

Context: What is Zoning?

And what parts of code are proposed to change in Valdez zoning (Title 17)?

What is Zoning?

Districts

Where types of uses should be allowed or excluded.



Residential districts



Industrial districts

Uses

Activities or structures allowed in each district.



Residential



Commercial



Industrial



Park

Other standards



Lot dimensions and setbacks: how close you can build to the property line



Use standards: limited hours of operation, disposal of waste, etc.



Design standards: requirements for appearance or architectural features.

Zoning code is local law governing how land within the city limits is used and developed, how buildings are sited, and rules such as building height or size.

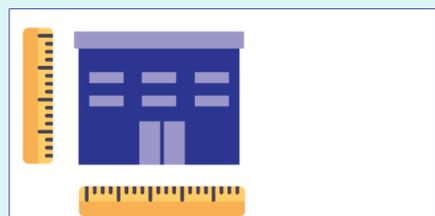
Valdez Zoning Code is known as Title 17.

Other Codes

Zoning is one set of laws that influence how and where a community is built.

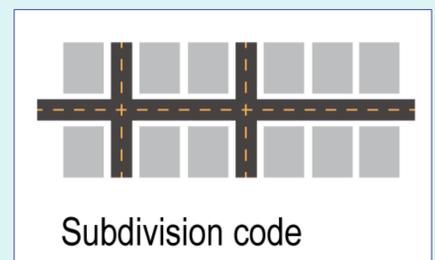
Other local codes impacting development listed below. These are not in the scope of this project, but may be reviewed for possible future changes to work better with the revised zoning code.

The City is also planning to update the building code (Title 15) as a separate project.



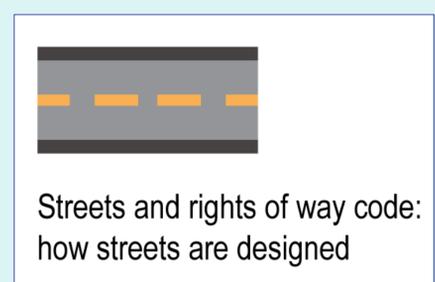
Building code: structural design, snow load, earthquake and hazard mitigation

Title 15: Buildings and Construction



Subdivision code

Title 16: Subdivisions



Streets and rights of way code: how streets are designed

Title 12: Streets, Sidewalks and Public Places

Steps to Simplify Zoning Code

1: Simplify land uses

Step 1: Simplify list of land uses: remove redundant or very similar uses, simplify to broader categories. Consider allowing more uses (example, housing types) in districts.

2: Consolidate district types

Step 2: Consolidate district types: remove redundant or very similar districts, simplify to broader categories: Residential districts, Commercial districts, Public Uses, etc.

3: Update other parts of code

Step 3: Update rest of code: use standards, setbacks and lot dimensions, definitions.

4: Simplify and add alternatives for zoning approvals

Step 4: Address approval process for uses, simpler options like administrative approvals.

5: Variances, implementation of code

Step 5: Address variances, nonconforming uses, and implementation of new code.



We want your input! There are 3 stations in the room with proposed zoning changes, general concepts for feedback, and other questions. Please share your thoughts at each station!

