



Project: Unlocking Housing Choices
Subject: Advisory Committee Meeting #5:
Meeting Notes
Meeting Date: Thursday, February 5, 2026
Meeting Time: 4:00pm - 6:00pm
Meeting Location: Wellington Webb Building, Room 4G2
201 W Colfax Ave, Denver, CO 80202
Microsoft Teams Remote Option

Meeting Notes

1. Building Form Updates

Updates to building forms and design standards to better align the mass and scale of redevelopment in residential neighborhoods.

Key Themes and Feedback

- Committee members supported the intent to reduce massing and discourage replacement of smaller homes with very large single-unit houses.
- At the same time, there was significant concern that changes intended to limit large homes may unintentionally reduce the feasibility of duplexes and other common missing middle housing types.
- Duplexes were repeatedly identified as the most prevalent and approachable multi-unit housing form; members cautioned that making duplexes less feasible could undermine overall housing production goals.
- Members discussed the shift toward a maximum gross floor area (GFA) model and expressed interest in maintaining flexible, framework-based form standards rather than overly prescriptive building form standards.
- Some members noted that reduced predictability in building outcomes could create public and political challenges, even if flexibility improves market responsiveness.
- Suggestions included testing additional housing forms not fully reflected in the prototypes, such as six-unit buildings, cottage courts, attached configurations, and subdivision of existing large homes.
- Block-sensitive front setbacks and compatibility with existing neighborhood patterns were identified as especially important for acceptance in lower-scale residential areas.

Next Steps

- Evaluate whether building form updates disproportionately reduce duplex feasibility.
- Test additional building forms and higher unit counts within the proposed GFA framework.
- Explore whether gross floor area allowance or other dimensional standards could be adjusted to support duplex viability.

- Clarify how form flexibility will be communicated to the public to maintain predictability and trust.
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2. Infill Bonus

Additional housing options when an existing structure containing a dwelling unit is retained.

Key Themes and Feedback

- Committee members expressed support for the infill bonus concept, particularly its potential for incremental housing growth and homeowner participation.
- Questions were raised about the feasibility assumptions used in the analysis, especially scenarios that assume zero land cost and existing homeowners adding units rather than buyers acquiring property specifically for redevelopment.
- Members noted that limited alley access, garage removal requirements, Zoning Lot Amendments (ZLAMs), and infrastructure constraints may significantly limit the number of properties that can realistically utilize the infill bonus.
- There was concern that only a small subset of lots may qualify under current assumptions, potentially limiting the scale of housing delivery.
- Members emphasized that feasibility varies widely by neighborhood context and that what works in one area may not work in another.
- Some members suggested further exploration of subdivision of existing large homes and attached configurations as part of the infill strategy.

Next Steps

- Run additional feasibility scenarios that include land acquisition costs and non-existing homeowner development.
 - Evaluate how many lots citywide realistically qualify for the infill bonus under different access and infrastructure conditions.
 - Explain the analysis of the feasibility of subdividing existing large single-unit homes.
 - Provide clearer estimates of housing production, timing, and price ranges attributable to the infill bonus strategy.
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3. Affordability Bonus

Additional housing options when at least one unit is designated as affordable.

Key Themes and Feedback

- Committee members expressed concern that affordability outcomes remain limited, with modeled unit prices still unaffordable for many Denver households.

- The feasibility analysis did not include subsidies, prompting questions about whether market-driven affordability alone is sufficient to meet equity goals.
- Members questioned whether deed-restricted affordability is the only or most effective approach and suggested testing alternatives, such as price- or rent-based affordability benchmarks tied to AMI without long-term restrictions.
- There was interest in exploring unit bonuses or gross floor area bonuses for providing additional affordable units, particularly at higher unit counts.
- Some members questioned whether an affordability bonus is necessary at smaller scales and how affordability compares between four-, six-, or higher-unit configurations.
- Administrative complexity and long-term management of deed restrictions were identified as potential barriers.

Next Steps

- Test alternative affordability mechanisms beyond deed restrictions.
- Model unit and floor area bonuses tied to affordability at different scales.
- Compare affordability outcomes across multiple unit counts and configurations.
- Clarify administrative implications and long-term oversight requirements associated with affordable units.

Across all three strategies, the Advisory Committee emphasized the need for:

- Clear projections of housing production, timing, and affordability outcomes.
- Better communication of tradeoffs between neighborhood character, feasibility, and equity.
- Strong public engagement and messaging to explain goals, limitations, and expected results.
- Coordination beyond zoning to address affordability, infrastructure, and unintended consequences.