

From: [Joshua Watanabe](#)
To: [Andrea Summerville](#); [Brian Harrington](#); [Frederick Schmechel](#); [Paul Weaver](#); [Jayne Pearce](#); [Sharon Cumbie](#); [Pat Gabriel](#); [Erin ODoherty](#); [Bryan Shuster](#)
Cc: [Matthew Cox](#)
Subject: Proposed Zoning and Code Changes
Date: Thursday, October 21, 2021 9:48:20 AM

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Mayor Weaver and Members of City Council,

I write to support both proposed changes put before the council as they relate to the dimensional changes to R2, R2M, and R3 zoning rules and the associated parking regulations proposed by city planners – TA-21-01 & TA-21-02.

I have had the opportunity to speak with planner Matthew Cox on different occasions. As one of the communities' largest housing and housing-related assistance resources, the shortfall of affordable housing has become more apparent than ever this year. While there may be several causes, the influx of those in need of housing this year should not have been wholly unexpected and will continue to grow. As housing becomes less affordable, the number of community members in need of our services increases while at the same time the level of support we are able to provide decreases. I believe that these changes are beneficial and needed for our community and the future work of Laramie Interfaith.

As we continue to see population growth and Laramie Interfaith continues to provide housing needs, the proposed dimensional changes to our multi-family areas will grant a great deal of flexibility not only to developers but also to agencies like Interfaith. Upon completing our food pantry, we plan to set the following goals towards addressing the housing issue. Across the country, unique and innovative housing options are being worked on both privately and by non-profit agencies to address homelessness and affordable housing issues. These developments do not often require large amounts of space, but they need flexibility in building rules. As detailed during the work session in August, these dimensional changes allow for creative and integrated housing units that can be built more affordably than traditional multi-story units.

Concerning the parking regulations, we are also in support of this action to increase housing affordability. I spoke specifically with Mr. Cox regarding this issue. Parking and transportation are frequent and consistent concerns of the population we serve. Reliable transportation is a requirement in Laramie, especially during the winter, and there is something to be said for proximity to housing. However, through our discussion and contact with our clients, parking, or the lack thereof, is not a concern in residential areas used by our clients – transportation is consistently noted, but this is not related to parking issues. As opposed to the consistent concerns for housing availability and housing affordability, this appears to be less of a concern outside of specific and frequently used areas of town. While compromise is the highlight of politics, the direct correlation between housing costs and parking available insists that we meet this issue directly. If parking increases costs, this requirement should be adjusted to give flexibility and afford developers options.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Joshua Watanabe, PMP

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