



## *City of Annapolis*

### DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

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CHRISTOPHER N. JAKUBIAK, AICP  
DIRECTOR

**July 11, 2025**

#### **MEMORANDUM**

**To: Planning Commission**

**From: Casey Ortiz, Comprehensive Planner**

**Via: Christopher Jakubiak, Director**

**Re: Ordinance O-18-25: Re-Allowing Historic Duplexes in R2 Zoning Districts**

#### **Attachments:**

- **O-18-25 First Reader**
- **O-18-25 Fiscal Impact Report**
- **O-18-25 Staffing Impact Report**
- **O-18-25 Legislation Impact Map**

#### **SUMMARY**

O-18-25 includes text amendments to the uses allowed in the R2 Single-Family Residence district which would re-legalize two-family dwellings. The text amendments are summarized below:

- The definition for Duplex Units would strike the August 10, 1970 requirement; and
- The *Dwellings, two-family* use would be permitted in R2 Single-Family Residence district;

#### **ANALYSIS**

##### ***Overview***

The proposed legislation re-introduces the duplex as an allowed use in the R2 Single-Family Residence district, the City's largest residential zoning district, by removing the "existing on August 10, 1970" requirement. Under current regulations, duplexes are only permitted in this district if they were built before that date. By removing this restriction, the proposed legislation will expand opportunities for property owners to build duplexes in the R2 district. To

implement this change, the amendment strikes the August 10, 1970 requirement and amends the use table for the zoning district. However, O-18-25 does not amend the bulk requirements for the zoning district which require a minimum of 5,400 square feet for a single-family residence. Therefore, only properties which have the minimum lot size of 10,800 square feet would meet the existing bulk standard for the duplex use.

### **Impact of Legislation**

O-18-25 reintroduces and expands a housing type which has been prolific in Annapolis for multiple centuries and which has defined the urban landscape of the city. The proposed legislation will affect all wards in Annapolis due to the widespread presence of the R2 zoning district. By focusing on the R2 district, the proposed legislation promotes a housing type which would be consistent with existing neighborhood character and where a large number of duplexes already exist. By requiring that duplexes comply with current bulk standards, the legislation ensures that new duplexes will match existing height limits and size requirements.

The proposed legislation supports the goals outlined in the *Annapolis Ahead 2040* Comprehensive Plan, specifically Land Use Goal 3 and Housing Goals 1 and 4. Land Use Goal 3 promotes the expansion of housing options for workforce and moderate income residents through zoning adjustments to the city's residential districts. Housing Goal 1 promotes a production of affordable rental and ownership housing to meet current and projected needs. Housing Goal 4 promotes the increase of supply, variety, and quality of housing types throughout the city. The proposed legislation advances these goals by expanding duplexes as a permitted use, increasing opportunities for affordable and compact housing, and promoting the potential for a diverse range of duplex housing types across all areas of Annapolis, rather than concentrating them in a single neighborhood.

The attached *O-18-25 Legislation Impact Map* identifies parcels shaded in green which are currently in the R2 district and meet the minimum required lot size of 10,800 square feet to build a duplex. Of the 3,657 parcels in the R2 zoning district, 842 meet these criteria and would be eligible for duplex development. The R2 district also includes a wide array of properties which are unlikely to be developed as duplexes in the future including parks, conservation easements, schools, government facilities, and apartment complexes, and these have been removed from the map for clarity.

### ***Conclusion***

O-18-25 will address multiple citywide goals by amending the city's most widespread zoning district to allow a housing type that previously existed within the district and which is already common in neighborhoods across the city.

### **CODE COMPLIANCE AND RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the above analysis, the staff recommends approval of the proposed O-18-25.

**Re-Allowing Historic Duplexes in R2 Zoning Districts**

For the purpose of allowing duplexes to be built in R2 zoning districts, provided they resemble the existing single-family homes in the neighborhood; and generally related to R2 Single-Family Residence district requirements.