Zoning Revision Project

For more information, visit www.zoningvaldez.com

Project Goals



Be consistent with
Plan Valdez



Address natural hazards



Plan for “winter city”
conditions



Create land
use/development
flexibility



Allow more housing
options



Accommodate mixed-
use projects



Remove unnecessary
regulations



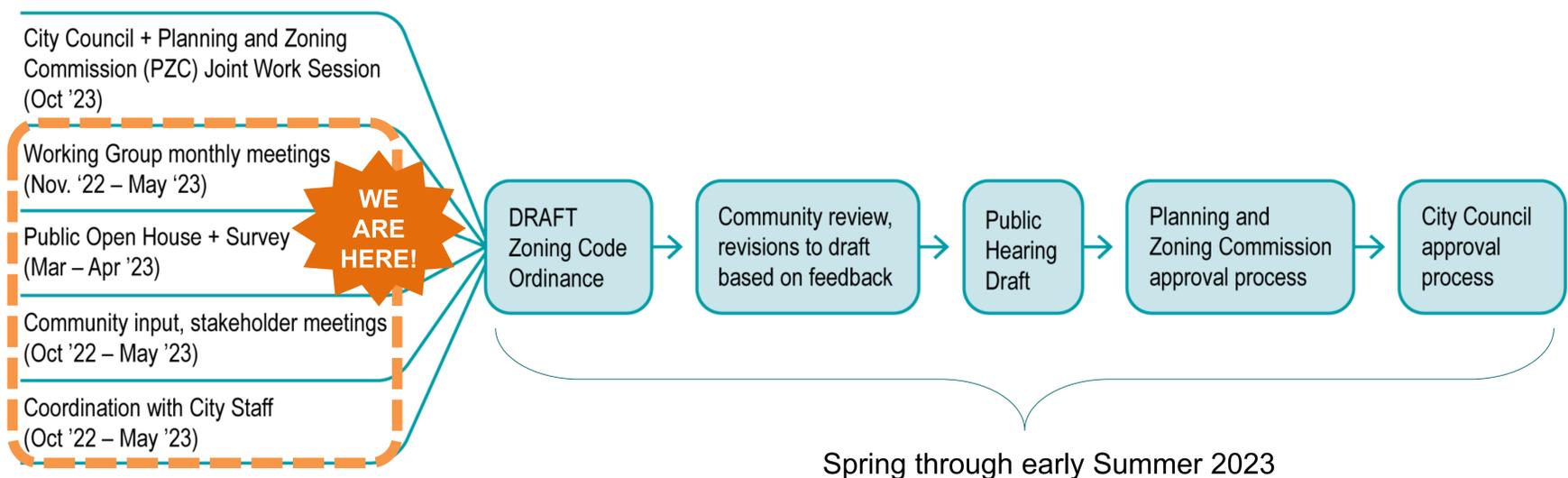
Streamline review
procedures

Project Timeline

The new Valdez zoning code is a work in progress.

Since fall 2022, we have worked with City leadership, Planning Department staff, and a volunteer Working Group of community members to review current code, identify where we can simplify, streamline, and improve the code, and discuss important topics that the code should address.

Project Timeline, including a preview of what’s next:



We want your input! There are 3 stations in the room with proposed zoning changes, general concepts for feedback, and other questions. Please share your thoughts at each station!

Housing

Answer questions below with dot stickers, write comments on sticky notes!

Making housing easier to build is a high community priority in Valdez.

Many proposed changes to code are intended to make it easier to build or expand housing, such as allowing more housing types in more districts, and units per lot.

Housing Types by District

 <p>R-1: Rural residential Detached, manufactured, mobile, accessory dwellings</p>	 <p>R-2: Moderate density residential Detached, attached duplex, 3- and 4-plex, manufactured, mobile, accessory dwellings; conditional = townhomes (more than 2) and 5+ units, live-work w/ commercial component</p>	 <p>R-3: Highest density residential Detached, attached duplex, 3- and 4-plex, townhomes (more than 2), manufactured, mobile, accessory dwellings; conditional = 5+ units, live-work w/ commercial component</p>
 <p>Housing Allowed in Commercial Districts Multi-family (3 plex, 4 plex, 5+ units) allowed in all commercial</p>	 <p>Temporary Worker Housing Allowed in Some Districts Conditional in R1, industrial, G General Commercial</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Newly allowed in district  Detached (single family)  Manufactured  Mobile  Accessory dwelling  Multi-unit (3-plex, 4-plex, apartments)

The City is considering allowing more housing types in each district.

The graphic illustrates which housing types are currently allowed in each district, and additional types that would also be allowed.

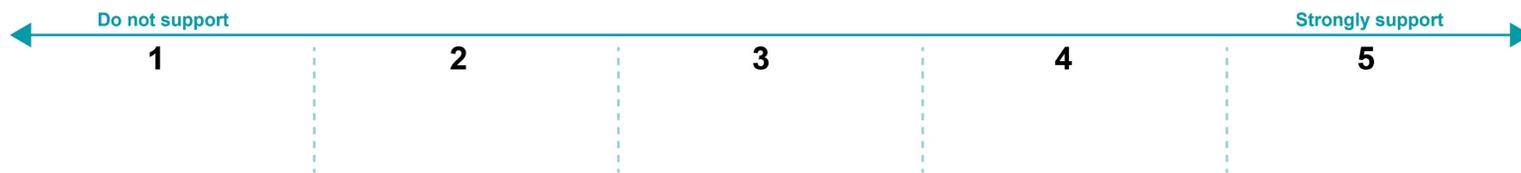


Questions:

