BAKER CITY, OREGON
CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

WORK SESSION
OCTOBER 28, 2025 - 5:00 PM
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Discussion

1. Discussion on potential Development Code updates	Tara Micka	Discussion

Baker City operates under an EEO policy and complies with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Assistance is available for individuals with disabilities by calling 541-523-6541.

BAKER CITY, OREGON

Date: October 28, 2025
Subject: Discussion on potential Development Code updates

BACKGROUND

Baker City adopted a Housing Production Strategy (HPS) in Aug. 2023. Since adopting the HPS, the Planning Department applied for and was awarded a grant from the Department of Land Conservation and Development in September 2024. In November 2024, the Council appointed a Housing Advisory Committee which includes members from the community who are local contractors, real estate professionals, land use consultants, City staff members, Planning Commissioners and City Council members. Baker City hired the consulting firm, Framework, out of Seattle, WA, who has been helping Planning Staff audit the current Baker City Development Code, developing community surveys, and drafting Development Code updates.

HOUSING PRODUCTION STRATEGY

What is the Housing Production Strategy? The HPS is Baker City's housing policy game plan to address our housing needs. There are required checkpoints at the mid (4-year mark) and endpoint (8-year mark). These strategies were tailored by community input. All told, the HPS has 15 strategies that the City needs to implement within 8 years of the adoption date. 7 of these strategies are being addressed with this Development Code update.

WHAT THIS PROJECT IS & ISN'T

As previously stated, this project **is** updating the Development Code to comply with recent State mandates and implement the HPS. It seeks to reduce barriers to housing production. Framework has also created several 'Help Sheets' as supplemental resources to provide to the public. 3 of these Help Sheets were provided for you tonight.

This project **is not** rezoning any property within the City of Baker City nor is it reducing the allowed uses on private property. It does not require anyone to add housing units to their property if they do not want to. The new housing development will be confined to Baker City's existing residential zones. Unfortunately, this project will not solve all of Baker City's housing problems.

PROJECT GOALS

- Audit the existing Development Code and draft updates for clear and objective standards
- Edit the Development Code to remove barriers and incentivize housing, along with implementing the HPS, ultimately bringing the Code into compliance with the State's middle housing rules.
- Create five help sheets on various topics that can be provided to the public.

TOPICS THAT WE NEED GUIDANCE ON

- Accessory Dwelling Units: should they be used as short-term rentals? If someone wants to develop two ADUs, should one or both be allowed to be used as a short-term rental? If only one, should the first or second be allowed to be a short-term rental.
- Cottage Cluster Allowance: should they be allowed in all residential zones? Currently, the draft Development

Code states they are not permitted in high-density residential.
- Hillside Development & Slopes: what is the right slope standard where hillside developments would be permitted (i.e. 20% slopes — is this too much or too little)?

Baker City Development Code Updates

Project Update October 2025

Project Goals

- Audit existing development code and draft updates for clear and objective standards
- Edit the development code to remove barriers and incentivize housing. Begin implementing Housing Production Strategy Report (see side 2)
- Bring the development code into compliance with middle housing rules (ORS 197A.420, OAR 660-046) and other state laws.
- Create five help sheets on ADUs, housing types, accessibility standards, etc.

Scan the QR code to visit the Baker City Development Code website.

What has happened so far?

1

Kick-Off

Back in January, the consulting team at Framework met with Baker City staff, finalized the project scope, and strategized how the Code Update project would move forward.

2

Code Audit

Framework spent the next several weeks conducting a thorough audit of the Baker City Development Code (BCDC) to identify potential updates to begin implementing the Housing Production Strategy (HPS), and ensure the City's code is in compliance with state law.

Key findings include:

- Diverse, dense housing is difficult to build due to restrictive development regulations.
- The code favors single-family homes over other housing types.
- Overall code clean-up could benefit applicants, review staff, and other users by improving readability and efficiency.
- Only minor adjustments are needed for complete compliance with state law.

3

Surveys

With the help of City staff, Framework also conducted two surveys: one for developers working in the city (8 responses), and another for general community members (147 responses). The information gathered from the surveys identified gaps and problems with the code, other barriers to housing production, and gaps in the existing housing supply.

Community Members responded to "What types of housing do you feel Baker City currently needs?" as follows, with write-ins including affordability and larger units.

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Baker City Development Code Updates

Project Update October 2025

What has happened, continued

4 Site Visit & HAC Meeting 1

In April, Baker City staff hosted the Framework team for an in-person visit and the first Housing Advisory Committee (HAC) meeting. Framework talked with other planning staff, former consultants, community members, developers and contractors, and public works staff.

Stakeholder feedback and on-the-ground experience of Baker City produced a clearer understanding of the City's housing issues and informed an effective and realistic strategy to implement key priorities in the HPS report.

5 Code Update Strategy

Framework created a strategy for BCDC amendments based on the audit, surveys, and HAC feedback. The general strategy is:

- Expand middle housing options and reduce development restrictions in all zones.
- Develop incentive programs that achieve affordability and accessibility goals via increased densities and heights.
- Use a scalable approach to density (lot area per unit) and more flexibility provided by a form-focused approach (detached, attached, stacked).

