

Cluster Housing Info Sheet

What is cluster housing?

Cluster housing includes group(s) of 4 to 12 smaller dwellings clustered together around a common green space; more than one such group can be developed on the same site. The dwellings themselves can be individual detached structures—often called cottages; attached structures such as townhouses, duplexes and 3-4 plexes; and small apartments sometimes called garden or courtyard apartments. The dwellings are clustered together facing each other across a courtyard, rather than arranged in a traditional grid along public streets. Dwellings share common amenities such as green space, parking areas, and community buildings.

Where can I build cluster housing in the city?

Cluster housing can be developed in all residential zones. Consult the Housing Explorer mapping tool online to see where cluster housing can be developed:

<https://www.orcity.org/maps/housing-explorer>.

Cluster housing can be developed as a stand-alone project, or a cluster can be integrated into a larger residential development such as a subdivision or master plan/planned unit development.

What are the key zoning requirements?

Dwellings within a cluster housing project must be built to a smaller scale, to offset the increased number of units permitted. The maximum gross floor area for any single unit is 1,500 sq. ft., with an overall maximum average floor area of 1,000 sq. ft. per unit for the project. Maximum height for all units is 25 feet.

All cluster housing projects must provide 400 sq. ft. of open space per unit, which may include private and common spaces. At least half of the open space must be provided as a central open space with individual



Cluster housing examples including detached cottage units (top), attached duplexes and triplexes (middle), and courtyard apartments (bottom), all with common courtyard and green.

homes facing onto the open space, translating to 800 sq. ft. for a 4-unit cluster up to 2,400 sq. ft. for a 12-unit cluster.

Cluster housing requires a minimum of one parking space per unit, and can be provided through a combination of individual garages, common parking areas or garages, and/or on-street parking.

Cluster housing can be developed on a single lot, with all units under common ownership or sold individually as condos, or a cluster can be developed through a subdivision that creates individual lots for each unit with common amenities controlled by a homeowners association.

Summary Table: Cluster Housing Standards by Zoning District

	R-10	R-8	R-6	R-5	R-3.5	R-2
Housing types allowed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-family detached • Up to two attached units (duplex or townhouses) 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-family detached • Up to four attached units (plexes or townhouses) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-family detached • Up to six attached units (Plexes or townhouses)
Minimum site area per unit	5,000 sq. ft. per unit	4,000 sq. ft. per unit	3,000 sq. ft. per unit	3,333 sq. ft. per unit	2,333 sq. ft. per unit	2,000 sq. ft. per unit
Minimum total site area¹	20,000 sq. ft. (for four units)	16,000 sq. ft. (for four units)	12,000 sq. ft. (for four units)	13,333 sq. ft. (for four units)	10,000 sq. ft. (for four units)	8,000 sq. ft. (for four units)
Minimum individual lot size²	3,500 sq. ft.	3,000 sq. ft.	2,500 sq. ft.	2,000 sq. ft.	2,000 sq. ft.	1,500 sq. ft.

1. Effective minimums based on minimum lot area per unit and minimum of four units required, rather than regulatory minimums of 10,000 sq. ft. per project in all zones except R-2, which would be too small to permit required number of units. Except that in R-3.5, 10,000 sq. ft. site minimum is higher than the 9,333-sq. ft. required site area for four units.

2. Overall project site must also meet minimum site area requirements for the number of units created.

What zoning standards apply to cluster housing development?

This handout is intended as a summary of key standards. For more complete information, see:

- Base zone standards
- OCMC 17.20.020 – Cluster Housing
- OCMC 17.52 – Off-Street Parking and Loading
- OCMC 17.62 – Site Plan and Design Review, including 17.62.050 – General Standards

What permits, applications and fees are required?

A Type II Major Site Plan and Design Review is required for all cluster housing projects, including a pre-application conference prior to submitting an application.

- Land Use process timelines: <https://www.orcity.org/planning/processes-and-timelines>

- Site Plan and Design Review resources: <https://www.orcity.org/planning/site-plan-and-design-review-resources>
- Planning Review Fees: <https://www.orcity.org/planning/planning-fee-schedule>

A subdivision or minor partition review is also required for any projects creating individual lots. See individual application forms for more detail.

- Subdivision (4 or more lots): <https://www.orcity.org/planning/subdivision-resources>
- Minor partition (2-3 lots): <https://www.orcity.org/planning/minor-partition-resources-0>

Building permits and engineering permits may be required as well.

- Building permits: <https://www.orcity.org/building>
- Engineering permits: <https://www.orcity.org/publicworks/engineering-development-services>

In addition to application and review fees, System Development Charges (SDCs) will be assessed for all cluster housing units. Cluster housing units are assessed as a mixed-use development. Contact Public Works for an estimate at (503) 657-0891. Further SDC information may be found at the following link:

- <https://www.orcity.org/publicworks/system-development-charges-sdcs>