1. What impacts might this change have?
2. Other comments and questions about this idea?

Current code reference:
VMC 17.14-22 Residential Districts

Level of support for allowing more housing types in residential districts

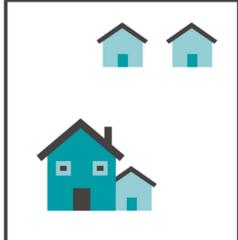
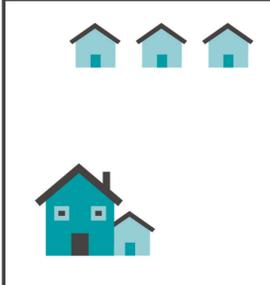
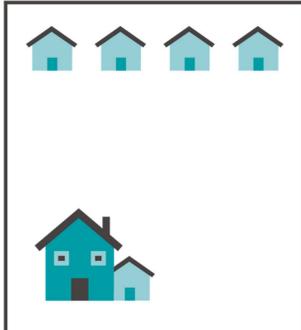


Accessory Dwellings

An accessory dwelling unit (ADU) is a separate housing unit on the same lot. An ADUs has its own kitchen, bathroom, and sleeping areas. ADUs could be used as more space for families, or as short- and long-term rentals.

ADUs, both attached and detached, may be allowed in residential districts.

Up to 2 would be allowed on a lot at least 8,000 sq. ft. The larger the lot, the more units allowed (up to 5 total).

 <p>Lot size: 8,000 sq ft</p>	 <p>Lot size: 18,000 sq ft</p>	 <p>Lot size: 28,000 sq ft</p>	 <p>Lot size: 38,000 sq ft</p>
<p>ADUs: 1 attached, 1 detached (2 total)</p> <p>ADUs: 1 attached, 2 detached (3 total)</p> <p>ADUs: 1 attached, 3 detached (4 total)</p> <p>ADUs: 1 attached, 4 detached (5 max)</p>			
<p>For each additional 10,000 sq ft, can have 1 additional</p>			

This graphic shows how many ADUs would be allowed on a property.



Questions:

1. Should there be a limit on the size (sq. ft.) of an ADU?
2. What impacts might this change have?
3. Other comments and questions about this idea?

Current code reference:
N/A: not in current code

Level of support for allowing accessory dwellings in residential districts

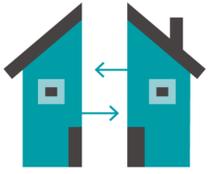


Housing

Answer questions below with dot stickers, write comments on sticky notes!

One of the community's goals is to expand housing in Valdez, and remove barriers to building more types of housing. Below are two proposals to help achieve this goal.

Manufactured and Mobile Homes



Manufactured home

Pre-fabricated and transported in pieces, assembled onsite.

Allowed in all residential districts.



Mobile home

Built before 1975, on a chassis.

Allowed as individual units in all residential districts. However, Mobile Home Court only allowed in R-3.



RV or camper

RVs not considered dwelling units for purposes of zoning code or building code.

There are many types of houses, including ones that are not "stick-built" or on a traditional foundation. Manufactured and mobile homes are options for lower-cost housing.

New code may allow manufactured and mobile homes in all residential zoning districts.

The graphic shows how the code would define these housing units, and where they would be allowed (with no change regarding RVs).

