

Micro-housing / Congregate Residences

City Council

Planning Land Use & Sustainability (PLUS)

Briefing April 18, 2014



City of Seattle
Department of Planning and Development

Micro-housing / Congregate Housing

Guiding Principles

- **Preserve affordability** –support housing options.
- Ensure basic **health and safety**.
- **Require Design Review** similarly to other types of new development.
- Provide **consistent treatment** and classification of micro-housing and congregate residences across all City departments and programs.
- **Improve tracking and awareness** of micro-housing and congregate residence development.



Micro-housing / Congregate Residences

What Are They? – Micro-housing units

- Groups of up to 8 “micro” living quarters in a dwelling unit
- Each “micro” has a small bedroom and bathroom
- Grouped around a shared kitchen

What Are They? – Congregate Residences

- Groups of 9 or more “sleeping rooms” in single building
- May have a shared kitchen and/or shared bathroom
- Similar to dormitory or some types of senior housing
- Increasing in number, and project scale

Both currently legal / allowed within current code.

Additional regulations are proposed.



Micro-housing / Congregate Residences

How Many Are There?

- About 62 projects in permitting since 2006
 - 42 in lowrise multifamily zones (LR)
 - 8 in midrise multifamily zones (MR)
 - 12 in commercial zones (C and NC)
- About 3,123 total micros or sleeping rooms in permitting
- 18 projects (out of 62 total) are complete (C of O)



Micro-Housing or
Congregate Residences,
Urban Centers &
Urban Villages
February, 2014

- Urban Center
- Hub or Residential Urban Village
- Micro-housing or
Congregate Residence

0 0.5 1 2
Miles

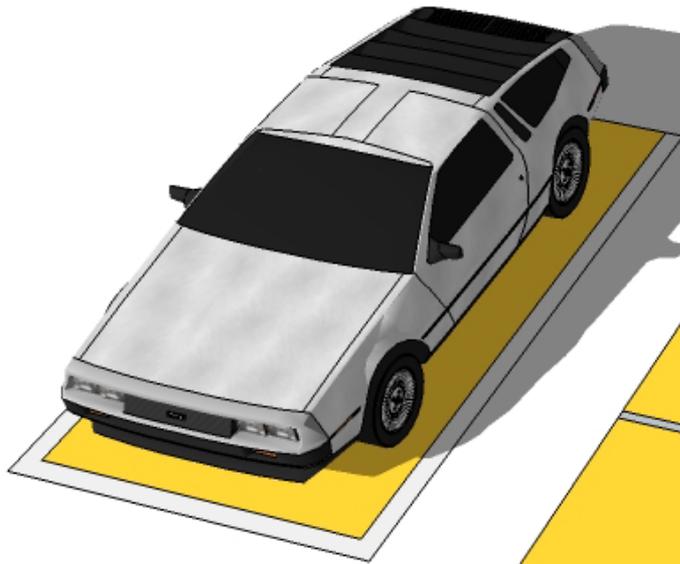
Where Are They?

- In Urban Centers & Urban Villages: 57 of 62
- Outside UV/UC: 5
- Cap./1st Hill: 20+
- University District: 13
- Madison / Miller: 5
- Ballard: 4
- Eastlake: 3
- W. Sea. Junction: 2

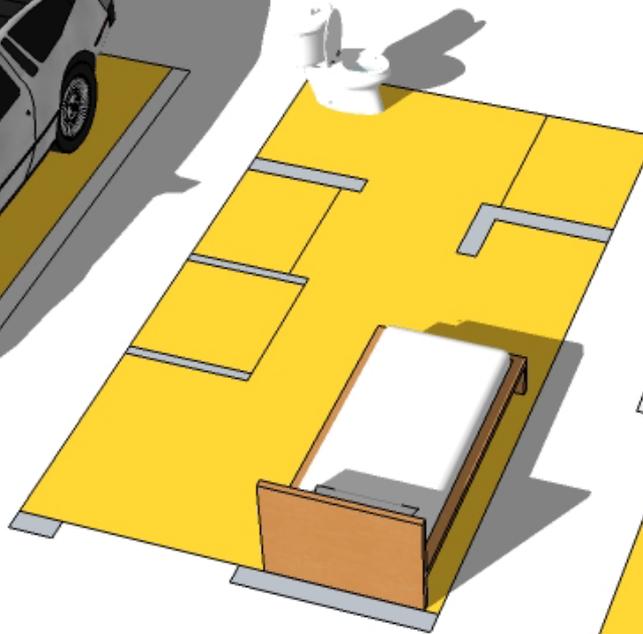


How Small Are They?

