Guide to
Housing Options

For the first time, Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) will require new commercial and multifamily residential development in Seattle to include affordable homes for low-income families or make payments to the Office of Housing to fund affordable housing. Zoning changes are needed to put MHA into effect. These new zones will allow for more housing options in Urban Villages and existing commercial and multifamily zones. No zoning changes are proposed, and MHA will not apply, in single-family areas outside of Urban Villages. www.seattle.gov/HALA

HALA
HOUSING AFFORDABILITY
AND LIVABILITY AGENDA

Seattle
Office of Planning &
Community Development

This model shows how different housing types can fit together in a neighborhood. Buildings in color reflect the proposed MHA zoning changes, while the other buildings are modeled with existing zoning. This is one example of a transition between higher- and lower-scale zones.

Principles to Guide MHA Zoning Changes

Below is a sample of of the community-generated principles that have guided MHA implementation. For more detail, see the full list of MHA Principles.

- Provide a range of housing options, from studios to family-sized homes.

- Plan for transitions between higher- and lower-scale buildings, creating step-downs between larger commercial buildings and residential areas.

- Allow more housing near parks, schools, and transit.

- Encourage building designs and landscaping that reflect Seattle and provide public open space.

- Expand Urban Villages to reflect a 10-minute walk from very good transit service.

- Do not increase development capacity in designated National Register Historic Districts, including Pioneer Square.

- Consider views from parks, streets, and other public spaces.

- Evaluate MHA implementation using a social and racial equity lens.

Residential Small Lot (RSL)

- Groups of small cottages
- Smaller single-family homes on small lots (2,000 sq. ft.)
- 2 or 3 apartments inside converted single-family homes
- 2 or 3 attached townhouses
- Similar scale to single-family homes
- Multiple bedroom family-sized homes
- Near existing single-family zones and edges of urban villages
- 30-foot height limit (same as single-family zones)

Lowrise 1 (LR1)

- Groups of townhouses or rowhouses
- 3-story apartment buildings
- A mix of rental and ownership options
- Usually near the edges of urban villages
- A mix of family-sized housing and smaller apartments
- Allows only housing (no retail or offices)
- 30' height limit (same as a single-family zones)

Lowrise 2 (LR2)

- Groups of townhouses or rowhouses
- 4-story apartment buildings
- A mix of rental and ownership housing options
- Provides a transition between commercial areas and lower-scale residential areas
- Allows only housing (no retail or offices)
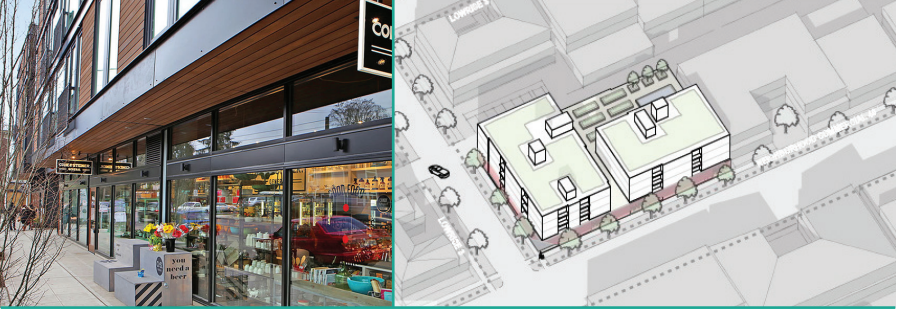- 40-foot height limit

Lowrise 3 (LR3)
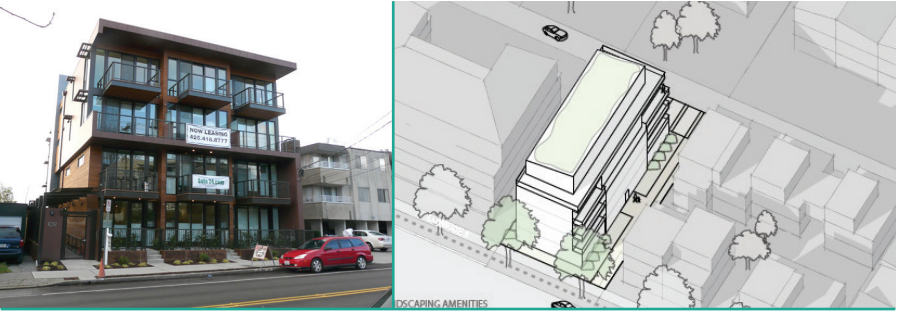
- 4- or 5-story apartment or condominium buildings
- Some groups of townhouses or rowhouses
- Usually near very good transit and services inside urban villages
- Allows only housing (no retail or offices)
- 40-foot height limit outside urban villages
- 50-foot height limit inside urban villages