6 HAC Meeting #2

At the end of July, the HAC reviewed the major draft code changes and discussed the following topics:

- Strategies for increasing the supply of long-term rentals
- Size and height increases for accessory dwelling units (ADUs)
- Help Sheet topics to communicate key concepts from the code

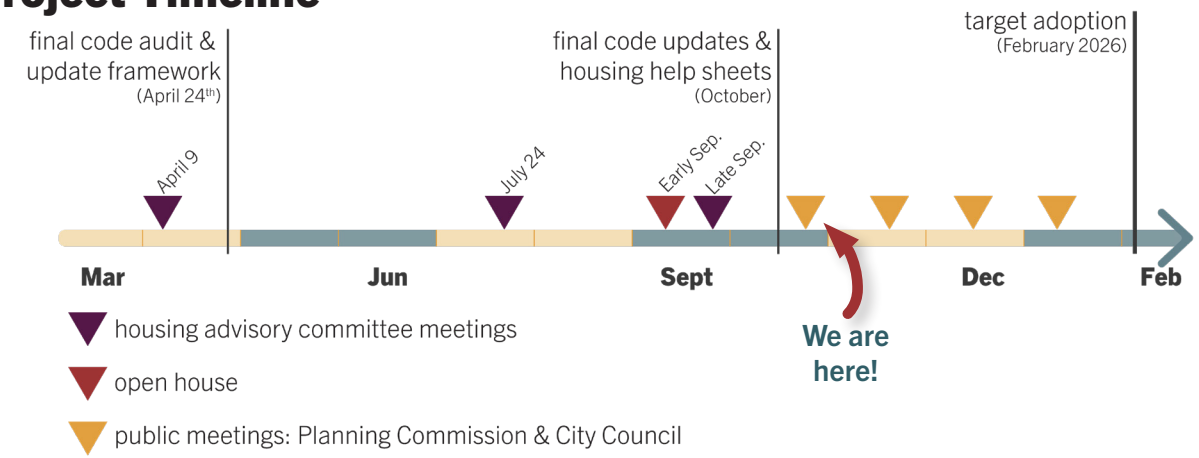
Highlights from HAC feedback:

- Removing or reducing architectural detail and articulation requirements could incentivize rental housing.
- A hotel could alleviate AirBnB pressures and allow vacation rentals to revert to long-term rentals.
- Consider temporary structures like "portable dwelling units" for flexible housing in Baker City.

7 Community Open House

An in-person and online open house took place the second week of September to showcase code updates and collect pubic input.

Project Timeline



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Baker City Development Code Updates

Preliminary Updates Use Table

2.2.110 Allowed Land Uses

Streamlined Residential Uses

The land use table now reflects a simplified, form-focused classification of residential development. Broad categories based on unit configuration (detached, attached, and stacked) are generally permitted by-right in R-LD, R-MD, and R-HD. The number of dwelling units is controlled through the development standards table (2.2.120).

Unique housing types such as accessory dwelling units, cottage clusters, and zero lot line homes are permitted with special standards.

Residential Configurations:

- **Detached Residential** includes standalone structures with a single living unit like single-family detached homes, multiple detached, or manufactured homes
- **Attached Residential** includes horizontally attached structures like duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, fiveplexes, townhomes, and row homes
- **Stacked Residential** includes structures with two or more vertically attached units like stacked plexes, apartments, or condominiums

DRAFT CHANGES (subject to change)		Residential Low-Density (R-LD)	Residential Medium-Density (R-MD)	Residential High-Density (R-HD)
Detached Residential	*simplified housing types & terminology*	P	P	P
Attached Residential		S	S	S
Stacked Residential		~~N~~ S	S	S
Accessory Dwelling Unit		S	S	S
Cottage Cluster	*new standards added*	~~N~~ S	~~P~~ S	~~P~~ N
Manufactured Home Park		S	S	S

Key
P = permitted
S = permitted with additional standards
N = not permitted

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Baker City Development Code Updates

Preliminary Updates Development Standards

2.2.120 Development Standards

Flexible Lot and Building Requirements

Density limits, lot size requirements, and setbacks are among the development standards adjusted for housing type diversity during this update. By switching to a form-focused system based on unit configuration (detached, attached, stacked), the number of rows in Table 2.2.120 has drastically been reduced. Formatting changes have also been made to improve readability.

Key updates include:

- Decreased minimum lot size in all zones
- Scalable density via lot area per unit requirements
- Clearer distinctions between each zone by right-sizing setbacks, coverage, and building height
- Removal or relocation of extraneous footnotes and standards (mostly relocated to 2.2.200)
- Simplified housing types & terminology

DRAFT CHANGES *(subject to change)*	Residential Low-Density (R-LD)	Residential Medium-Density (R-MD)	Residential High-Density (R-HD)
Density (DU/acre)	min: 1 max: ~~10~~15	min: 2 max: ~~20~~22	min: 4 max: ~~45~~43
(NEW) Max # Units in a Single Building	attached: 3 units stacked: 6 units	attached: 4 units stacked: 8 units	attached: 5 units stacked: 20 units
Minimum Lot Area			
Lot Area for up to 2 units	~~7,500~~ 6,000 ft²	~~7,500~~ 4,000 ft²	~~5,000~~ 2,000 ft²
Lot Area for each additional unit	2,500 ft²	2,000 ft²	1,000 ft²
Cottage Cluster (per unit)	~~NA~~ 2,500 ft²	~~2,000~~ 1,500 ft²	1,000 ft²
Minimum Lot Width			
Detached/Stacked Residential	alley: 50 ft no alley: ~~40~~ 60 ft	alley: 40 ft no alley: ~~40-50~~ 50 ft	alley: 30 ft no alley: ~~40-50~~ 40 ft
Attached Residential	20 ft	20 ft	~~20~~ 18 ft
~~Minimum Lot Depth~~	*removing min. depth allows for more flexibility. Min. lot area and min. width are adequate.*		
Maximum Building/Structure Height			
Detached/Attached/Stacked	35 ft	35 ft	35 ft
Accessory Dwelling Unit	~~20~~ 25 ft	~~20~~ 25 ft	~~20~~ 25 ft
Maximum Building Coverage			
Detached / Attached or Stacked	50% / 60%	~~50~~ 55% / ~~60-70~~ 65%	~~50~~ 60% / ~~60-70~~ 70%
Minimum Setbacks			
Front Setback	15 ft	15 ft	10 ft
Side Setback	~~5~~ 10 ft	5 ft	5 ft
Rear (Alley/no Alley)	10 ft / 1 ft	10 ft / 1 ft	10 ft / 1 ft

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Baker City Development Code Updates

