



**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF NAGS HEAD, NORTH CAROLINA AS IT RELATES TO MULTI-FAMILY DWELLING DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN THE TOWN.**

**ARTICLE I. Purpose(s) and Authority.**

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 160D-701, the Town of Nags Head (the "Town") may enact and amend ordinances regulating the zoning and development of land within its jurisdiction and specifically the location and use of buildings, structures and land; pursuant to this authority and the additional authority granted by N.C.G.S. Chap. 160D-702, the Town has adopted comprehensive zoning regulations and has codified the same within the Unified Development Ordinance, Part II of the Town Code, adopted pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 160D-103, which allows the Town to combine certain land development ordinances into a unified ordinance;

**WHEREAS**, Section 2.4.4.3 of the Unified Development Ordinance provides that the powers and duties of the Planning Board include developing and recommending policies, ordinances, development regulations, administrative procedures, and other means for carrying out plans in a coordinated and efficient manner;

**WHEREAS**, Section 3.5.1. of the Town Code makes clear that a zoning ordinance text amendment may be initiated by motion of the Board of Commissioners, by motion of the Planning Board, or by application by any person within the zoning jurisdiction of the Town;

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Commissioners requested a comprehensive review of the town's multi-family standards and recommendations on how to re-introduce this use into the Unified Development Ordinance, and

**WHEREAS**, Planning staff began working with the Planning Board at their May 2023 meeting to complete a thorough review of the multi-family standards and identify issues and/or inconsistencies with the existing multi-family language. Subsequently, the Board of Commissioners established a Multi-Family Working Group to review the Planning Board's ordinance. The Planning Board and Multi-Family Working Group have developed a comprehensive set of draft text amendments for the Board of Commissioner's review and consideration.

**WHEREAS**, the 2022 Comprehensive Land Use Plan provides the following policies and actions which should guide the Town's zoning and development actions:

Table 2.2.2.A, pg. 2-12 lists "Multi-Family" as an appropriate land use in the Gallery Row – Community Center Character Area, Northern Commercial Node.

Table 2.4.2.A, pg. 2-25 lists "Multi-Family" as an appropriate land use in the Village Municipal Service Character Area.

Table 2.6.2.A, pg. 2-36 lists "Multi-Family" as an appropriate land use in the Whalebone Junction Character Area, Soundside Activity Node.

Table 2.8.2.A, pg. 2-48 lists "Multi-Family Residential" as an appropriate land use in the Corridors Character Area, US 158/US 64 only.

LU-1 – Ensure that the character of Nags Head is preserved as a single-family residential beach community with ties to its natural environment. This character is defined by:

- Development that blends with the landscape, preserving natural vegetation, dunes, open spaces, and environmental quality.
- Buildings with a residential scale and appearance with lot heights and small footprints that are designed to reflect the heritage of Nags Head.
- Land uses that are compatible with the community and with adjacent properties that don't create excessive noise, light, unsafe conditions, or other nuisances.
- Development of low density and intensity served primarily with on-site wastewater systems.

LU-9 – Encourage land uses that serve the needs of both year-round and seasonal residents in support of the town's overall vision for the community.

LU-10 – Discourage high intensity land uses that produce significant noise, light, heavy vehicle traffic, noxious fumes, or poor air quality, are unsightly, encourage unsafe behavior, or require large amounts of lands for heavy industrial uses, processing, or storage of materials or equipment.

LU-15 – Promote architectural standards for commercial development in keeping with the Nags Head style architecture.

LU-27 – Promote and expand the types of housing and accommodations for varying income levels, aging populations, and the seasonal workforce within the town. 4e – Develop regulations that prevent incompatible commercial development adjacent to areas with historical designations or significance.

**WHEREAS**, consistent with Section 3.5.4 of the UDO (and subparts to that section), the Board finds that the proposed text amendment advances the public health, safety, or welfare; will help preserve the residential and historic character of areas of Town where commercial and non-residential uses or increases in or expansions of such uses are not compatible or desirable; is reasonable and in the public interest; and is consistent with the Town of Nags Head Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

#### **ARTICLE II. Construction.**

For purposes of this ordinance amendment, underlined words (underline) shall be considered as additions to existing Town Code language and strikethrough words (strikethrough) shall be considered deletions to existing language. Any portions of the adopted Town Code which are not repeated herein but are instead replaced by an ellipsis ("...") shall remain as they currently exist within the Town Code.