Midrise Residential (MR)

- 6- or 7-story apartment or condominium buildings
- Near good transit and services inside urban villages and urban centers
- Allows only housing (no retail or offices)
- 75' height limit
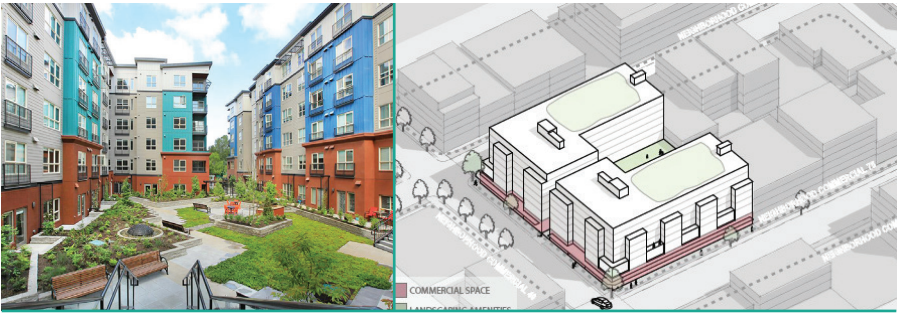
Neighborhood Commercial 40 (NC-40)

- 4- or 5-story mixed-use buildings
- Usually ground-floor shops with apartments above
- Some groups of townhouses or rowhouses
- Usually near very good transit and services and/or inside urban villages
- 40-foot height limit

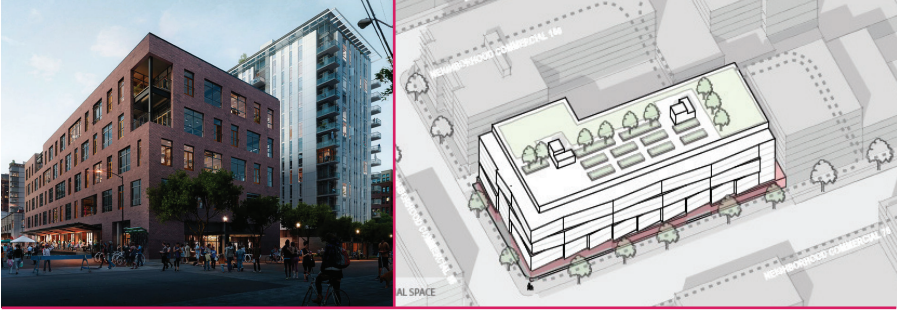## Neighborhood Commercial 55 (NC-55)

- 5-story mixed-use buildings
- Usually ground-floor shops with apartments above
- In neighborhood commercial business districts
- Usually near very good transit and services inside urban villages
- Small and medium shops and services, like corner stores, bars, and restaurants
- 55-foot height limit

Neighborhood Commercial 75 (NC-75)

- 6- or 7-story mixed-use buildings
- Usually ground-floor shops with apartments above
- Usually at the heart of a neighborhood commercial district
- Near very good transit and services inside urban villages
- Often medium to large businesses like grocery stores
- Some entire buildings of office or commercial uses
- 75-foot height limit

Neighborhood Commercial 95 (NC-95)

- 6- to 10-story mixed-use buildings
- Usually ground-floor shops with apartments above
- Usually at the heart of a neighborhood commercial district
- Only found in the busiest urban villages and urban centers
- Near very good transit and services inside urban villages
- Medium to large businesses like grocery stores
- Some entire buildings of offices or commercial uses
- 95-foot height limit

Examples are for general illustration purposes only and are not intended as technical representations of proposed zoning standards.