



American Planning Association
Texas Chapter
Houston Section

Creating Great Communities for All

May 16, 2023

Subject: Chapter 42 Housing amendments

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Dear Director Wallace Brown,

On behalf of the American Planning Association Texas Chapter, Houston Section (APA Houston), thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on proposed Chapter 42 changes. We took a thorough look at the proposed recommendations and think that these will expand the variety of housing options and price-points for Houstonians during a critical time of the housing affordability crisis. The flexibility in parking requirements will create important affordable alternatives for residents of Houston. The incentives for small-scale developments such as garage apartments, fourplexes and courtyard developments, will incentivize more “missing middle” homes for Houstonians while honoring the character of existing neighborhoods.

All of these proposed policy recommendations are consistent with solutions identified in My Home is Here: Harris County’s Needs Assessment and 10-Year Housing Strategy.

Summary of proposed changes:

- **Second Dwelling Unit:** Allow this housing type to be larger and parking based on the unit size.
- **Multi-Unit Residential:** Bringing back this affordable housing type which is small scale 3–8-unit apartments with a height restriction to be neighborhood scale and right-sized parking rules.
- **Courtyard Style Development:** New housing type where lots are located around a common courtyard, and lots do not require a street frontage. The proposal includes a greens space requirement per lot and height restriction so that homes are at neighborhood scale.
- **Narrow Lot Development:** Housing type allowed today but proposing changes to how the narrow lots take access. The objectives are to reduce the impervious cover in the public ROW, reduce the number of driveway cuts and to preserve on-street parking for the public.
- **Market Based Parking:** For the four residential development types mentioned above, the proposal is to allow market-based parking in proximity where other transportation options exist and make housing affordable. What this means is that City does not have a minimum requirement, and the property owner can provide parking based on market needs.

APA Houston appreciates the opportunity to provide input and feedback on the proposed Chapter 42 housing amendments. APA Houston has no objections to the proposed changes based on the draft of March 10, 2023.

If you have any questions regarding the APA Houston's position, please do not hesitate to contact me at houstonapa@gmail.com

Sincerely,

Luis Guajardo

Luis Guajardo, AICP and the APA Houston Board of Directors 2022-2023