



To: Auburn Planning Board

From: Natalie Thomsen, Planning Coordinator

Date: June 10, 2025

Re: Proposed Zoning Text Amendment – General Business (GB) and Multi-Family Suburban (MFS)
District Density Standards

Overview:

At the direction of the Auburn City Council, the Planning Board is being asked to consider a zoning text amendment to Section 60-307 of the City's zoning ordinance, which governs dimensional regulations for the General Business (GB) and Multi-Family Suburban (MFS) districts. This order was formally referred by the Council on May 19, 2025.

The proposed amendment updates the density calculation for residential developments in these zones to promote housing variety and encourage mixed-type developments that align with market demand. Currently, the ordinance regulates density based on housing type—one-family, two-family, or multifamily—limiting flexibility in design and creating barriers to integrated development. The revision introduces a unified density cap of **17 units per acre** for any development composed of two or more dwelling units, regardless of unit type.

This change supports the city's broader goals of housing diversity, efficient land use, and simplified ordinance administration. It also maintains a 50% green space requirement and does not alter dimensional requirements for lots containing only a single housing type.

Supporting Documents:

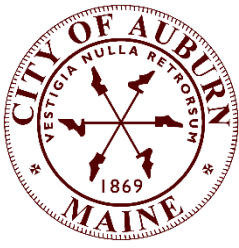
- City Council Order to initiate the amendment
- Proposed text amendment to Sec. 60-307
- Informational summary sheet
- Map identifying impacted GB and MFS districts

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends the Planning Board hold a public hearing on the proposed amendment and vote to forward the amendment to the City Council with a recommendation for adoption.

Suggested Motion:

"I move that the Planning Board forward the proposed amendments to Section 60-307 of the Zoning Ordinance, as it relates to density standards in the General Business and Multi-Family Suburban districts, to the City Council with a recommendation for adoption."



City of Auburn City Council Information Sheet

Council Workshop or Meeting Date: May 19, 2025

Order:

Author: David Hediger, Director of Planning

Subject: Initiating Zoning Ordinance Amendment: General Business and Multifamily Suburban District Density Requirements

Information: This item considers a zoning ordinance amendment to revise the density requirements in the General Business (GB) and Multifamily Suburban (MFS) Districts. The density of both districts is currently regulated by Sec. 60-307.

The city continues to see a strong interest in residential development. Many of the approved projects involve larger multifamily structures. Developers have also expressed interest in projects that include a variety of housing types—such as one-family, two-family, and multifamily dwellings—as part of a single development. However, the current zoning in the GB and MFS districts makes it more difficult to offer one and two-family housing types, as it limits the amount of development that may occur per acre more strictly for the structures with lower unit counts. The ordinance currently lacks flexibility, making it challenging for developers to include multiple housing types in a single project. This has become a barrier to mixed-housing developments that align with current market demand.

The current ordinance uses graduated density limits based on housing type:

- One-family: 4 units/acre
- Two-family: 6 units/acre
- Multifamily: 17 units/acre

The proposed ordinance would allow for a single maximum density of 17 units per acre for any development with a mixture of one family detached, two family, and/or multifamily dwellings. This approach is less restrictive than the current ordinance and provides developers with more options in terms of housing types, while keeping the overall lot density unchanged.

Additional changes in the proposed amendment update language to be more consistent with existing terms and definitions used in the zoning ordinance (i.e., dwelling vs. housing).

Density standards for lots with only one dwelling type remain unchanged.

This amendment provides greater flexibility, encourages more efficient land use, and simplifies mixed-housing development.

City Budgetary Impacts: None anticipated.

Staff Recommended Action: Determine if the city council wishes to initiate a zoning amendment by sending this proposal to the planning board for public hearing.

Previous Meetings and History: None.

City Manager Comments:

I concur with the recommendation. Signature:

Attachments: Map of impacted districts, proposed amendment, order

5/13/25

Amendment to Chapter 60, Article IV, Division 7, Sec. 60-307. Dimensional Regulations, as it relates to the General Business and Multifamily Suburban Districts

Sec. 60-307. Dimensional regulations.

All structures in this district, except as noted, shall be subject to the following dimensional regulations.

- (1) *Minimum lot area, width and depth.* For each ~~building erected on a lot, there shall be provided the minimum required lot area, width, and depth as follows:~~
 - a. ~~Building housing one family~~One Family Detached Dwellings: 10,000 square feet minimum lot area, not less than 100 feet width, and 100 feet in depth.
 - b. ~~Buildings housing two families~~Two Family Dwellings: 12,000 square feet minimum lot area, not less than 100 feet width, and 100 feet in depth.
 - c. Multifamily ~~buildings~~Dwellings: 10,000 square feet minimum lot area for the first dwelling unit and 2,000 square feet minimum lot area for each additional dwelling unit. No lot shall be less than 100 feet width and 100 feet in depth. ~~More than one principal building per lot is allowed.~~
 - d. For a lot containing a mixture of one family detached, two family, and/or multifamily dwellings, the entire lot shall be subject to a minimum lot area requirement of 10,000 square feet for the first dwelling unit and an additional 2,000 square feet for each additional dwelling unit.
- (2) *Density.* ~~The following~~A maximum ~~densities~~density of 17 dwelling units per acre shall apply to any residential development with two or more dwelling units on a single lot, regardless of building configuration or according to housing type:

One-family	<u>4 units per acre</u>
Two-family	<u>6 units per acre</u>
Multifamily	<u>17 units per acre</u>