#### **ARTICLE III. Amendment of the Unified Development Ordinance.**

PART I. That **Appendix A, Definitions**, be amended as follows:

~~*Dwelling, multi-family* means a dwelling containing three or more dwelling units, designed for or occupied by three or more families living independently of each other. Multifamily dwelling shall include a townhouse and any similar building, irrespective of the form of legal title.~~

**Dwelling, Multi-Family or Dwelling Unit, Multi-Family** means a single-family dwelling unit located within a multi-family development.

**Apartment or Apartment Style Design** means a residential architectural and planning design characterized by single-family attached dwelling units constructed on multiple floors and separated by shared vertical walls and shared horizontal ceilings, floors, planes, or surfaces. For the purposes of this chapter, a series or group of **Apartment** units shall be considered a multi-family development.

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR)** means the quotient resulting from division of the gross floor area of all buildings on a lot by the area of the lot.

~~**Townhouse** means a single-family dwelling on its own individual lot but connected on two sides, by means of a common wall for at least ten feet of its length, to two other single-family dwellings or an end dwelling of a row of such dwellings.~~

**Townhouse or Townhouse Style Design** means a residential architectural and planning design characterized by single-family attached dwelling units constructed in a series or group of units and separated by shared vertical walls. For the purposes of this chapter, a series or group of **Townhouse** units shall be considered a multi-family development.

**Multi-Family Development** means a development containing no less than three multi-family dwelling units and shall be characterized as either a large multi-family development or a small multi-family development.

**Large Multi-Family Development** means a development containing more than six multi-family dwelling units.

**Small Multi-Family Development** means a development containing no less than three multi-family dwelling units and no more than six multi-family dwelling units.

**Long-term occupancy/tenancy** means the occupancy of a single-family dwelling by an owner, tenant, or other lawful occupant for a period of ninety (90) consecutive calendar days or more.

**Principal Place of Residence** means the home or place in which one's habitation is fixed, and to which one has present intention of returning after a departure or absence therefrom.

**Qualified Person** means a person working/employed in Dare County, NC. A qualified person includes but is not limited to any person who has an internship with an employer if the employer's place of business is physically located in Dare County, NC, or a person who works remotely for an employer if the person's principal place of residence and the employer's place of business are both physically located in Dare County, NC.

**Workforce Housing** or **workforce housing unit** means the following:

- a. A dwelling unit which is occupied by at least one qualified person under a long-term occupancy/tenancy, and
- b. A dwelling unit which is the principal place of residence for at least one qualified person, and
- c. A dwelling unit which has been encumbered by the owner of the dwelling unit with recorded restriction covenants to ensure compliance with this definition and Section 7.5 of the Town Code. The recorded restrictive covenant shall expressly identify the Town as the sole beneficiary of the recorded restrictive covenant, which shall include the express power and authority of the Town to enforce the recorded restrictive both in law and in equity, including the use of judicial injunctive relief. The Town staff shall provide the owner with the exact wording of the restrictive covenant to be recorded by the owner with the Dare County Register of Deeds in order to satisfy this requirement, and Town staff shall verify such recordation. The recorded restrictive covenant shall appear in the recorded chain of title of the dwelling unit and in the case of a multi-family development, the recorded restrictive covenant shall also be contained in the multi-family development's recorded declaration of covenants establishing the multi-family development.

Nothing in this definition shall preclude employers from purchasing workforce housing units to provide accommodation for their employees, provided the employees are qualified persons who occupy such workforce housing units within Dare County and the workforce housing unit is the employee's principal place of residence, even if owned by the employer.