City Council of the  
**City of Annapolis**

Ordinance 18-25

**Introduced by: Alderman Huntley**  
**Co-sponsored by:**

**Referred to:** Planning and Zoning Commission, and Rules and City Government Committee

**AN ORDINANCE** concerning

**Re-Allowing Historic Duplexes in R2 Zoning Districts**

**FOR** the purpose of allowing duplexes to be built in R2 zoning districts, provided they resemble the existing single-family homes in the neighborhood; and generally related to R2 Single-Family Residence district requirements.

**BY** repealing and reenacting with amendments the following portions of the Code of the City of Annapolis, 2025 Edition: **21.40.050, 21.48.010**.

**WHEREAS,** The City allowed duplexes to be built in R2 Single-Family Residence districts until August 10, 1970, as a conforming use; and

**WHEREAS,** The City of Annapolis values its historic neighborhoods, which often feature duplexes alongside single-family homes; and

**WHEREAS,** Allowing a variety of housing types can help create strong, inclusive communities that offer homes for residents at different stages of life; and

**WHEREAS,** Modern building codes and design standards can ensure that duplexes blend well with the character of existing single-family neighborhoods; and

**WHEREAS,** The City's comprehensive plan published in 2025, titled "Annapolis Ahead: Comprehensive Plan 2040," states only single-family detached houses are permitted in the R-1 and R-2 zoning districts, while the other residential zones

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**Explanation:** ~~Strikethrough~~ indicates matter stricken from existing law.  
Underlining indicates a change to the City Code.  
Underlining & black - copyediting or reformatting of existing Code section  
Underlining & red - new matter added to the code.

1 allow for duplexes; there is no remaining buildable land in the R-3 and R-4 zones,  
2 the only zones which currently allow for even modest density such as duplexes  
3 and triplexes (page 86); and  
4

5 **WHEREAS,** The plan also states, "...the City's capacity for residential development, in its  
6 residential districts is nearly exhausted" based on developments currently in  
7 development. If all those projects in the pipeline are approved, the City's land  
8 base will be 99% developed. (page 89); and  
9

10 **WHEREAS,** This ordinance complies with recommendation LU3 of the 2025 comprehensive  
11 plan, which states, "Explore incremental adjustments to the city's residential  
12 zones to allow for more diversity of housing types such as townhomes and  
13 duplexes that are compatible with existing neighborhoods, using architectural  
14 standards if needed to ensure compatibility." (page 150); and  
15

16 **WHEREAS,** Duplexes typically have a higher property value per land area than single-family  
17 homes, and the City of Annapolis is interested in promoting the most fiscally  
18 responsible land uses;  
19

20 **SECTION I: BE IT ESTABLISHED AND ORDAINED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY**  
21 **COUNCIL** that the Code of the City of Annapolis shall be amended to read as follows:  
22

23 **Title 21 - PLANNING AND ZONING**  
24 **Division III - BASE DISTRICT REGULATIONS**  
25 **Chapter 21.40 - Residential Districts**  
26

27 **21.40.050 - R2 Single-Family Residence district.**

- 28 A. **Purpose.** The R2 Single-Family Residence district provides for single-family detached  
29 dwellings at up to eight dwelling units per acre and other uses compatible with these  
30 single-family neighborhoods of the City.
- 31 B. **Uses.** Uses that may be permitted in the R2 Single-Family Residence district are set forth  
32 in the table of uses for residential districts in Chapter 21.48.
- 33 C. **Development Standards.** Chapter 21.50 contains the bulk regulations table for the R2  
34 Single-Family Residence district.
- 35 D. **Uses Deemed Conforming.**
- 36 1. **Stadiums.** A stadium is deemed to be conforming, pursuant to Section 21.68.030  
37 of this Zoning Code, provided that it was legally existing on July 1, 2009, and  
38 may be altered or expanded subject to approval through the special exception  
39 process, pursuant to Chapter 21.26 of this Zoning Code.

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2. **Duplex Units.** Duplex units ~~existing on August 10, 1970, may be altered or enlarged provided that the alteration or enlargements~~ otherwise meet the provisions of the R2 Zoning district including the setback and height limitations in accordance with single-family detached dwellings, except that the shared lot line between each half of the duplex unit must meet the provisions of the R3, General Residence district, and subject to minor site design plan review.