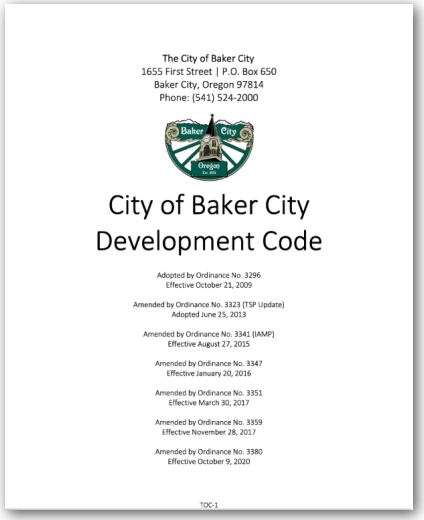
October 28 Joint Workshop

Meeting Agenda

1. **Project Overview**
2. **Focused Discussion**
   - ADUs & Short-Term Rentals
   - Cottage Permissions
   - Hillside Development Thresholds
3. **Wrap-up**
   - Next steps

Meeting Goals

- Share goals and progress for the Baker City Development Code update project.
- Gather policy guidance on unresolved topics including short-term rental limitations for ADUs, permission of cottage clusters in the Residential-High Density zone, and slope thresholds for hillside development and design standards.
- Preview latest housing help sheet drafts.


The City of Baker City
1655 First Street | P.O. Box 650
Baker City, Oregon 97814
Phone: (541) 524-2000

City of Baker City
Development Code

Adopted by Ordinance No. 3296
Effective October 21, 2009

Amended by Ordinance No. 3323 (TSP Update)
Adopted June 25, 2013

Amended by Ordinance No. 3341 (IAMP)
Effective August 27, 2015

Amended by Ordinance No. 3347
Effective January 20, 2016

Amended by Ordinance No. 3351
Effective March 30, 2017

Amended by Ordinance No. 3359
Effective November 28, 2017

Amended by Ordinance No. 3380
Effective October 9, 2020

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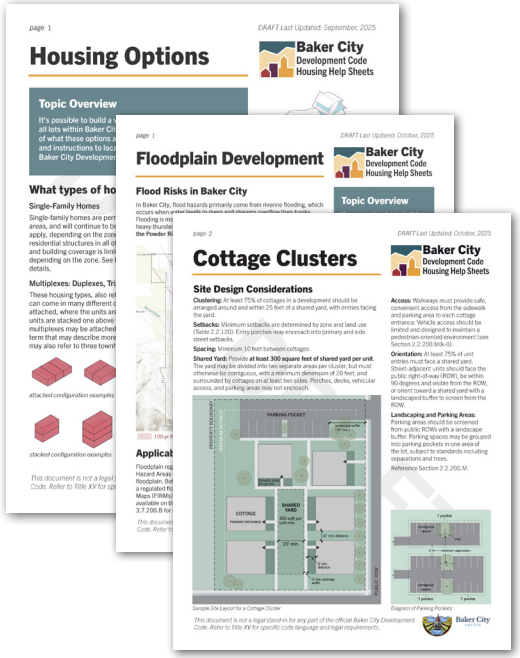

Scan the QR code to visit the Baker City Development Code website.

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ADUs Accessory Dwelling Units

Baker City Development Code Housing Help Sheets

What are Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)?

ADUs are secondary, smaller housing units located on the same lot as a primary residence. Each ADU is a **complete and independent living space with its own kitchen, bathroom, and sleeping area**, making them perfect for in-laws, young adults, guests, or long-term renters. ADUs can be detached cottages, attached to the main house, or interior conversions, offering homeowners an increasingly popular way to add space and value to their homes and property.

Why build one?

ADUs are flexible housing options that fit seamlessly into existing neighborhoods but add a lot of value. They support intergenerational living, create more affordable rental opportunities, expand housing choices, and provide supplemental income for homeowners.

Who do they house?

ADUs can serve a variety of needs and often house aging parents, adult children, guests, or long-term renters such as students or local workers. Homeowners can also downsize into an ADU while renting out their main house for additional income.

Where are they allowed?

ADUs are permitted with standards on all lots across the City's residential zones. Up to two ADUs are permitted on each lot.

Types of ADUs

Flexible by design, ADUs can be customized to fit your lot and needs. Units can be attached or detached, built as additions or created through interior conversions. Common examples include basement or attic conversions, garage conversions, above-garage additions, attached additions, and detached cottages (See diagram below).

Topic Overview

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) add value and versatile living options to your property. This help sheet gives you an overview of what ADUs are, the basic standards that apply to them, and guidance on where to find more details in the Baker City Development Code (BCDC).

Backyard Cottage / Detached ADU

Detached Garage Conversion ADU (Photo by RMLS via M.Rodriguez Homes)

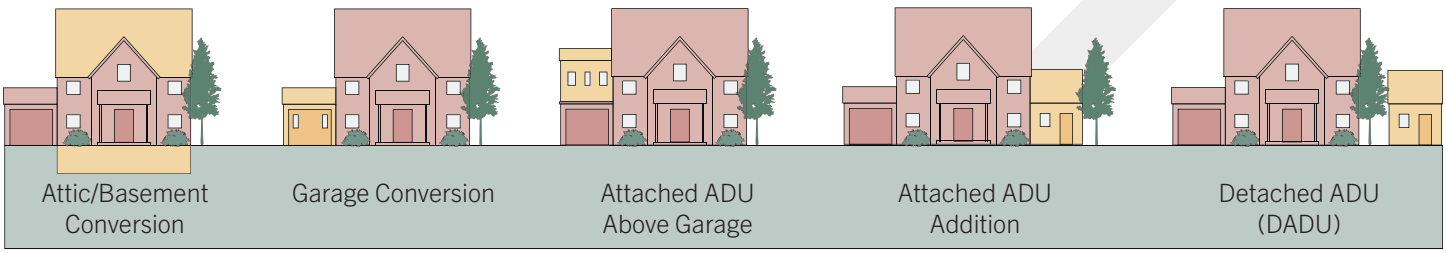

Diagram of ADU options

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ADUs Accessory Dwelling Units

Baker City Development Code Housing Help Sheets

What regulations apply?