**PART II.** That **Section 7.5 Dwellings, Multi-Family**, shall be replaced in its entirety by the following:

Multi-family dwelling units are permitted in accordance with Section 6.6, Table of Uses and Activities, provided that the following additional requirements and conditions are met:

<b>TABLE 7-1: REQUIREMENTS FOR MULTI-FAMILY DWELLINGS</b>		
	<b>Large Multi-Family C-2</b>	<b>Small Multi-Family C-2</b>
Unit Design	Townhouse and Apartment Style Design shall be allowed for both large and small categories.	
Min. Lot Width for Multi-Family Site	150 feet	No minimum
Min. Site Area in Uplands	26,000 square feet	15,000 square feet
Location of Multi-Family Site	Properties with frontage on US Hwy 158 only.	On any lot meeting the minimum site area requirements.
Setbacks	All buildings shall be setback a minimum 35 feet to all property lines.	All buildings shall meet the minimum setbacks: Front: 30 feet Side: 12 feet or 15 feet for corner lots Rear: 20% lot depth not to exceed 30 feet.
Townhome orientation	No townhome structure established as part of a multi-family development shall be situated on a site so as to face/front the rear of another townhome structure within the development or on an adjoining property.	

<b>TABLE 7-1: REQUIREMENTS FOR MULTI-FAMILY DWELLINGS</b>		
	<b>Large Multi-Family C-2</b>	<b>Small Multi-Family C-2</b>
Density/ Building Size	Floor Area Ratio: 0.32 square feet of gross floor area for each 1 square foot of lot area.  Maximum gross floor area for a single building is 10,000 square feet. More than one building may be permitted on a site.	One (1) unit per every 4,000 square feet of lot area.  Maximum building gross floor area is 5,000 square feet.
Maximum Bedroom per Acre Standard	Total number of bedrooms within the development shall not exceed 25 per acre.	
Maximum number of units	75 dwelling units	6 dwelling units.
Number of dwelling units per townhome structure	Maximum 6 dwelling units per structure.	No maximum.
Height	Maximum of 35 feet, may be increased to 42 feet with the use of an 8:12 roof pitch or greater. Additionally, no building shall exceed three (3) habitable floors.	
Open Space	50% of side yards to remain as open space.	
Lot Coverage	55%	
Parking	A minimum of 2 parking spaces shall be included for each dwelling unit plus 1 parking space for every 4 units.	
Deed Restrictions	All multi-family dwelling units within a multi-family development shall be deed restricted for long- term occupancy/tenancy. No less than 60% of all units shall be deed restricted for workforce housing.	All multi-family dwelling units in a multi-family development shall be deed restricted for long term occupancy/tenancy and workforce housing.
Unit Sizes/ Categories	Minimum Unit Sizes/Size Categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studio/One Bedroom 500 sq. ft.</li> <li>• Two Bedroom 700 sq. ft.</li> <li>• Three Bedroom 1,000 sq. ft.</li> </ul> Maximum unit size 1,750 sq. ft.	
Mixture of Units	No more than 60% of the units shall be from any unit size category.	No requirement
Buffer	In addition to the buffering requirements included in the Commercial Design Standards, a minimum 10-foot-wide commercial transitional protective yard shall be provided consistent with Section 10.93.3.2 and 10.93.3.3 of the UDO.	In addition to the buffering requirements included in the Commercial Design Standards, a 10-foot-wide commercial transitional protective yard shall be provided consistent with Section 10.93.3.2 of the UDO.
Architectural Design Requirements	All multi-family dwelling buildings, regardless of size, shall go through the Sketch Plan process as outlined in Section 10.84 of the UDO.  Multi-family dwelling buildings shall meet the requirements of Article 10, Part VI, Commercial Design Standards.	Buildings shall meet the design requirements for a large residential dwelling.  Small multi-family structures shall be approved administratively.