**Title 21 - PLANNING AND ZONING**  
**Division III - BASE DISTRICT REGULATIONS**  
**Chapter 21.48 USE TABLES**

**Section 21.48.010 Table of Uses—Residential Zoning Districts.**

P = Permitted Use; S = Special Exception Use; -Std = Use Subject to Standards (Chapter 21.64); A = Accessory Use; Blank = Not Permitted

Uses	District R1A	District R1B	District R1	District R2	District R2-NC	District R3	District R3-NC	District R3-NC2	District R3-R	District R4	District R4-R	District C1	District C1A
Dwellings, two-family				<u>P<sup>1</sup></u>		P	P	P	P	P	P	S-Std	S <sup>2</sup>

1 Duplex units ~~existing on August 10, 1970, may be altered or enlarged provided that the alteration or enlargements~~ otherwise meet the provisions of the R2 zoning district, except that the shared lot line between each half of the duplex unit must meet the provisions of the R3, General Residence District, and subject to minor site design plan review.

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## Chapter 21.50 BULK REGULATIONS TABLES

### Section 21.50.040 Bulk Regulations Table R2 District.

*After "Dwellings, single-family detached" insert "Dwellings, two family" as stated below.*

Permitted uses, special exception uses, and uses subject to specific standards	Lot Dimensions (minimum) Area, (sq. ft. or acres) <sup>1</sup>	Lot Dimensions (minimum) Width (ft)	Yards (minimum) Front (ft) <sup>6</sup>	Yards (minimum) Interior Side (ft) <sup>7, 8</sup>	Yards (minimum) Corner Side (ft) <sup>7, 8</sup>	Yards (minimum) Rear (ft)	Height, Coverage, Floor Area Ratio (maximum) Height, (stories and feet) <sup>9</sup>	Height, Coverage, Floor Area Ratio (maximum) Lot Coverage, (percent)	Height, Coverage, Floor Area Ratio (maximum) Floor Area Ratio	Open Space (minimum, percent)
<u>Dwellings, two-family</u>	<u>10,800</u> <sup>11</sup>	<u>50</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>2.5 stories not to exceed 35 feet</u>			

#### Footnote:

<sup>11</sup> If the lot is to be subdivided, a minimum lot area of 5,400 square feet and a minimum lot width of 30 feet per dwelling unit shall be provided.

**SECTION II: AND BE IT FURTHER ESTABLISHED AND ORDAINED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL** that this ordinance shall take effect upon passage.

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## FISCAL IMPACT NOTE

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**Ordinance:** O-18-25

**Title:** Repeals the Ban on Duplexes in R2 Zoning Districts

**Date:** June 13, 2025

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This ordinance allows duplexes to be built in R2 zoning districts, provided the architecture fits with the existing single-family homes in the neighborhood. The fiscal impact cannot be determined as it is unknown how many duplexes will be constructed.

*Prepared by Jake Trudeau, Budget Manager*



## STAFFING IMPACT REPORT ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

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To: Mayor Gavin Buckley

From: Victoria Buckland, Acting City Manager

Date: June 11, 2025

Subject: O-18-25: Re-allowing Duplexes in R2 Zoning Districts

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### **Purpose of legislation**

