



# Housing & Infrastructure Legislation FAQs

## How did this start?

In 2024, Nashville's Metropolitan Council passed a resolution (RS2024-288) that directed several city agencies, including the Metropolitan Planning Department, to study the possible changes Nashville can make to allow for more housing as our city continues to experience incredible growth.

## What are Metro Planning's recommendations to Council?

To address the need for middle housing options, which include smaller scale duplexes, townhomes and cottages, Metro Planning has offered four Zoning Code changes for Council to consider:

1. [BL2025-1005](#) will create two new zoning districts: Residential Neighborhood (RN) and Residential Limited (RL). These districts are new options, not mandates. Parcels would need to go through an entirely separate and new legislative public process to rezone to these districts.
2. [BL2025-1006](#) will lower the maximum height for two existing zoning districts - residential single-family (RS) and residential one- and two-family (R) - from 3 stories to 2.5 stories and make the administrative process for approving duplexes more straightforward in R districts while still prohibiting them in RS districts.
3. [BL2025-1007](#) will loosen current restrictions for in-law units - also known as Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (DADUs).
4. [BL2025-1008](#) creates new incentives for private developers to build multi-family attainable housing.

## Did the public have input on Metro Planning's recommendations?

Yes. Metro Planning staff engaged with more than 600 people over the course of 17 public meetings and 35 office hours, conducted three surveys with 590 respondents, and had countless other conversations with city leaders, community organizations, builders and residents to better understand what changes were needed. Planning's recommendations have changed significantly as a result of this public input, and we continue to work with Council to deliver recommendations that will benefit Nashvillians.

## How can I get involved?

There are several opportunities to give public comments and learn more about the H&I study. More information on the study and Metro Planning's recommendations can be found [here](#).

## Why do we need new zoning districts when we already have over 100 others?

Many of Nashville's existing zoning districts make it too hard for builders and families to find middle-ground options: the rules lead to unpredictable outcomes and do not reflect Nashville's current needs. That's why two new zoning districts are recommended to help bridge the gap:

1. Residential Neighborhood (RN) provides for homes, town homes and plex houses with design standards that enable them to be thoughtfully situated in a variety of contexts.
2. Residential Limited (RL) provides for homes, town homes, plex houses and small apartments.



**Will these new zoning districts be automatically applied to my neighborhood?**

No. The addition of RN and RL zoning districts in the Zoning Code will not change anyone's current zoning. Applying these new districts to any property will follow the same process as the hundred other existing zoning districts in Nashville: any rezoning would have to come through legislation supported by a district's councilmember.

**Do the new districts allow commercial uses in neighborhoods?**

No. Both zoning districts match what is allowed in the existing residential use zoning districts.

**Why does Metro Planning think these additional districts will help make Nashville more affordable?**

RN and RL zoning provide an option for what Nashville's market is missing: middle housing, which is less costly than a single-family home while being more appropriate for a neighborhood's character than a tower or high-rise apartment complex. It gives neighborhoods more predictability through design standards, it gives builders more tools to construct the housing options for Nashvillians, and it gives families more options for access to a diversity of housing types.

**What's next in the process?**

In the coming months, Council will debate the Zoning Code changes recommended by Metro Planning and will need to pass each bill after three readings including a public hearing.

**Are Short-Term Rentals (STRs) allowed within Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (DADUs) in the DADU legislation (BL2025-1007)?**

Planning is recommending that in a RS (Single Family)-zoned neighborhood, new DADUs built or converted cannot be owner-occupied short-term rentals (STR). In a R (One and Two Family)-zoned neighborhood, a new DADU can be a STR.

**How do we expect DADUs to affect property values and affordability?**

As a rental property, a DADU can generate income that a homeowner can use to offset costs associated with financing and owning a home. The extra revenue can bring homeownership within reach for some and help others stay in their homes.

**How do current overlay districts like Historic Preservation and Neighborhood Conservation Overlays interact with the new districts, RN and RL?**

The RN and RL districts work with overlays in the same way all other existing zoning districts interact with the overlays. The base zoning sets the rules for a property, and the overlays add a more detailed set of instructions. If there is a conflict between the two the overlay takes precedence.

**Will the proposed changes to the Zoning Code provide a measurable path to meeting our housing demand?**

Meeting Nashville's housing demand will take several different approaches, and these changes will create an important new tool that will help meet this demand.



**If these districts are approved, could large, multi-family residential buildings be built on properties zoned R (one- and two-family districts) or RS (single family districts)?**

No. Adding the RN and RL districts to the zoning code has no effect on existing zoning districts.

**If these districts are approved, could the owner of property in R or RS zoning get a permit for a plex house?**

No. A plex house is not allowed in R and RS zoning.