Up to two ADUs are permitted with standards on all lots across the City's residential zones. See BCDC Table 2.2.120 and Section 2.2.200(A).

Footprint: Single-story detached structures may have a building footprint up to 1,000 sq.ft, and two-story structures may have a building footprint up to 700 sq.ft. No detached ADU's building footprint may exceed the primary structure's footprint.

Height: The maximum allowable building height for ADUs is 25 ft. in all residential zones.

Reduced requirements/Exemptions: ADUs are exempt from the housing density standards of their Residential zone and have no off-street parking requirement. ADUs also have reduced minimum rear setbacks: 5 ft. with no alley, or 1 ft. with an alley, in all residential zones.

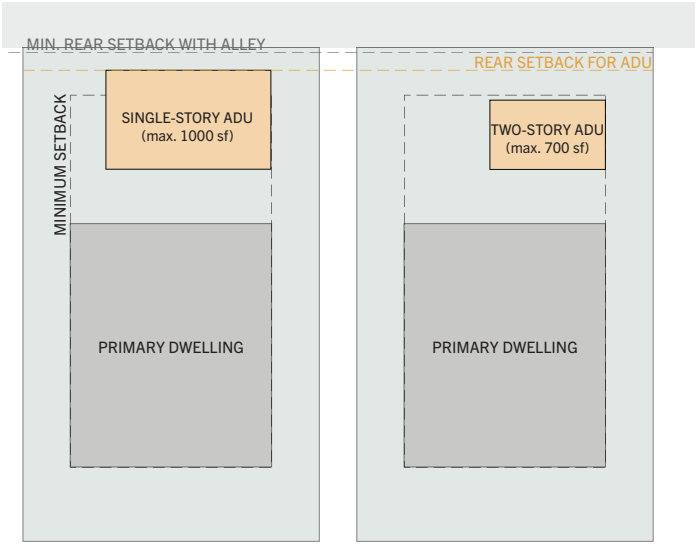
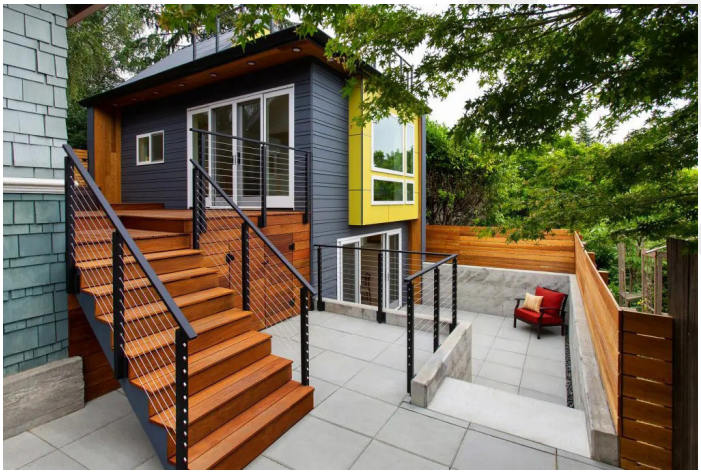


Diagram of Footprint options for detached ADUs



Example of a two-story ADU (Photo from Board & Vellum)

Design Considerations

There are no design guidelines for ADUs, but any new development should meet basic community design standards outlined in Article 3 of the BCDC. Key considerations include:

Access: No off-street parking is required for an accessory dwelling unit. Your plan should include a safe pedestrian route from the primary entrance of the ADU to the street or sidewalk. Consider slope, lighting, and separation from vehicle paths.

Utilities: Each dwelling unit should be provided with a water, sewer, and electrical connection. Discuss with utility providers whether to share or separate utility hookups and verify capacity.

Stormwater: Any new impervious surfaces (roofs, pavement) should drain on-site to prevent runoff.

All new constructions should additionally meet state and local building codes, including fire, structural, energy, mechanical, plumbing, and accessibility standards.

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ADUs Accessory Dwelling Units

Baker City Development Code Housing Help Sheets

How do I build an ADU?

Like other small residential projects, all types of ADUs are subject to Land Use Review, per BCDC Section 4.2.300. Land Use Review is conducted administratively and prior to issuance of permits to ensure compliance with the basic land use and development regulations summarized above (see BCDC Section 2.2.200(A) for ADU standards).

Getting Approval

The first step to building an ADU is submitting a completed Land Use Review Application to the Planning Department. Required information includes:

- Property information (address, tax lot, zoning) along
- A basic site plan showing the location and dimensions of the proposed ADU in relation to the existing primary dwelling, property lines, adjacent roads, and access points.
- Application fee ($40)

The Land Use Review Application form can be downloaded via the Baker City Planning Department's website or picked up at City Hall.

Permitting

After Land Use Review approval, you must also obtain the required building permits before construction can begin. In order to receive permits, proposed ADUs must comply with applicable building codes (structural, fire, energy, accessibility), utility requirements (water, sewer, electrical, gas), fire access and emergency vehicle standards, and stormwater/drainage requirements.

Conversions

Existing structures, including garages, may be converted into ADUs or have ADUs added on as additions. Examples include attached or detached garage conversions, attic or basement "carve-outs," and additions to the primary dwelling. When converting, the following standards apply:

- The footprint of the ADU must not exceed 75% of the footprint of the primary structure.
- If the existing structure is a legal, non-conforming structure (i.e. it encroaches into a setback, exceeds the height limit, or has other pre-existing conditions not allowed under the current code), the conversion must not increase the degree of non-conformity.

What do I have to do?

DECIDE WHAT KIND OF ADU YOU WANT. An interior or garage conversion, attached addition, detached ADU?

↓

DRAW A BASIC SITE PLAN. With property boundaries and dimensions, adjacent roads, existing and proposed structures with dimensions and distances from property lines, existing and proposed driveway access.