Current code reference:
 VMC 17.04.940 Mobile Home Definition
 VMC 17.14-22 Residential Districts
 VMC 17.22 Mobile Home District

Questions:

1. Should Manufactured and Mobile Homes be treated like other housing types?

Yes



Yes, but with Restrictions

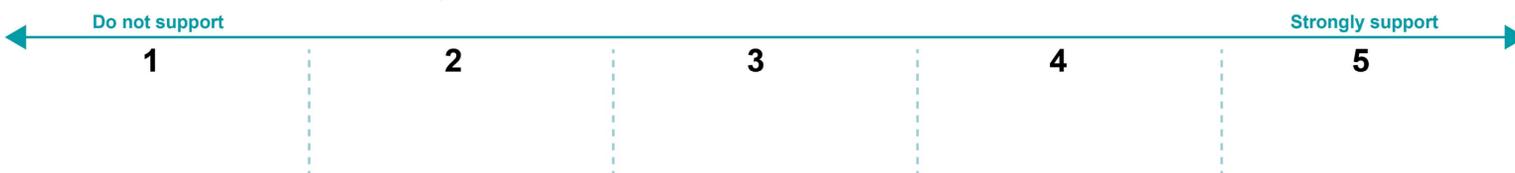


No



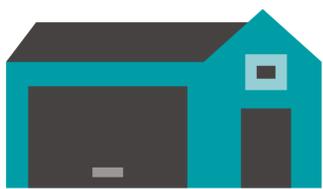
2. How would this change impact your property, including future plans?

Level of support for allowing Manufactured and Mobile Homes in residential districts

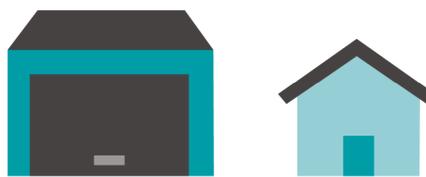


"Shouse" (Shop-House)

Accessory apartments/units in or near larger garage or shop building.



Attached



Detached

A shop-house, or "shouse," is a garage or workshop building with an attached or adjacent small dwelling unit.

A shop-house allows a resident to have ample space on their property for a workshop and/or indoor storage for a vehicle, boat, and equipment.

Questions:

1. Should Shop-Houses be allowed in residential areas?

Yes, All Residential Districts



Yes, Some Residential Districts



No, Do Not Allow



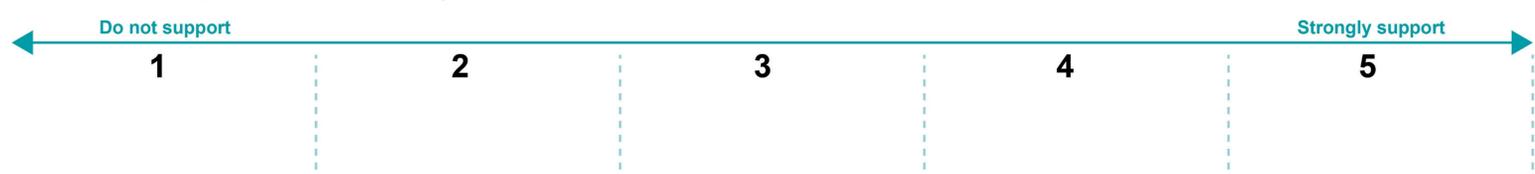
Many residents may want to have shop-houses to suit their lifestyle: fishing, work and recreational vehicles, home businesses.

Current code does not have guidance about these structures beyond maximum building size (lot coverage).



2. Should Shop-Houses be limited, such as maximum size? If so, how?

Level of support for allowing Shop-houses in residential districts



Housing

Answer questions below with dot stickers, write comments on sticky notes!

Below are two big topics in the community: how to treat short-term (vacation) rentals, and whether the zoning code should specifically address snow storage.

Short-term Rentals



Bed & Breakfast

Room rented in a home/building. Currently allowed.

Current code reference:
VMC 17.04.170 Bed and Breakfast Home



Full-unit Rental

Currently not addressed in code. If allowed, could be treated the same as a traditional B&B, with permit required.

Short term rentals, also known as vacation rentals by owner (VRBO), typically rented for less than 30 days. A rental can be a room inside a home, or renting an entire unit.

Current code allows a bed & breakfast (B&B) in an owner-occupied home. Other short-term rentals are not addressed in code.

