



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Matthew R. Walsh, Deputy City Manager – Development

DATE: April 13, 2026

SUBJECT: Zoning Ordinance Amendments – Modifications of supplemental standards for conversion of residential buildings to create additional dwelling units

Recommendation:

1. Accept this report; and,
2. Set the attached Ordinance amending the Code of Ordinances, Title IV, Zoning Code, Chapter 28, Zoning Ordinance, Section 28-5-3 Conversion of a Residential Building for public hearing on May 11, 2026.

Background:

Section 28-5-3 of the Zoning Ordinance governs the conversion of existing residential buildings to create between 1-5 dwelling units at a property. Residential conversions are a specific residential use category in the table of uses, which are permitted in 8 zoning districts.

Additionally, 28-5-3 also governs the conversion of nonresidential structures creating between 1-5 dwelling units in 11 zoning districts (6 of which overlap with conversion of residential structures use category). Conversion of nonresidential structures is also a specific residential use category in the table of uses.

On December 11, 2024, the City was designated a Housing Champion by the State of New Hampshire. Currently, housing is permitted in 15 of the City's 18 zoning districts (or 95% of the City's total land area). From 2022-2025, 511 housing units (gross) were constructed. The City has consistently been one of the top housing producers in the State, as chronicled NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs. In October 2025, Realtor.com reported that Concord had the 14th "hottest housing market" in the United States (Nashua-Manchester was ranked #7).

Discussion:

The "Economic and Community Development" section of the City Council's 2026-2027 City priorities includes the following focus area: "*Remove barriers to commercial and residential development through regulatory and administrative reform.*"

As such, staff is providing the attached proposed zoning amendment. If adopted, the attached amendment will:

1. Remove provisions which limit such conversions to buildings constructed prior to 1945;
2. Expressly allow for the conversion of detached accessory structures (in addition to the primary residential building and attached accessory structures);
3. Clarify minimum lot requirements based on total dwelling units which will result at the property (i.e. total number of pre-existing dwelling units, as well as new units resulting from the conversion, combined). The current language in the ordinance is cumbersome and resulted in confusion;
4. Relax limitations on expansion of the floor area of existing structures as part of a conversion (currently capped at 5%) by providing the opportunity to exceed said limit through a conditional use permit;
5. Eliminates minimum dwelling unit sizes required as part of a conversion (i.e. 600SF per one-bedroom unit and 800SF for two-bedroom units; gross floor area); and,
6. Clarifies that conversions must comply with applicable parking requirements set forth in Section 28-7 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Summary:

These amendments will serve to clarify the existing ordinance, thus improve ease of interpretation and administration, as well as help facilitate development of small-scale housing projects (1-5 units) via conversion of existing buildings in zoning districts where such conversions are currently permitted, thus expanding “missing middle” housing opportunities in the City.