↓

SUBMIT A LAND USE REVIEW APPLICATION

↓ *wait for approval*

ACQUIRE BUILDING PERMITS

↓ *wait for approval*

BUILD YOUR ADU!

Basement "carve-out" ADU (Photo from WestSound Magazine)

Detached Garage Conversion ADU (Photo by RMLS via M.Rodriguez Homes)

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DRAFT Last Updated: October, 2025

Cottage Clusters

Baker City Development Code Housing Help Sheets

What are Cottage Clusters?

A cottage cluster is a group of smaller-than-average homes arranged around shared open spaces, walking paths, and landscaping. They add gentle density, offering more affordable housing options and creating a close-knit community feel. Their compact, efficient design makes them ideal infill projects that optimize land use in existing neighborhoods while preserving open space, diversifying housing options, and promoting more sustainable patterns of living.

What makes a cottage?

A "cottage" is a small house, up to 1,000 square feet. Cottages can be detached or attached as duplexes.

What makes a cluster?

A "cluster" refers to a group of 4-12 cottage units, all oriented towards and within 25 feet of a shared yard.

What makes a cottage cluster development?

A development may have up to 2 clusters. At least 75% of units in a development must be within a cluster.

Why build?

Cottage clusters provide attainable housing options through a compact, flexible design that fits efficiently into existing neighborhoods while lowering costs and energy use. Shared open spaces and walkable layouts foster social connection and enhance neighborhood livability.

Diagram of cottage cluster (left); Photo of cottages (right), including 1.5-story cottages and a 1-story common house facing a shared open space.

Cottage Cluster developments that meet the criteria for the **Housing Benefit Incentive** (see Section 2.2.220.E) qualify for **alternative development standards**, including smaller minimum lot areas, reduced parking requirements, and increased allowable density by zone.

Topic Overview

Cottage Clusters add community, open space, and gentle density to residential zones. This help sheet provides an overview of what Cottage Clusters are, how to build them, and where to find more details in the Baker City Development Code (BCDC).

What regulations apply?

Zoning: Cottage clusters are permitted with standards in low- and medium-density residential zones (R-LD and R-MD). They are not permitted in high-density residential (R-HD) zones. See BCDC Section 2.2.110.

Permitting: Cottage clusters are subject to site design review according to Section 4.2.400.

Lot Size: Minimum lot area per dwelling unit is 2,500 square feet per unit in R-LD and 1,500 square feet per unit in R-MD (Section 2.2.120).

Density: Cottage clusters are exempt from dwelling unit per acre density standards of the underlying zone, provided minimum lot size requirements are met.

Parking: A minimum of **1 parking space per unit** is required (Section 3.3.300.A).

Building Coverage: Structures in a cottage cluster may occupy a maximum of **40% of the total lot area**. See Section 2.2.160 for the building coverage calculation.

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Cottage Clusters

Baker City Development Code Housing Help Sheets

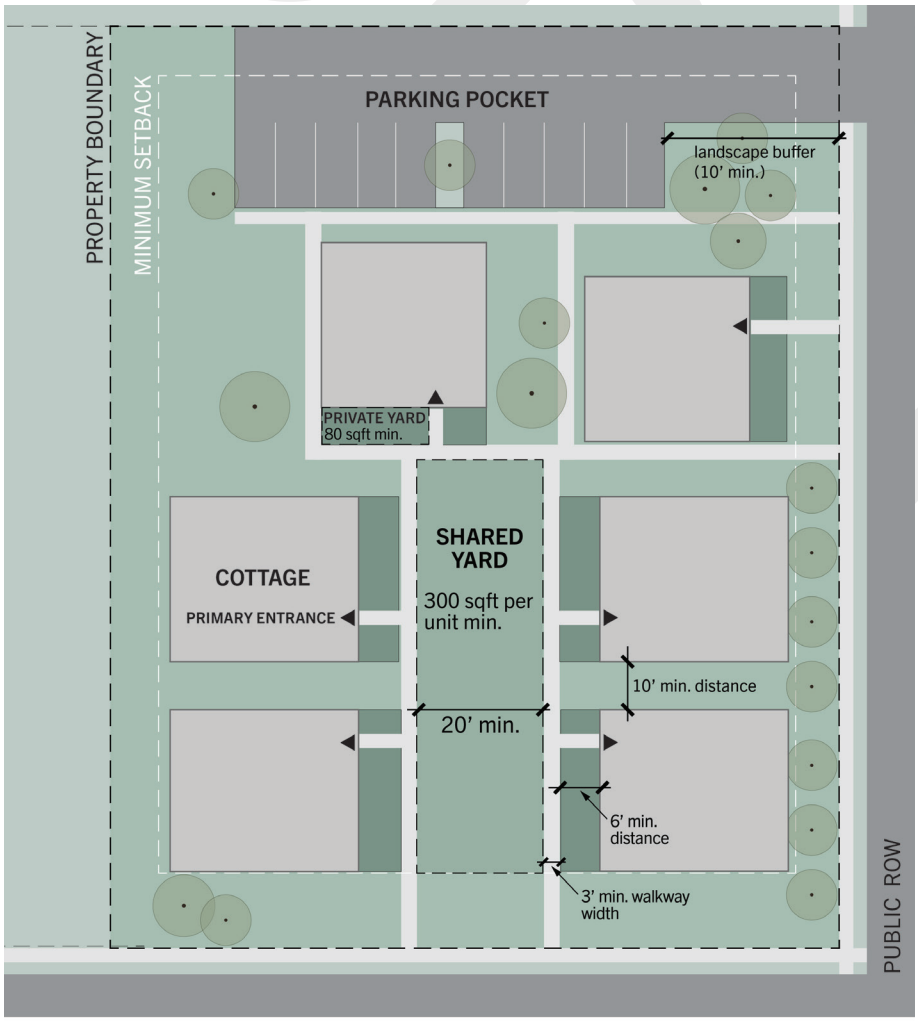
Site Design Considerations

Clustering: At least 75% of cottages in a development should be arranged around and within 25 feet of a shared yard, with entries facing the yard.