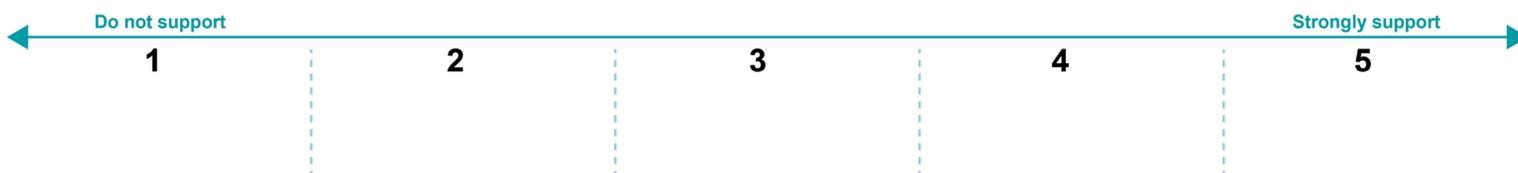
New code could treat full-unit rentals the same as traditional B&Bs, and require registration.

Questions:

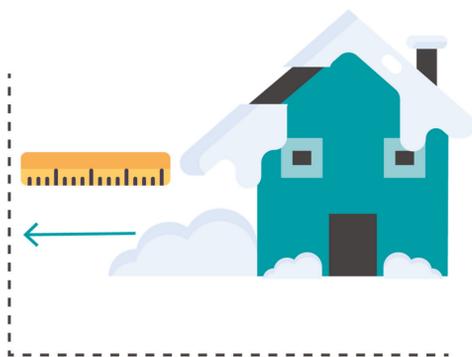


1. What (if any) impacts do short-term rentals have on the housing market in Valdez?
2. How should full-unit rentals be treated in zoning code?

Level of support for expanding definition of B&B, allowing all short term rentals



Snow Storage



Side setback



Front setback

Roof pitch
Space beside buildings (setbacks) for snow shedding
None: No rules needed

There are few rules about onsite snow storage for residential and commercial properties:

When creating a new subdivision, there must be dedicated land for snow storage (VMC 16.24.080).

Zoning code also requires setbacks: the minimum distance between property line and building, in most districts (*varies by district*).

Building code (Title 15) addresses structural requirements for snow load.

Other factors, like roof pitch and material, impact how snow accumulates on a property: a steeper roof tends to shed snow, while a flatter roof holds more snow.

Current code reference:
VMC 16.24.080 Subdivisions, Dedication for Snow Storage
VMC 17.48.040 Yards and Setbacks

Questions:

1. What topics should be addressed in zoning code regarding snow storage?

Roof Pitch



Minimum Setbacks



No Rules Needed



2. What (if any) other rules should the zoning code include for onsite snow storage?

Commercial + Industrial

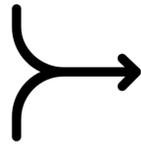
Answer questions below with dot stickers, write comments on sticky notes!

Most proposed changes to the zoning code are intended to simplify the rules, making it easier to use for businesses as well as staff.

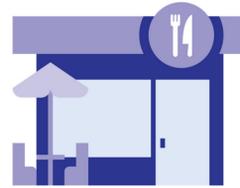
Commercial and Industrial Zoning

273

Uses in Current Code



Commercial and retail sales



Eating establishment



Indoor recreation facility



Manufacturing and processing

Current code lists over 270 allowed commercial and industrial uses, many of which are redundant.

This creates barriers for business: concepts that don't fit neatly into a category may be prohibited, or require changes to fit.

The graphic shows examples of proposed broad categories of commercial and industrial uses. This creates flexibility, allowing more businesses to fit the zoning, and removes barriers for innovative ideas.

Current code reference:
VMC 17.12-47 Zoning Districts

Level of support for simplifying and broadening Commercial and Industrial Use categories



Home Occupations



Allowed Activities

1 sign, up to 2 people employed onsite, minimal traffic (including deliveries). Must be secondary to dwelling unit.

Some uses allowed with additional standards

Tutoring, woodworking and furniture making, small engine and appliance repair.

Current code reference:
VMC 17.48.060 Home Occupations



Uses that generate these impacts are not allowed

Noise, vibrations, odors, bright lights, additional traffic and deliveries. These would require being in a commercial/industrial district.

Home occupations are businesses operating out of a residence. These are currently allowed, with rules about impacts on neighboring properties. Some business activities are not allowed.