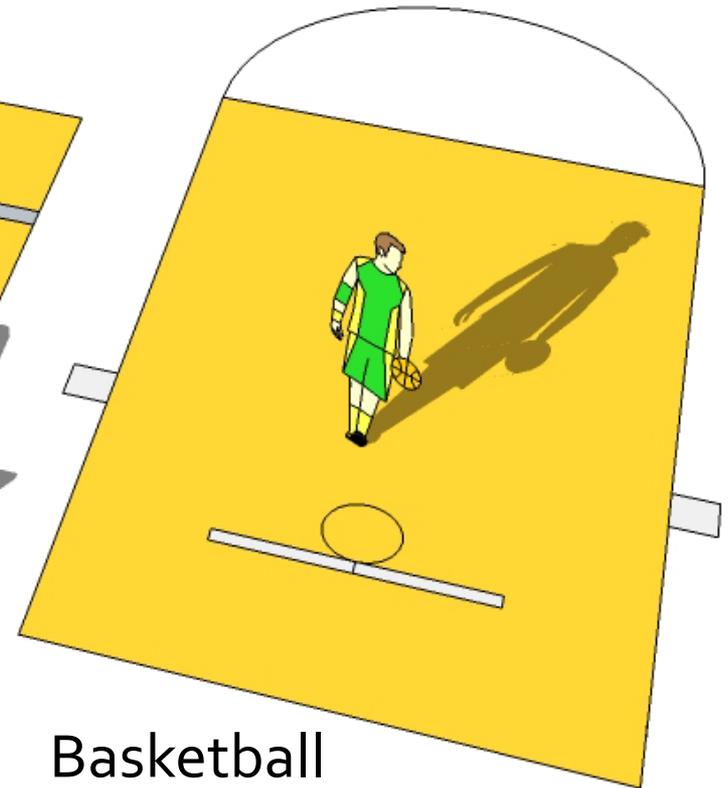
Typical Seattle micro = 100 – 185 sf



Medium Parking
Space = 128 sf



Micro-apartment
Example = 150 sf



Basketball
Court Lane = 180 sf



Micro-housing / Congregate Residences

How Affordable Are They?

- Micros typically rent for between \$500 - \$800 / month
- \$663 average based on a 331-micro sample.
 - Often includes utilities, some furnishings and internet
 - A few top floor micros with lofts are \$1,000+
- Average market rate rents for studios 2008 and newer:
 - Cap Hill / Eastlake: \$1,370. First Hill: \$1,495.
- Subsidized 80% AMI studio rent limit is \$1,127.



Micro-housing / Congregate Housing

Who Rents These?

- Lease terms usually 3-6 months then month-to-month
- Average length of stay is 14 months
- Popular with:
 - Students, lower wage workers, part time residents.
 - People in transition.
- 75% of occupants reported as employed.
- 20% of occupants reported as students.
- 95%+ occupancy rate reported.



Microhousing / Congregate Housing

What about parking?

- Parking for cars is not required in Urban Centers, and Urban Villages with frequent transit service.
- Most micro-housing / congregate residences do not include any parking for cars.
- Residents appear to:
 - Own cars at lower rates than citywide averages
 - Commute by transit at higher rates than citywide averages
 - Commute by bicycle at higher rates than citywide averages



Micro-housing / Congregate Residences

What Would the City's New Regulations Do?

1. **Define** "Micro-housing unit" and "Micro" in the Land Use Code
2. Prohibit Micro-housing in **single-family zones**
3. Apply **Design Review and notice** by the size of the building
4. Establish minimum size of **shared kitchens** and common areas
5. Limit **kitchen components** in Micros and Sleeping Rooms



Micro-housing / Congregate Residences

What Would the City's New Regulations Do?

6. Provide authority to increase required **refuse collection** size
7. Increase quantity of required parking for **vehicles** (when required) **and bicycles**
8. Clarify **RPZ** pass eligibility
9. **Track / count** number of "Micros" and "Sleeping Rooms"
10. Deepen **affordability level** for Affordable Housing programs
11. Ensure application of **green factor** (congregate res.)





Example
1304 E. John St.

Proposed Regulations:

Design Review and public notice would have been required (ADR).