Setbacks: Minimum setbacks are determined by zone and land use (Table 2.2.120). Entry porches may encroach into primary and side street setbacks.

Spacing: Minimum 10 feet between cottages.

Shared Yard: Provide **at least 300 square feet of shared yard per unit**. The yard may be divided into two separate areas per cluster, but must otherwise be contiguous, with a minimum dimension of 20 feet, and surrounded by cottages on at least two sides. Porches, decks, vehicular access, and parking areas may not encroach.



Sample Site Layout for a Cottage Cluster

Access: Walkways must provide safe, convenient access from the sidewalk and parking area to each cottage entrance. Vehicle access should be limited and designed to maintain a pedestrian-oriented environment (see Section 2.2.200.M(k-l)).

Orientation: At least 75% of unit entries must face a shared yard. Street-adjacent units should face the public right-of-way (ROW), be within 90 degrees and visible from the ROW, or orient toward a shared yard with a landscaped buffer to screen from the ROW.

Landscaping and Parking Areas: Parking areas should be screened from public ROWs with a landscape buffer. Parking spaces may be grouped into parking pockets in one area of the lot, subject to standards including separations and trees.

Reference Section 2.2.200.M.

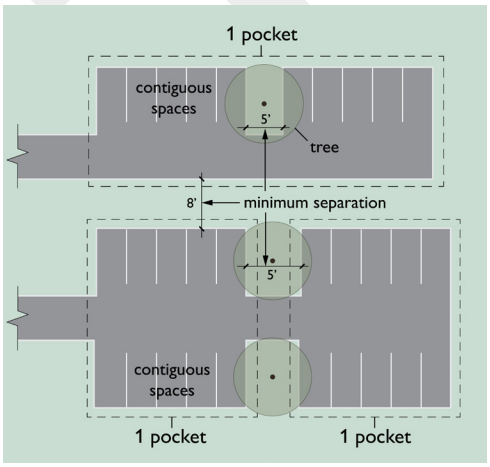


Diagram of Parking Pockets

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Cottage Clusters

Baker City Development Code Housing Help Sheets

Cottage Design Considerations

Size: Maximum **1,000 square feet** of habitable floor area per unit.

Height: Maximum **28 feet.**

Unit types: Cottages can be detached or attached as duplexes. Up to 50% of residential buildings on the site may be duplex cottages. Other attached units, such as triplexes, are not permitted.

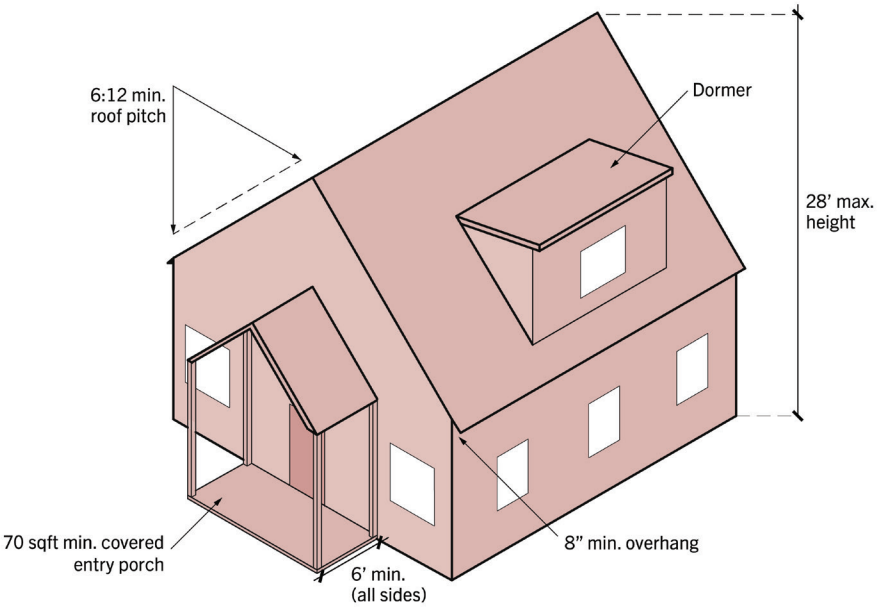
Form: Cottages may be one story or one-and-a-half stories. In a one-and-a-half story form, the second story is smaller than the first and tucked under the roof. See Section 2.2.200.M(o).

Roof: Minimum roof pitch of 4:12 with an overhang of at least 8 inches is required. A steeper pitch of 5:12 or greater is encouraged. Dormers are also encouraged.

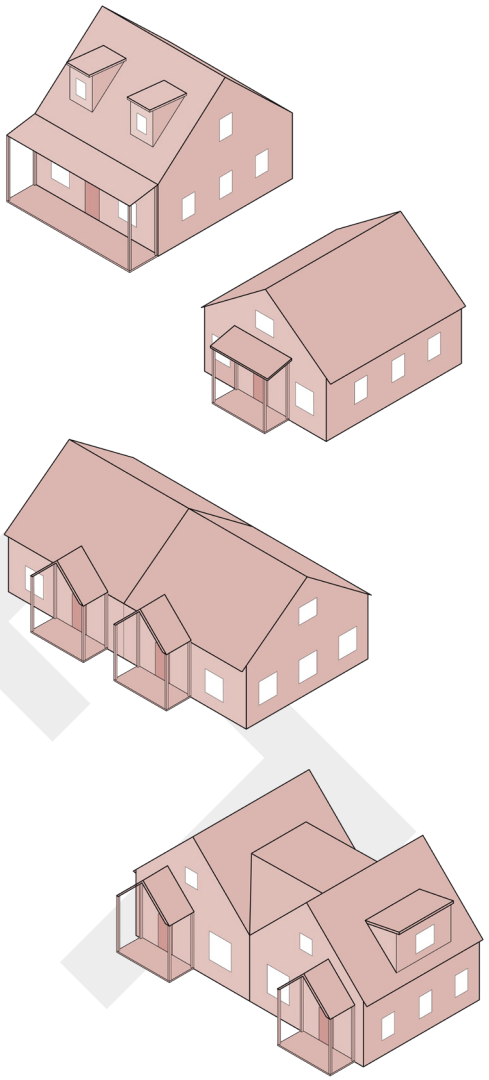
Private yard: Each unit must have an associated private yard of at least 80 square feet.

