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# City News

**From Councilwoman Jeanne Faatz**

## **Denver zoning officials look to improve code**

Denver zoning officials have come up with a new zoning code that they say is a big improvement. The revision uses words and pictures to convey an expanded list of zoning options. They say this better links zoning designations with planning documents and existing building patterns.

**In our council district, the proposed code would change little.** We are primarily single-family residences, which the new code describes differently. Instead of the familiar R-1 and R-0 designations, it uses terms and drawings that speak of forms and concepts. Zoning officials say this helps homeowners better understand what they can do with their property.

The new code defines minimum lot sizes, which makes it harder to assemble property and build more houses on smaller parcels. This helps homeowners who want to preserve the character of their existing neighborhoods. According to planning staff, current townhouse and apartment designations will remain but with different names. All Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) will stay the same, and our commercial areas will have equivalent zoning.

In our area, zoning already matches existing building. But that's not so in some locations where single-family homes or duplexes sit on land zoned for higher density. Homeowners who bought with the intention of developing their property may feel the new code is taking their property rights. This is not a controversy in southwest Denver.

Other homeowners are concerned that the new code's bulk plane rules will increase shading on their homes. Still others worry about Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), also known as Granny Flats, which allow renting but don't limit it to relatives. Southwest Denver's proposed zoning does not allow ADUs.

City planners have been having meetings to acquaint people with the proposed code. I've asked them to brief people in our district at homeowner association meetings to ensure high attendance. Call my council office at (303) 763-8562 or contact your homeowner group to find out where briefings will be in September.

To see the draft code and maps of how it would affect neighborhoods, go to [www.newcodedenver.org](http://www.newcodedenver.org).