- Townhouse format
- LR3 zone
- 8 Dwelling Units
- 56 "Micros"
- Total: 13,848 gsf
- No Design Review

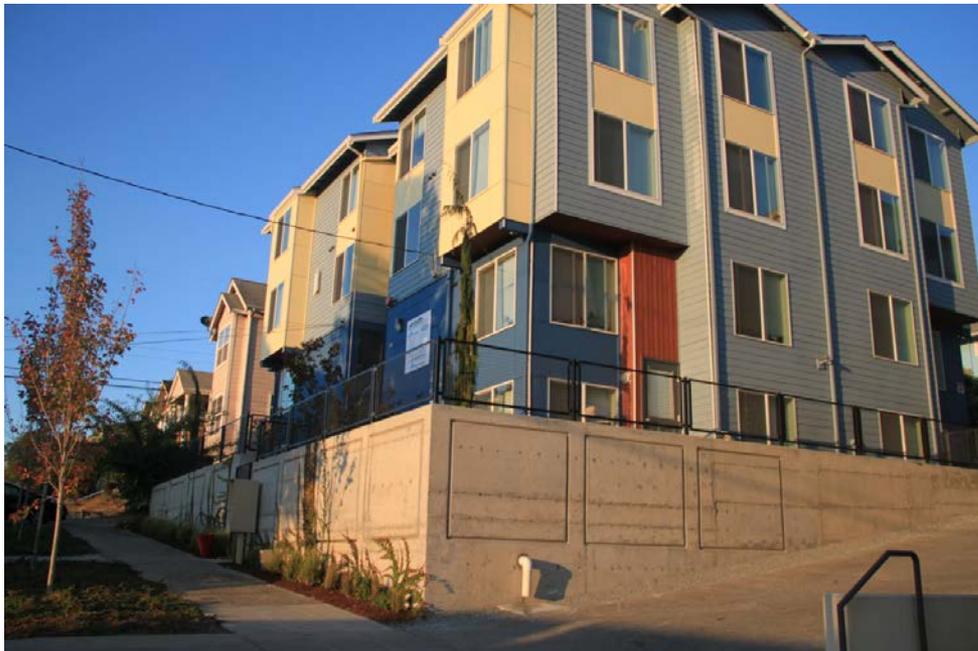




Example
310 17th Ave. S.

Proposed Regulations:

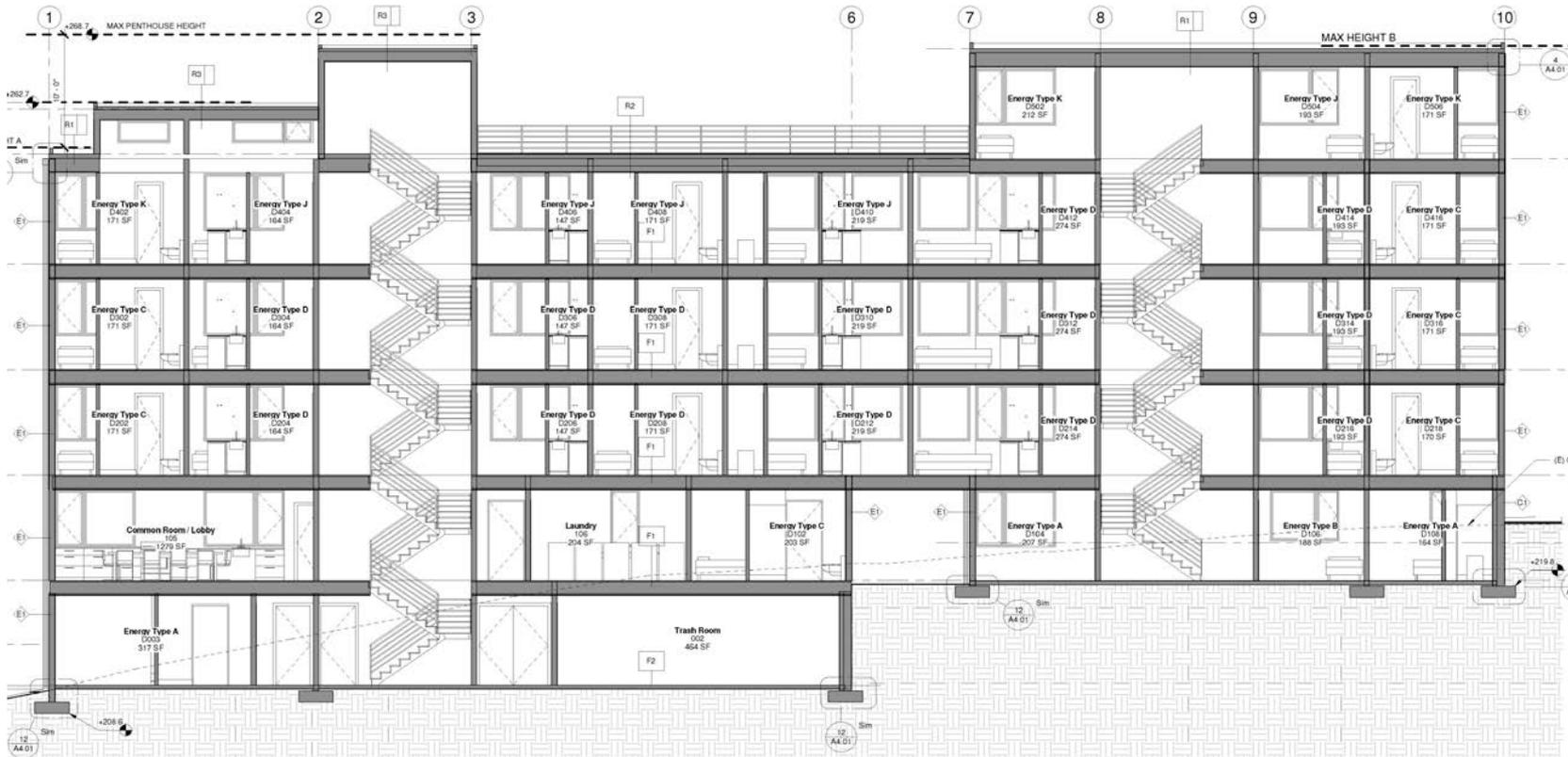
Design Review and public notice would have been required (SDR).