~~Not less than 50 percent of the net acreage shall be devoted to green area. Green space shall be deemed to include patios, whether paved or not, pedestrian walks, and landscaping within parking lots, but no off-street parking spaces, driveways, or common roads. For townhouse projects, the green area of individual lots may be counted toward the 50 percent green space requirement of the project. Net acreage shall include all land contained within the project except dedicated streets or street rights-of-way shown on the city's adopted master development plan or proposed to be so included within a reasonable period of time.~~

- (3) *Yard requirements.*
 - a. *Rear.* There shall be behind every building a rear yard having a minimum depth of 25 feet or 25 percent of the average depth of lot, whichever is less.
 - b. *Side.* There shall be a minimum distance of five feet between any building and the side property line plus the side yard setback shall be increased one foot for every five feet or part thereof increase in street frontage over 50 feet to a maximum of 15 feet for side yard setback.
 - c. *Front.* There shall be in front of every building a front yard having a minimum depth of 25 feet or 25 percent of the average depth of the lot whichever is less.

- d. *Principal buildings.* More than one principal building may be erected on a lot, provided that the buildings meet all yard setback requirements and are separated by a distance equivalent to the height of the higher building or 30 feet, whichever is greater.
 - e. *Green space.* Not less than 50 percent of the net acreage of each lot shall be devoted to green space. For the purposes of this section, green space shall include patios, whether paved or not, pedestrian walks, and landscaping within parking lots, but shall not include wetlands, buffer areas, off-street parking spaces, driveways, or common roads. Net acreage shall include all land contained within each lot except dedicated streets or street rights-of-way shown on the city's adopted master development plan or proposed to be included within a reasonable period of time.
- (4) *Height.* The height of all structures shall be limited to 2½ stories or 35 feet, except as follows:
- a. Multifamily buildings shall have a maximum height of 45 feet from grade.
 - b. A church, ~~or~~ temple, or windmill may have a maximum height of 65 feet from grade, provided that the front yard, rear yard and each of the side yards shall be increased by one foot for each foot in height in excess of 35 feet.
- (5) *Off-street parking.* Off-street parking spaces shall be provided in accordance with the requirements for specific uses as set forth in article V of this chapter.

(Ord. of 9-21-2009, § 3.44C; Ord. No. 11-03012021, §§ 24, 59, 3-15-2021; Ord. No. 19-05032021, 5-17-2021)

5/13/25 – No Redline (draft for Planning Board 06/10/25)

Amendment to Chapter 60, Article IV, Division 7, Sec. 60-307. Dimensional Regulations, as it relates to the General Business and Multifamily Suburban Districts

Sec. 60-307. Dimensional regulations.

All structures in this district, except as noted, shall be subject to the following dimensional regulations.

- (1) *Minimum lot area, width and depth.* For each lot, the minimum required lot area, width, and depth is:
 - a. One Family Detached Dwellings: 10,000 square feet minimum lot area, not less than 100 feet width, and 100 feet in depth.
 - b. Two Family Dwellings: 12,000 square feet minimum lot area, not less than 100 feet width, and 100 feet in depth.
 - c. Multifamily Dwellings: 10,000 square feet minimum lot area for the first dwelling unit and 2,000 square feet minimum lot area for each additional dwelling unit. No lot shall be less than 100 feet width and 100 feet in depth.
 - d. For a lot containing a mixture of one family detached, two family, and/or multifamily dwellings, the entire lot shall be subject to a minimum lot area requirement of 10,000 square feet for the first dwelling unit and an additional 2,000 square feet for each additional dwelling unit.
- (2) *Density.* A maximum density of 17 dwelling units per acre shall apply to any residential development with two or more dwelling units on a single lot, regardless of building configuration or housing type:
- (3) *Yard requirements.*
 - a. *Rear.* There shall be behind every building a rear yard having a minimum depth of 25 feet or 25 percent of the average depth of lot, whichever is less.
 - b. *Side.* There shall be a minimum distance of five feet between any building and the side property line plus the side yard setback shall be increased one foot for every five feet or part thereof increase in street frontage over 50 feet to a maximum of 15 feet for side yard setback.
 - c. *Front.* There shall be in front of every building a front yard having a minimum depth of 25 feet or 25 percent of the average depth of the lot whichever is less.
 - d. *Principal buildings.* More than one principal building may be erected on a lot, provided that the buildings meet all yard setback requirements and are separated by a distance equivalent to the height of the higher building or 30 feet, whichever is greater.
 - e. *Green space.* Not less than 50 percent of the net acreage of each lot shall be devoted to green space. For the purposes of this section, green space shall include patios, whether paved or not, pedestrian walks, and landscaping within parking lots, but shall not include wetlands, buffer areas, off-street parking spaces, driveways, or common roads. Net acreage shall include all land contained within each lot except dedicated streets or street rights-of-way shown on the city's adopted master development plan or proposed to be included within a reasonable period of time.
- (4) *Height.* The height of all structures shall be limited to 2½ stories or 35 feet, except as follows:
 - a. Multifamily buildings shall have a maximum height of 45 feet from grade.
 - b. A church, temple, or windmill may have a maximum height of 65 feet from grade, provided that the front yard, rear yard and each of the side yards shall be increased by one foot for each foot in height in excess of 35 feet.

- (5) *Off-street parking.* Off-street parking spaces shall be provided in accordance with the requirements for specific uses as set forth in article V of this chapter.

(Ord. of 9-21-2009, § 3.44C; Ord. No. 11-03012021, §§ 24, 59, 3-15-2021; Ord. No. 19-05032021, 5-17-2021)