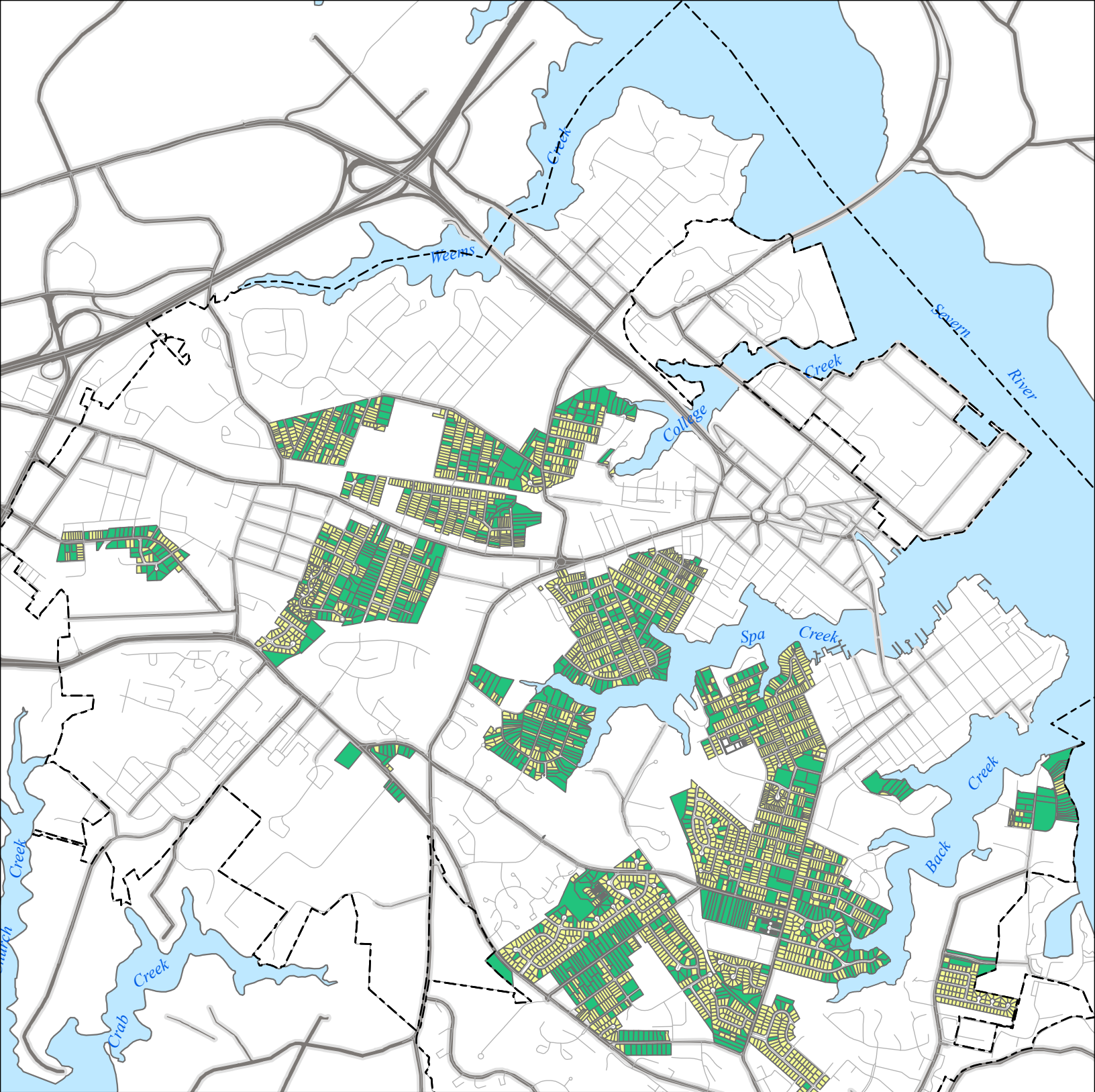
The purpose of this legislation is to allow two-family dwellings (an apartment in a single-family house or a duplex) as permitted housing types in the R2 zoning district, provided they resemble the existing single-family homes in the neighborhood, and generally related to R2 Single-Family Residence district requirements.

### **Impact of legislation on staffing**

The impact on staff time will depend mostly on the number of single family homes that are proposed to be converted to two-family dwellings and the potential use by applicants of the variance and administrative adjustment procedures. The City is not expecting a large volume immediately, so staffing impacts from this legislation may be absorbed gradually over time into the Department's work flow without significant disruption.

*Prepared by Victoria Buckland, Acting City Manager and  
Chris Jakubiak, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning*





## O-18-25 Legislation Impact Map

Impacted R2  
Zoned Parcels

- Duplex Ineligible
- Duplex Eligible

- City Boundary
- Roadways

**\*Schools, parks, government properties, conservation easements, and apartment complexes were excluded from eligibility\***

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

