

# Proposed Amendments to SeaTac's Multi-Family Code

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### WHY AMEND THE MULTI-FAMILY CODE?

SeaTac's multi-family development standards were largely created in the early 2000s. Since that time, various issues have emerged including:

- The current code focuses on requirements for large lot, multi-building complexes instead of higher density urban infill projects.
- More flexibility could be added while maintaining the quality of development.
- Existing requirements need to be clarified and streamlined.

### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Update multi-family development standards to:

- Ensure continued development of high quality multi-family projects.
- Add flexibility where appropriate.
- Clean up redundancies to make code easier to use.

### REVIEW PROCESS TO DATE

- Planning Commission Review Sessions: 11
- Public Hearing and Planning Commission recommendation to adopt code: 8/7/2018
- Planning & Economic Development (PED) Committee Review Sessions: 1

### KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

**Changes to ensure buildings are not only nice places to live, but also enhance neighborhoods:**

- **Building Orientation/Connectivity:** Add standards which require buildings in multi-building complexes to orient to, and better connect to, streets.
- **Screening Service Areas:** Add requirements for garbage collection areas to be fully enclosed, and balconies screened adjacent to single family houses.
- **Building Design:** Add façade variation requirements to break up the scale of building walls, especially for large projects.

**Changes that add flexibility to the code while ensuring attractive buildings and sites:**

- **Building Setbacks:** Allow projects in higher density zones to set back farther from streets.
- **Landscaping:** Reduce street frontage landscaping requirements.
- **Neighborhood Compatibility:** Allow some reductions to neighborhood compatibility requirements for projects abutting lower density parcels while maintaining significant building setbacks, landscape buffers and height limitations.
- **Recreation Space:** Add a cap on the amount of recreation space required for multi-family projects outside of overlay districts (20% of site area), and provide for recreation space reductions for projects if certain locational, size and use criteria met.

## SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO SEATAC MULTI-FAMILY CODE

<i>CODE SECTION</i>	<i>PROPOSED CHANGE</i>
<b>15.510.010</b> <b>Authority and Application</b>	<p><b>Departures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace existing Departure language with language from S 154<sup>th</sup> St Station Area Overlay District to establish clear criteria for when projects can depart from existing development standards.</li> </ul>
<b>15.510.100</b> <b>Site Design and Building Orientation</b>	<p><b>Primary Entrances</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove language allowing the Director to decide the location of primary entrances on private roads, so that entrance requirements on private and public roads are treated the same way.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Building Orientation &amp; Multiple Building Complexes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add requirement for buildings to first orient to streets, with remaining buildings allowed to orient to courtyards or a pedestrian system (as in existing code).</li> </ul>
<b>15.510.120</b> <b>Neighborhood Compatibility</b>	<p><b>Abutting Residential Low Parcels</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce side/rear setbacks abutting Residential Low parcels from 20' to 15', which is consistent with other local cities' codes.</li> <li>Reduce landscape buffer width from 15' to 10'.</li> <li>Reduce building height step back requirement which currently requires 35' height maximum within 60' of Residential Low parcel to allow 35' building height within 25' of parcel. <i>(Specific proposal: 35' maximum height required for 10' from side/rear setback, with height increase at no more than 10' vertical for each 10' horizontal, up to 55'.)</i></li> </ul>
	<p><b>Abutting Townhouse and Residential Medium Parcels</b></p> <p>Maintain requirement for new multi-family buildings to be 15' to side or rear of abutting Townhouse parcels, but change setbacks and landscaping code as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase side/rear setback abutting Townhouse from 5' to 15', (this is consistent with Residential Low proposal above).</li> <li>Reduce landscape buffer width from 15' to 10'.</li> <li>Change building height step back to allow 40' building height within 25' of Townhouse parcel (currently, 35' building height required within 40' of Townhouse parcel). <i>(Specific proposal: 40' maximum height required for 10' from side/rear setback, with height increase at no more than 10' vertical for each 10' horizontal, up to 55'.)</i></li> <li>Add these requirements to projects in higher density designations abutting to Residential Medium parcels.</li> </ul>
<b>15.510.130</b> <b>Service Element Location and Design</b>	<p><b>Screening Service Elements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove vegetation as screening method for garbage dumpsters/recycling areas, and specify that trash and recycling collection areas be enclosed on all sides and screened by a wall or fence.</li> </ul>
<b>15.510.200</b> <b>Pedestrian Circulation</b>	<p><b>Pedestrian Walkway Widths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase 4' walkway width to 5', consistent with existing general/citywide requirements.</li> </ul>

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES TO SEATAC MULTI-FAMILY CODE (cont.)

CODE SECTION	PROPOSED CHANGE
<p><b>15.510.400</b> <b>Recreation Space</b></p>	<p><b>In Overlay Districts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Outdoor Common Space</i>: Decrease minimum requirement in overlay districts from 100% to 75% of total recreation space.</li> <li>• <i>Play Areas</i>: Make requirement optional in overlay districts.</li> <li>• <i>Indoor Common Space &amp; Private Balconies/Patios</i>: Change to allow to count for up to 25% of total recreation space.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Outside Overlay Districts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Private Balconies/Patios</i>: Change to allow to count for up to 50% of total recreation space.</li> </ul>
<p><b>15.510.460</b> <b>Recreation Space Reductions</b></p>	<p><b>Recreation Space Reductions</b> Allow for reductions in amount or type of recreation space required if certain criteria met as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of public park with playground within ¼ mile walking distance of site (not including school facilities).</li> <li>• Small projects under 15 units.</li> <li>• Mixed use projects.</li> </ul> <p><b>Cap on Recreation Space Outside of Overlay District</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cap the amount of recreation space required at 20% of net site area for projects outside of overlay districts.</li> </ul>