- Townhouse format
- LR3 zone
- 4 Dwelling Units
- 32 "Micros"
- Total: 9,206 gsf
- 3 parking spaces
- No design review



Example: Congregate residence. 1414 E. Yesler Way. (in permitting)
175 sleeping rooms. 4 to 5 stories. NC2-40 zone. 44,016 gsf.



Proposed Regulations: Design Review and public notice would have been required. Common space of more than 4,000 sf would have been required.



Examples: Kitchen-like features.



Proposed Regulations: To be classified as micro-housing, sinks may not be located outside of bathrooms (micro-housing), or would be limited to a certain number of sleeping rooms (congregate residence).



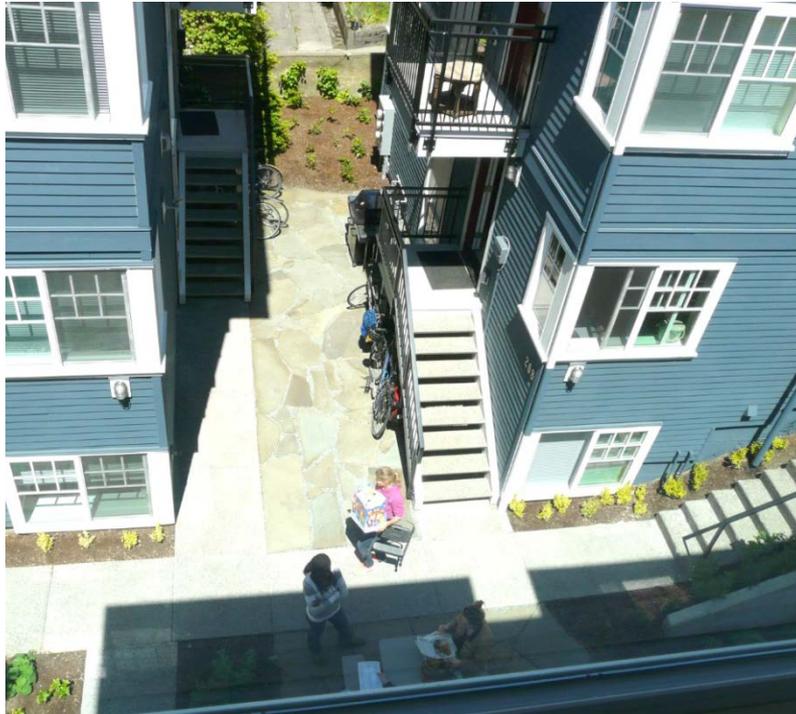
Examples: Shared / common areas.



Proposed Regulations: Shared kitchens must be a minimum of 120 sf (micro-housing); or common area must be at least 10% of the total floor area of all sleeping rooms (congregate residence).



Examples: Common space / amenity areas.



Proposed Regulations: In addition to the Amenity Area otherwise required by code, minimum sizes would be required for required common space.



Design Review – Streamlined: 6,000 – 11,999 GSF.



5,950 GSF project
4 townhouse units
6,000 sf lot
Underwent Streamlined Design Review (SDR)
Located in the LR1 zone
Located in lower Magnolia



Design Review – Administrative: 12,000 – 19,999 GSF.



12,952 SF project
8 LiveWork Units
9,300 SF Lot
Columbia City Historic Review Board project
Located within the NC2-40 zone



Design Review – Board: 20,000 GSF or greater.



20,022 GSF total
25 apartment units
Capitol Hill
Historic Apartment Building (Built 1910)
Located within the LR3 zone
Project pre-dates design review



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Thank You

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