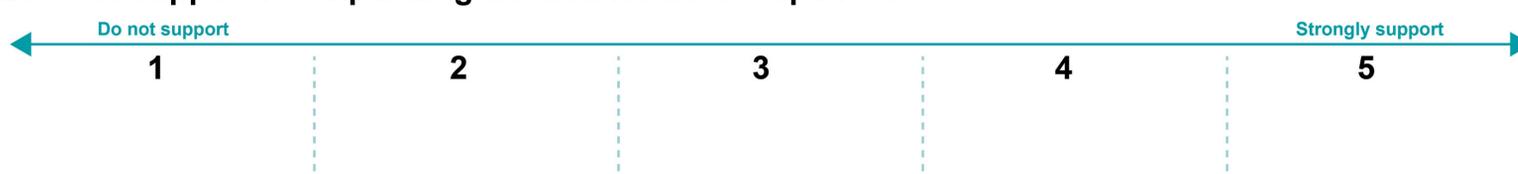
The graphic shows types of allowed home occupations, and activities not allowed as home occupations. **New code may expand allowed home business activities.**



Question:

What businesses should be allowed as home occupations?

Level of support for expanding allowed Home Occupations

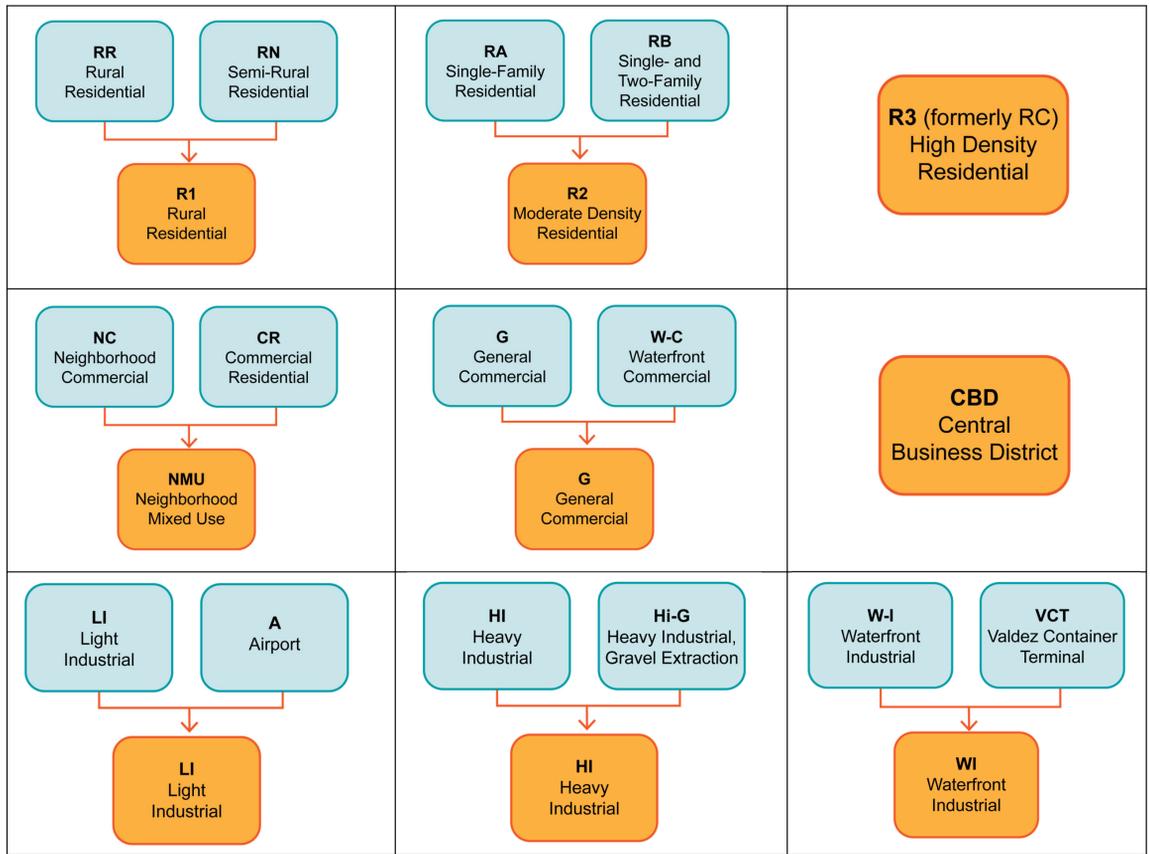


Commercial + Industrial

Answer questions below with dot stickers, write comments on sticky notes!

