

MEMO

DATE: April 24, 2025
TO: Tillamook County Planning Commission
Sarah Absher, Tillamook County
FROM: Elizabeth Decker, JET Planning
SUBJECT: Middle Housing Code Summary
ATTACHED: Proposed TCLUO 5.120, Middle Housing Design Standards

I. PURPOSE & OVERVIEW

Tillamook County is working to expand opportunities for middle housing—duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, townhouses and cottage clusters—by updating the Tillamook County Land Use Ordinance (TCLUO) in line with state middle housing regulations. The County and all incorporated jurisdictions must take action to amend the TCLUO and Comprehensive Plan policies as directed by Senate Bill (SB) 406. The bill, adopted in 2023, includes several provisions expand housing options within Tillamook County by permitting middle housing and planning comprehensively for housing needs. The bill directs cities and unincorporated communities within Tillamook County served by water and sewer to permit all forms of middle housing in zones where single family dwellings are permitted, consistent with the state’s adopted rules for Middle Housing in Large Cities which are implemented through state rules (OAR Division 660-046) and Middle Housing Model Code adopted by reference.

Middle housing code updates for unincorporated communities in Tillamook County will require zoning code changes that are both specific to individual communities and changes that apply across communities. In total, code updates will include changes to 18 zoning districts across eight unincorporated communities. This memo provides a brief summary of proposed updates by topic area, below, and full code updates will be presented to Planning Commission as part of the adoption process in coming months. Questions are welcome at the April 24th meeting to refine the code and prepare for the adoption process.

II. CODE UPDATES SUMMARY

The overall code approach is similar across all communities and zones, as described below. Some details, where options exist within the state rules framework, are being refined specific to each community and may be distinct.

Allowed Housing Uses: Permit all middle housing types in all residential zones within the unincorporated community boundaries where single-family detached homes are permitted:

- Duplexes
- Triplexes
- Quadplexes
- Townhouses, up to four attached
- Cottage clusters, minimum of three cottages up to maximum of eight cottages arranged around a common courtyard. (More than eight cottages could be permitted through alternative review process.)

These changes significantly expand what types of middle housing are permitted, and where it is permitted in each community. Middle housing projects will be reviewed through zoning and building permit submittal, without a separate land use review, to remove obstacles in the development process.

Minimum Lot Sizes: Apply existing minimum lot sizes for single-family detached dwellings in each zone to middle housing as well. Requiring the same size lot greatly expands the number of lots eligible to develop middle housing. The same lot size will apply to single-family detached, duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes and cottage clusters, except for zones with minimum lot sizes less than 7,000 SF, where a larger 7,000 SF minimum lot size will apply for quadplexes and cottage clusters. Specific minimum lot sizes by zone are detailed in the attached table.

For townhouses, the same lot size will apply to a group of four townhouses (or 7,000 SF equivalent), with an allowed minimum of 1,500 SF for an individual townhouse lot. For example, a 7,500-SF lot meeting the zone's minimum lot size could be developed with two 1,500 SF interior units and two 2,250 SF end units for a total of 7,500 SF.

Setbacks & Height: Generally apply the same standards as apply to single-family detached dwellings, to create a consistent scale within communities. Middle housing-specific standards include:

- Reduced minimum lot width for townhouses (20 ft in most, 15 ft in Oceanside)
- 0-ft side yard setback for townhouses where attached
- No front, side or rear setback greater than 10 ft around the perimeter of cottage clusters, with minimum 10-ft separation between cottages within the cluster

- Reduced 17-ft height for cottage clusters, to allow single-story cottages up to 900 SF

Parking: Establish off-street minimum parking standards specific to middle housing and require a minimum of one off-street parking space per dwelling unit, which is the maximum amount of parking that jurisdictions can require under state rules. An individual development may provide additional parking if desired or if the site can accommodate; there are no limitations proposed on the maximum amount of parking that can be provided.

Design Standards: Design standards for middle housing are proposed specific to triplexes & quadplexes, townhouses and cottage clusters. (See attached draft TCLUO 5.120.) The draft standards align with the state's Model Code standards, which establish specific clear and objective standards for middle housing that address common site design issues without creating unreasonable cost or delay relative to construction of single-family dwellings. The only other design standards that can be applied to middle housing are clear and objective standards that apply to all residential types. Some Tillamook County communities are proposing additional design standards that will be reflected in draft language for Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioner consideration.

Definitions: Expand dwelling definitions to include duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, townhouses and cottage clusters, defined by the number of dwelling units and their configuration. Related middle housing definitions are also proposed, as well as updating current terms like 'floor area.'

Infrastructure Improvements: Water and sewer improvements are required to serve new middle housing, and applicants will be required to submit service provider letters for sewer and water the same as applicants for single-family dwellings. Road access, or improvements where needed, meeting the emergency vehicle access standards are required.

Land Divisions: Add new section to Land Division Ordinance to allow Middle Housing Land Divisions. All land division standards continue to apply to creation and development of the original lot, the "parent lot." The MHLDD process will allow division of the "parent lot" into individual "child lots" tied to each unit of middle housing to allow sale of those units individually. For example, a 7,000-SF lot developed as a quadplex must meet all setbacks and lot coverage standards for the 7,000 SF parent lot, but the MHLDD allows the creation of individual lots of any size corresponding to each of the units within the quadplex. Those new lots with one unit apiece cannot be further divided nor do they gain status as legal nonconforming lots; they do not have to individually meet any setback or dimensional standards, but they remain subject to the standards for the overall "parent lot" for the whole site.

Middle Housing Minimum Lot Sizes Specific to Zoning Districts

S-F Dwelling	Duplex	Triplex	Quadplex	Cottage Cluster	Townhouses
5,000- 6,000 SF <i>Comm Res CR-2, CR-3</i> <i>Neskowin R-3</i> <i>Netarts R2</i> <i>Netarts RMD</i> <i>Oceanside ROS (<20%)</i> <i>PC/Woods R2</i> <i>PC/Woods R3</i>	Apply existing 5,000-6,000 SF		Require 7,000 SF		Require minimum average 1,742 SF, absolute minimum 1,500 SF for individual lots
7,500 SF <i>Comm Res CR-1</i> <i>Neahkahnne NK-7.5</i> <i>Neskowin R-1</i> <i>PC/Woods R1</i>	Apply existing 7,500 SF				Require minimum average 1,875 SF, absolute minimum 1,500 SF for individual lots
10,000 SF: <i>Oceanside 20-30% slope</i> —Apply existing 15,000 SF: <i>Neahkahnne NK-15</i> —Apply existing 20,000 SF: <i>Comm Res CSFR, Neskowin RR, Oceanside >30% slope, PC/Woods RR</i> —Apply existing 30,000 SF: <i>Neahkahnne NK-30</i> —Apply existing					Minimum average=1/4 of minimum lot size, Absolute minimum 1,500 SF for individual lots