Porches: Every unit must have a **covered entry porch** oriented toward a shared yard or street. Porches must be open on at least two sides. Porches should have a minimum dimension of 6 feet on all sides, a minimum area of 70 square feet, and a minimum dimension of six (6) feet on all sides. See Section 2.2.200.M(q).

A **one-and-a-half story form** with a roof pitch of 5:12 or greater is recommended. Up to 5 feet of additional height may be granted if this design is used. Mix cottage designs to provide increased housing diversity!



Sample Cottage Diagram



Alternate Cottage Designs, including detached units and attached duplexes

Baker City OREGON

Cottage Clusters

Baker City Development Code Housing Help Sheets

Other Considerations

General Community Design Standards

Cottage Cluster developments should meet basic community design standards outlined in Article 3 of the BCDC. Key considerations include:

Utilities: Each cottage unit should be provided with a water, sewer, and electrical connection. Discuss with utility providers whether to share or separate utility hookups and verify capacity.

Stormwater: Any new impervious surfaces (roofs, pavement) should drain on-site to meet city stormwater requirements and prevent runoff.

Compliance: All new construction will need to meet state and local building codes, including fire, structural, energy, mechanical, plumbing, and accessibility standards.

Accessory Dwelling Units

ADUs are not permitted in cottage cluster developments.

Housing Benefit Incentives

Cottage clusters that qualify under Section 2.2.220.E may access alternative development standards, including reduced minimum lot sizes, lower parking requirements, and increased allowable density. See Table 2.2.210 for alternative development standards.

Permitting and Approvals

Cottage clusters are subject to Site Design Review per BCDC Section 4.2.400 and follow a Type I Procedure (Administrative). Applications must meet the general submission requirements for Type I review (Section 4.1.200) and include the following:

- Proposed site plan
- Architectural drawings showing building dimensions and materials
- Labeled floor plans for each distinct building design
- Preliminary grading and surface water retention plan
- Landscape plan

Additional information may be required as deemed appropriate by the City Planning Official.

Questions?

Refer to **BCDC Chapter 2.2** for complete development regulations in residential zones and the special use standards for Cottage Clusters (Section 2.2.200.M). For additional information, visit the Baker City Planning Department website or contact the Planning Department directly.

Cully Grove Cottage Development in Portland, OR (Photo by Communitecture)

Greenwood Avenue Cottages in Shoreline, WA (Photo by Ross Chapin Architects)

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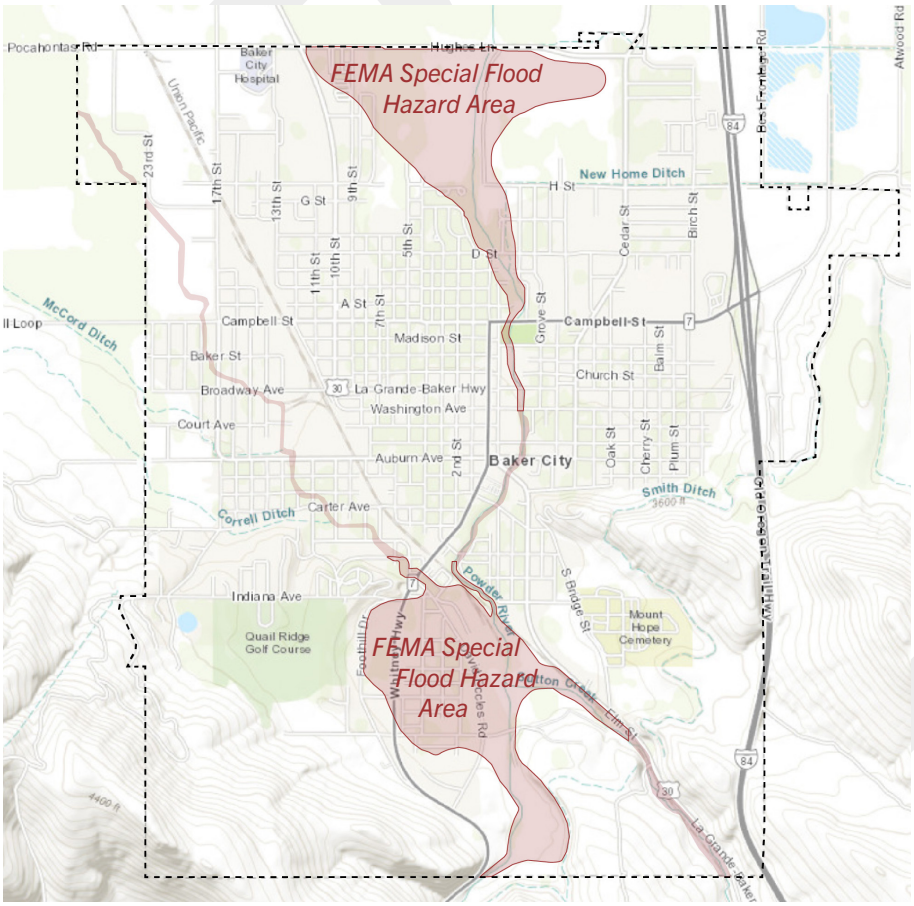
Floodplain Development

Baker City Development Code Housing Help Sheets

Flood Risks in Baker City

In Baker City, flood hazards primarily come from riverine flooding, which occurs when water levels in rivers and streams overflow their banks. Flooding is most frequent in the winter months, typically following rain, heavy thunderstorms, or rapid snowmelt. The greatest risks occur **along the Powder River, its tributaries, and smaller creeks and drainages**.