The topics below illustrate how zoning districts will be simplified in the new code, and an overview of the Waterfront Industrial district, with examples of allowed uses.

Simplifying Zoning Districts



Zoning Districts are geographic areas where certain uses are allowed, prohibited, or allowed as a conditional use.

The graphic illustrates how current districts will be consolidated:

Residential (top row)
Commercial (middle row)
Industrial (bottom row)

Individual properties in each district will not require re-zoning: districts will be updated areawide.

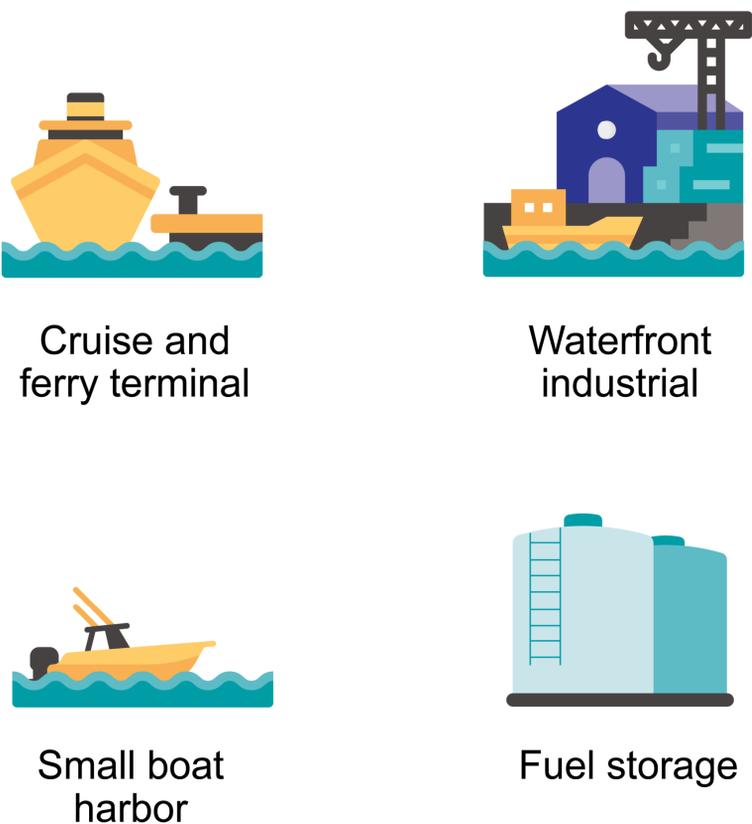
Allowed uses will generally stay the same (see poster about uses).

Current code reference:
VMC 17.12-47 Zoning Districts



We want your input! Do you have questions or comments about this concept? Talk to staff at this station, and write and post your thoughts on a sticky note!

Waterfront Industrial: Maintaining a Working Waterfront



Valdez has strong connections to the waterfront: tourism, seafood processing, petroleum operations, and other uses.

The City's **Valdez Waterfront Master Plan** addresses how to maintain a healthy balance of these uses.

There are no major changes proposed to what's allowed: the zoning code will be updated to be consistent with the Waterfront Master Plan.

This graphic shows some of the proposed, simplified categories of waterfront industrial uses.

Current code reference:
VMC 17.32 W-C Waterfront Commercial District
VMC 17.24 W-I Waterfront Industrial District
VMC 17.35 VCT Valdez Container Terminal District



We want your input! Do you have questions or comments about this concept? Talk to staff at this station, and write and post your thoughts on a sticky note!

Approvals

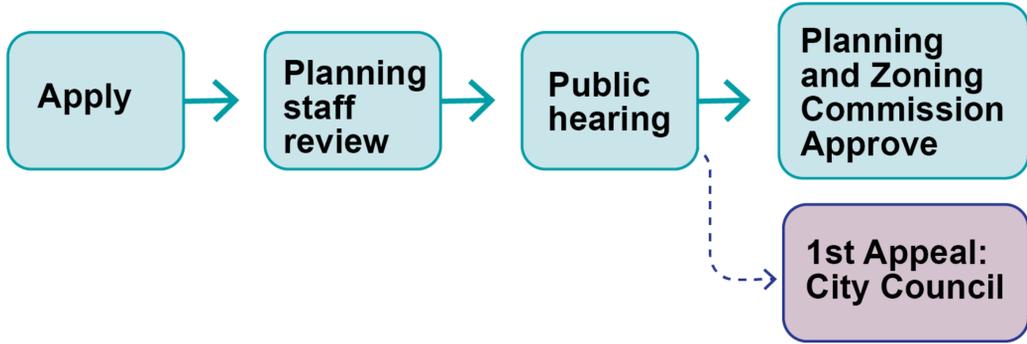
Answer questions below with dot stickers, write comments on sticky notes!

