

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. Tiny Houses can be used as one type of Missing Middle housing.



What Are Tiny Houses?

Olympia’s Municipal Code currently does not have a separate definition of tiny houses; neither does the International Building Codes (IBC). The State of Washington permits tiny houses built on trailers with wheels as recreational vehicles. Olympia permits permanently-located tiny houses as single-family houses.

What Are Proposed Changes Regarding Tiny Houses?

The table below summarizes the primary existing regulations as currently applied to tiny houses in Olympia, and proposed changes.

Current Regulation	Proposed Change	Purpose of Change
Tiny houses on trailers with wheels permitted by the State as recreational vehicles. Permanent occupancy is not permitted.	No change. Regulation is under the authority of the State of Washington.	NA
Tiny houses may be permitted as single-family houses, accessory dwelling units or cottage housing if meet all applicable codes, including parking requirements.	No change. Urge State Building Code Council to adopt Appendix V of new 2018 IBC for application to tiny houses. Single-family houses <800 sq. ft. require one off-street parking space rather than two spaces.	Appendix V would increase flexibility in design of tiny houses, particularly with regard to sleeping lofts. Reduced parking requirement decreases cost and may provide more of this housing.
A group of tiny houses allowed as conditional use in light industrial zoning district with shared community building.	Clarify group of tiny houses permitted as co-housing development in most residential zoning districts.	Provides clear option for tiny house communities.