

Single-Family Housing Affordability in Utah

Updating Regulations to Support Innovation – May 2025

New housing options and the focus on affordability drive the need for updated regulations to ensure that affordable SINGLE-FAMILY homes are an integral part of Utah neighborhoods:

Issue:

Multi-layered zoning requirements have been built around protecting large lots for single family homes. Developers focus on existing approval processes for single family homes and pursue Townhome/Multifamily housing options as their only affordable option.

Concern:

Zoning overlays are needed to ensure smaller lots are not excluded from residential zoning. Developers and cities do not have a competitive need to change their business models or product options. Without a state-wide zoning overlay to provide affordable single-family lots and housing options, the status quo will keep Utah families limited in their housing options.

Proposal:

Implement a targeted and limited state-wide zoning overlay for SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES to ensure developers and cities drive affordable options into existing residential zones.

- **Leverage General Plan initiatives (10-9a-403 (2)(b)(Z): adoption of a land use ordinance that requires 10% or more of new residential development in a residential zone be dedicated to moderate income housing...**
- **Integrate performance criteria that addresses city/development concerns:**
 - Consistent with Utah S.B. 181: "Affordable housing" means housing occupied or reserved for occupancy that is priced at 80% of the county median home price.
 - Minimum lot size of 3,500 square feet
 - 3 dedicated off-street parking spaces
 - Minimum Setbacks: Front (10 feet), Side (5 feet), Rear (10 feet)
 - Minimum conditioned dwelling space 1,000 ft²
 - Site-built permanent foundation that meets Building Code requirements
 - Percentage (10%) applicable to current residential land use areas unentitled or available in a city's general plan
 - Enable single-family housing to be considered as a conforming use in multi-family housing zones if affordable housing requirements are met
 - Developments with alley load access to homes must meet minimum firecode standards for either rear alley and frontage roads.

These changes will ensure that Utah families are not left behind as developers and cities focus on single-family housing alternatives supported by higher-income earners and out-of-state buyers moving to Utah.