In addition to changes to uses and districts, improving zoning code means making approval processes simpler. Here are proposed changes to these processes.

Simpler Alternatives: Review and Approval Processes

Conditional Use Permit approval process

Process currently in code for most approvals

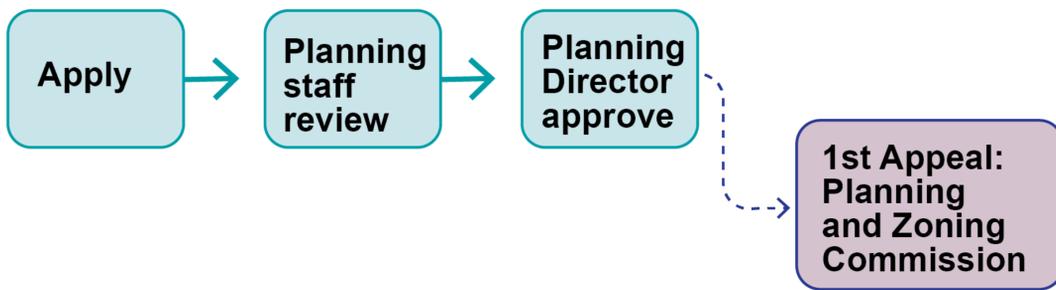


In current code, uses are either allowed, restricted, or require a **conditional use process** to be approved. This requires staff review, a public hearing, and vote by the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC).

It is common for a community to use **Administrative Adjustments**, a process for smaller changes, with sign-off “over the counter.” Planning Department staff review the application, and the Director can approve the application.

Administrative Adjustment - New Addition to the Code

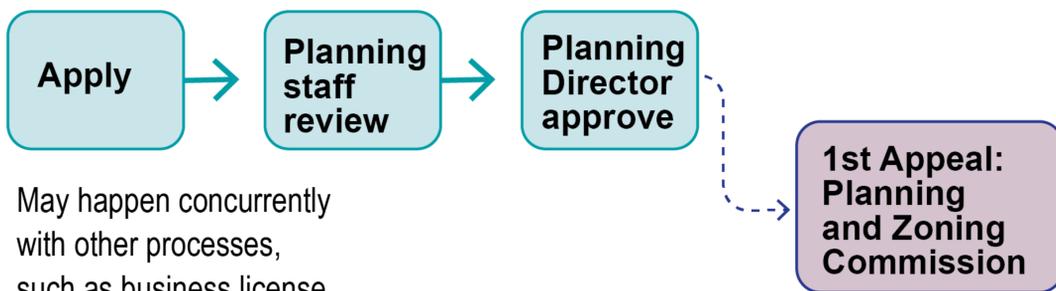
Planning Dept. review and approval



Other communities also use the **Zoning Clearance process**: Staff reviews an application (new business, housing development, etc.) and confirms the project conforms with zoning requirements. This clears up confusion upfront for the property owner or business, and may avoid needing to make changes further down the line.

Zoning Clearance - New Addition to the Code

Planning Dept. review and approval



May happen concurrently with other processes, such as business license or local permit

The graphic illustrates the **Conditional Use Permit process**, and two new (proposed) processes:

- Administrative Adjustment
- Zoning Clearance

Current code reference:
VMC 17.06 Administration and Enforcement, Planning and Zoning Commission
VMC 17.50 Conditional Uses

Level of support for having simpler alternatives to current Conditional Use Permit approval process



Do you support the proposed Administrative Adjustment process?

Yes

No

Do you support the proposed Zoning Clearance process?

Yes

No



Write and post your thoughts on a sticky note!