should have strong public and/or private local schools.
- It should be easy and comfortable for someone to take a walk in their neighborhood.
- Neighborhoods should be blessed with strong local churches.
- Neighborhoods should have a particular character and style of housing.
- Strong, active associations should represent neighborhoods.
- Neighborhoods should be good places to raise a family.
- Good city services and facilities help build strong neighborhoods.
- New homes should be built on vacant lots (where appropriate).
- It is good when business people also live in the neighborhood.

The fundamental physical elements of an ideal neighborhood, that reinforces these beliefs, include walkable streets, human-scale blocks, a variety of housing choices, usable public space, an identifiable center and definable edges. Every neighborhood within the city has the potential to be "great". Some neighborhoods hold more of the pieces to the puzzle than others, yet with appropriate strategies and a clear vision for the future every neighborhood within the city can be a place of choice that offers a quality living environment.

Housing Need – Rental units

The City of GR will need *at least* **5,340** more **rental units** by 2025 to satisfy demand. 60% of total county-wide rental needs.

GRAND RAPIDS RENTAL HOUSING NEEDS (2020 – 2025)

Income Category	0-30% AMI	30-50% AMI	50-80% AMI	80-120% AMI	120% AMI+
Overall Units Needed	1,031	895	966	1,469	979

Bowen National Research, 2020

Housing Need – Owner-occupied units

The City of GR will need **3,548** more **owner-occupied units** by 2025 to satisfy demand. 26% of total county-wide for-sale needs.

GRAND RAPIDS <u>FOR-SALE</u> DEMAND ESTIMATES (2020 – 2025)					
Income Category	0-30% AMI	30-50% AMI	50-80% AMI	80-120% AMI	120% AMI+
Overall Units Needed	254	346	949	1,569	430

Bowen National Research, 2020

Neighborhood Outreach



Initial outreach via email on January 31, 2022 with request to attend upcoming neighborhood board meeting.



Received responses from five neighborhood associations seeking more information



Attended six board meetings to discuss the proposed amendment.



5/6 organizations expressed support or neutral position on the amendment



Boston Square Neighborhood Association requested a delay of final implementation until the draft Equitable Economic Development Support Policy is ready for adoption

Planning Department Observations

- To better align with neighborhood classification, minimum lot widths should be no less than:
 - TN districts: 36 feet*
 - MCN districts: 42 feet*
 - MON districts: 60 feet*

*If alley access is available less widths can be permitted provided the proposed



TN – 36 feet

MCN – 42 feet

MON – 60 feet

Planning Department Observations

- As proposed, lot width reductions cannot be used to support new two-family dwellings on vacant lots.
- To allow the Planning Commission to grant lot width reductions to existing vacant lots to facilitate new two-family dwellings, updates to the amendment would be necessary.



TN – 36 feet

MCN – 42 feet

MON – 60 feet