

## What Is Missing Middle Housing?

For the past several decades, housing has primarily consisted of single-family homes and apartment buildings. “Missing Middle” is a term used to describe a range of housing between those two types. Allowing for a variety of housing options is essential to help ensure housing availability for all. Cottage housing is one type of Missing Middle housing.



## What Is Cottage Housing?

Olympia’s city code defines cottage housing as “four or more small, detached dwelling units sharing a commonly owned courtyard/common area and parking area.” Cottage housing differs from co-housing because it does not also include shared community structures.

## What Are Proposed Changes Regarding Cottage Housing?

Cottage housing is permitted in most single-family residential zoning districts. The table below summarizes Olympia’s primary regulations and proposed changes.

Current Regulation	Proposed Change	Purpose of Change
A cottage housing development must include at least one courtyard or common open space area. Between 4 and 12 detached dwelling units shall be located on each courtyard, occupying at least two sides of the courtyard.	No change, except any two dwelling units may be attached	Provides increased flexibility in site layout
First story of each cottage, including a garage = 800 sq. ft. Maximum size each cottage = 1600 sq. ft.	First story maximum 1,000 sq. ft.; Maximum size each cottage = 1250 sq. ft. Garage or carport not included in size calculation.	Provides greater consistency with neighboring cities; larger size for one-story cottages; less boxy appearance for 2-story cottages; smaller overall size visually more appealing in combination with increased density bonus below.

Cottage housing developments = 20% density bonus	Allow 50% density bonus	Provides greater consistency with neighboring cities; increased opportunities for this housing type
Frontage improvements and common areas constructed before buildings.	With approval of a master plan, allow phased construction of common areas, frontage improvements, and payment of impact fees and general facilities charges.	Provides greater flexibility in financing cottage developments, which may increase availability of this housing type
Provide one off-street parking space per cottage, or 1.5 spaces per cottage if no on-street parking is available. 50% of parking must be in a shared parking lot.	No change to number of parking spaces required. Parking may be provided anywhere on-site. Allow one off-street parking space per cottage to be provided in a garage or carport.	Provides greater flexibility in site design and layout.
May allow a single connection to sewer main in street, with lateral connections to each cottage on-site.	Clearly allow a single connection to sewer main in street is allowed, with lateral connections to each cottage on-site.	Clarifies requirement. Provides decreased cost for sewer connections in some cases, which may increase availability of this housing type.