<b>TABLE 7-1: REQUIREMENTS FOR MULTI-FAMILY DWELLINGS</b>		
	<b>Large Multi-Family C-2</b>	<b>Small Multi-Family C-2</b>
Building Separation	20 feet; a sidewalk or boardwalk constructed to provide a grade separation from vehicular traffic of at least six inches shall connect all principal buildings on the site. Separate buildings shall be connected with pedestrian passageways that are striped when crossing traffic lanes.	Buildings shall be separated from one another by a minimum of ten feet, including projections. Separate buildings shall be connected with pedestrian passageways that are striped when crossing traffic lanes.
Accessory Uses	<p>Management/sales office, not including a trailer, provided that the management office shall be included as a permanent structure in the project's design or may occupy one of the dwelling units.</p> <p>A management/sales office may include, within the particular project, spaces for maintaining supplies, service products and amenities to be used in connection with the units within the project. There shall be sanitary facilities available for customers and employees.</p> <p>Shed.</p> <p>Pool (only one pool per development),</p> <p>Walls and Fences.</p> <p>Private Park/Playgrounds.</p>	<p>Shed.</p> <p>Pool (only one pool per development).</p> <p>Walls and Fences. Private Park/Playgrounds</p>
Outdoor Amenity Area/Common Area	An area designated on the site plan for multi-family development as "common area" or as an area to be held in separate ownership for the use and benefit of residents occupying the dwelling units shown on such plan provided that it is conveniently accessible to all residents of the development.	No requirement.
Limit on Development Approvals	There shall be a limit of no more than 3 new large multi-family projects approved after the effective date of this ordinance. Existing multi-family development as of the effective date of this ordinance shall be governed by Article V – Nonconformities.	There is no limit on the number of small multi-family projects that can be approved under this ordinance.

7.5.1 The multi-family development shall have a mandatory homeowners' or residents' association. At a minimum, the duties of such association are to ensure compliance with Section [7.5]. The obligation of an owner or lessee to join the association and to provide the information the owner or manager of a multi-family development must be expressed in a declaration of covenants that is recorded in the Dare County Registry and provided to the town prior to any residential occupancy. The homeowners' or residents' association shall provide annually a certification to the town of the multi-family developments' compliance with the restrictive covenant and workforce housing occupancy requirements, using a required certificate of compliance form provided to the association by town staff upon request.

7.5.2 Any site improvements, including construction of additions of any size, accessory structures of any size, and landscaping and buffering projects, that occur following the original Board of Commissioners Special Use Approval of a Large Multi-family dwelling development or Administrative Approval of a Small Multi-family dwelling development shall be submitted for consideration by the UDO Administrator to determine whether additional stormwater management measures are necessary.

**PART III.** That **Section 10.93.3.3, High Impact Uses**, be amended as follows:

10.93.3.3. High Impact Uses. High impact uses are particular uses of land, which are considered as a whole because of their peculiar or operational and physical characteristics are expected to have an adverse effect on adjoining or adjacent properties. High impact uses include, but are not limited to:

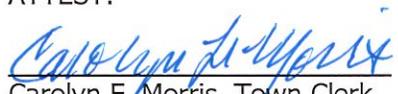
10.93.3.3.27. Large Multi-Family Dwelling Development.

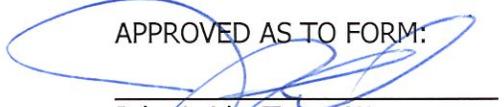
**PART IV.** That **Section 6.6, Table of Permitted Uses and Activities**, be amended as follows:

	Use Category/Class	Use Type	Residential Districts			Commercial Districts					Special Districts				Overlay Districts			
			R-1	R-2	R-3	CR	C-1*	C-2	C-3	C-4	C-5	SPD-20	SED-80	SPD-C*	O&S	CO	HO	SRO
1	Residential	Dwelling, Large Residential	PR	PR	PR	PR		PR			PR	PR	PR		PR			PR
<u>1</u>	<u>Residential</u>	<u>Dwelling, Multi-Family (Small)</u>						PR										
<u>1</u>	<u>Residential</u>	<u>Dwelling, Multi-Family (Large)</u>						SR										
1	Residential	Dwelling, Single-Family (detached)	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P	P		P			P
1	Residential	Dwelling, Two-Family		P	P	P	P	P		P	P							
<u>1</u>	<u>Residential</u>	<u>Townhouse</u>						SR				SR						

**ARTICLE IV.** All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after the 2nd day of October 2024.

  
Benjamin Cahoon, Mayor

ATTEST:  
  
Carolyn F. Morris, Town Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
  
John Leidy, Town Attorney

Date adopted: \_\_\_\_\_  
Motion to adopt by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_  
Motion seconded by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_  
Vote: AYES \_\_\_\_\_ NAYS \_\_\_\_\_