100-yr flood areas

Applicability

Floodplain regulations apply to all areas in FEMA's official Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) and any other areas mapped within the 100-year floodplain. Before seeking permits, confirm whether your property is in a regulated floodplain by checking FEMA's online Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and reviewing official City of Baker City floodplain maps, available on the Planning Department's website. See BCDC Section 3.7.200.B for more details.

Topic Overview

If you are planning to build, remodel, place fill, or make other changes in a mapped floodplain, you must comply with the special development standards outlined in the BCDC Chapter 3.7. These requirements keep people safe, reduce property damage, and ensure the community remains eligible for flood insurance. This Help Sheet summarizes these requirements and outlines steps to take when you're thinking of building in the floodplain.

Why is this important?

Floods can cause serious damage to homes, businesses, infrastructure, and natural systems. Structures that are not properly elevated or flood-proofed lead to greater flood losses.

The purpose of Floodplain Development standards is to ensure that new projects in hazard areas are built with appropriate safeguards to reduce future risk, minimize damage, and protect the community's eligibility for affordable flood insurance coverage.

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Steps for Building in the Floodplain

1 Determine your location and identify the flood zone designation.

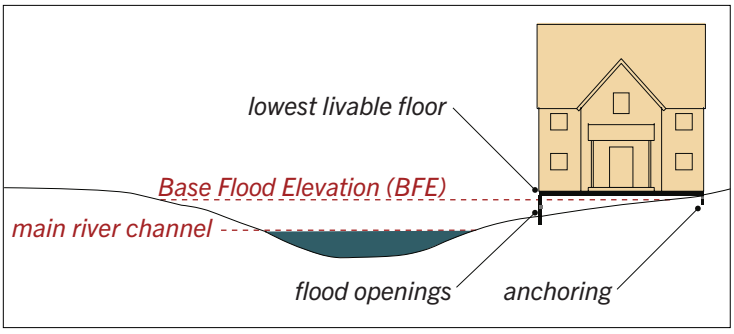
Confirm your property's floodplain status before starting design or permit work. Review the City's official floodplain maps, FEMA's Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), and the Flood Insurance Study (FIS) to identify your flood zone designation and Base Flood Elevation (BFE). Note whether your site is within a Zone AE, AO, AH, or Floodway, as this determines which standards apply. Where Base Flood Elevation data is not available, provisions of Section 3.7.400A(7) will apply.

2 Conduct an On-Site Survey.

An On-Site Survey may be required to verify elevations and support development permit applications, as outlined in BCDC Sections 3.7.300.B(2) and 3.7.300C(2).

3 Evaluate Map Amendment or Revision options.

If a survey shows your property is above the mapped floodplain, you may submit a Letter of Map Amendment (LOMA) to request formal determination of the property's location and/or elevation relative to FEMA's Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs). A LOMA requires professional survey data certifying elevations and an application, available on FEMA's Map Service Center.



4 Review Applicable Standards.

All new construction and substantial improvements in Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) must comply with the general floodplain development standards (BCDC Section 3.7.400). Because all flood zones in Baker County are riverine, the standards in Sections 3.7.400.B(1) and 3.7.400.B(2) also apply. These standards require that structures be:

- Anchored to prevent flotation, collapse, or lateral movement.
- Constructed using methods and practices that minimize flood damage.
- Constructed with materials and utility equipment resistant to flood damage. Utilities and equipment must be elevated above BFE or flood-proofed, and must be designed to minimize or eliminate infiltration of flood waters, discharge, or contamination.
- Provided with flood openings where required according to Section 3.7.400.B(1).
- Garages constructed in compliance with Section 3.7.400.B(2)

Reference BCDC 3.7.400 for all general floodplain standards. Additional standards apply depending on flood zone designation:

- Zones with Base Flood Elevations (BFE), including Zones A1-A30, AH, and AE. See Section 3.7.400.B(3).
- Floodways. See Section 3.7.400.B(4).
- Shallow Flooding Areas, including Zones AO and AH. See Section 3.7.400.B(5).

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5 **Obtain a Permit.**

A Floodplain Development Permit is required for all structures (including manufactured dwellings), fill, utilities, and land alterations within the floodplain. Applications hould be submitted to the Baker City Planning Department to be reviewed by the Floodplain Administrator. Access the application on the Planning Department website.

Other Considerations?

Substantial Improvements

If improvements (including alterations and additions) equal or exceed 50% of the structure's market value, full compliance with current floodplain standards is required for the entire structure.

Variances

Variances are rare. Variances require technical justification and are only granted for exceptional hardship, historic structures, or functionally dependent uses. Variances may increase risk and do not reduce flood insurance premiums. More details in Section 3.7.300.D.

Insurance

Development in the floodplain affects eligibility and rates for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Find additional information about the NFIP in FEMA's FAQ booklet and/or Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations (44 CFR 59-76).

Powder River at Baker City (Photo from NOAA)

What information do I need to apply for a Floodplain Development Permit?

When applying for a permit, you will need to provide details about your project and site conditions, including:

- **Type of structure and development activity** (i.e. new construction, addition, alteration, etc)
- **Site plan** - drawn to scale, showing property boundaries, existing and proposed structures, utilities, drainage, and flood vents
- **Elevations** - drawn to scale, showing proposed lowest floor (including basement), attendant utilities of all new and substantially improved structures, and BFE and/or mean sea level where required
- Amount and location of any proposed fill or excavation activities
- Flood-proofing certification and plans, where applicable
- Substantial improvement calculations, where applicable

Reference BCDC Section 3.7.300.C for full requirements.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- Baker City Development Code Chapter 3.7 - Floodplain Development
- Baker City Planning Department Floodplain Devleopment webpage
- National Flood Insurance Program FAQ

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