

# Residential Use Update FAQ



Pierce County needs code to reflect the different kinds of housing that are needed in the community. This starts by updating County definitions to recognize modern housing trends, align with changes in state policy and law, and to better distinguish between terms that might seem related.

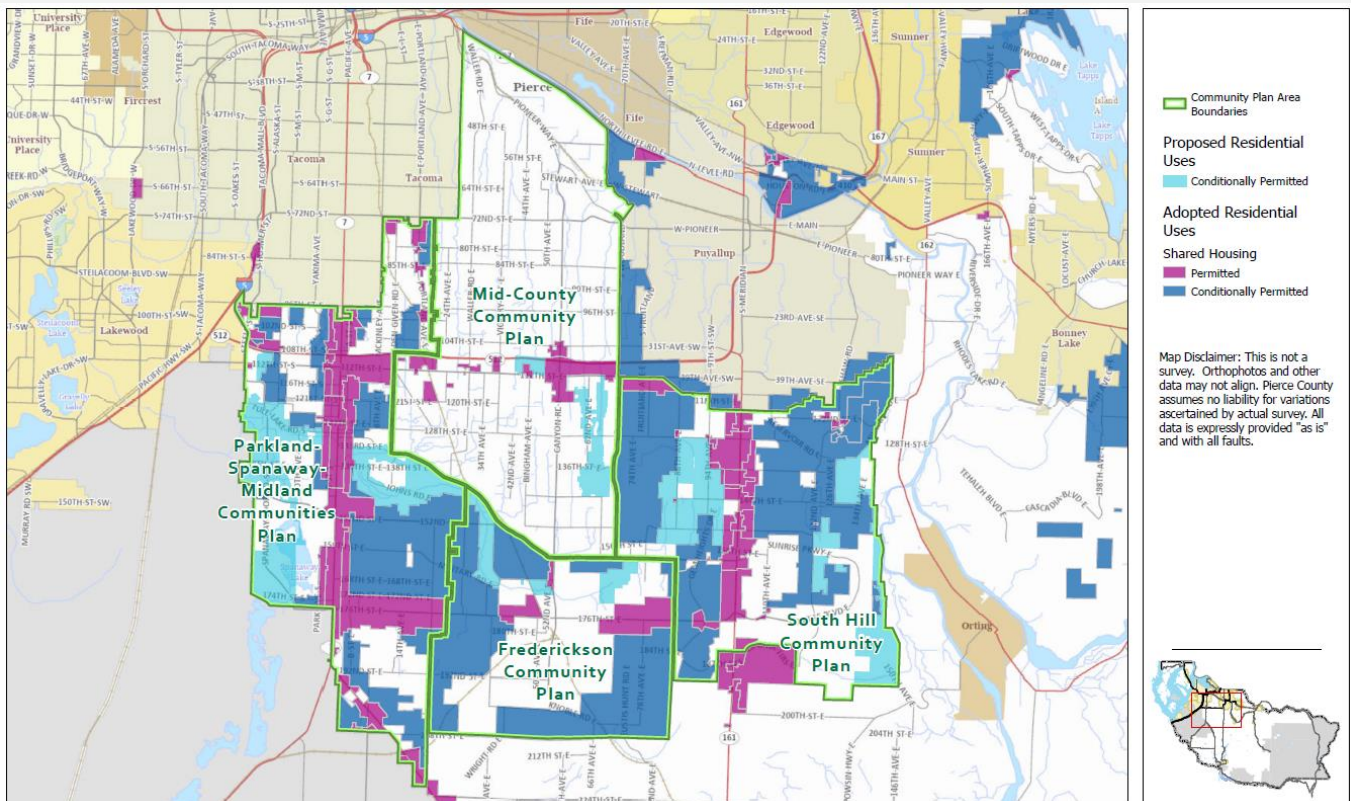
## What are Shared Housing Villages?

A Shared Housing Village is a type of community housing that is affordable to people with low incomes. People live in tiny homes that may not have full kitchen and/or bathroom facilities. Instead, kitchens and/or bathroom facilities are available in shared common spaces. The community may have other shared facilities available to residents and their guests as well. Shared Housing Villages create permanent housing leased by the month or year, not lodging, shelter, or an encampment where the occupants frequently come and go.

## Where are Shared Housing Villages Currently Allowed?

Through Ordinance 2022-49s, shared housing is already allowed in urban residential areas. It is a permitted use in higher density residential, commercial, and mixed-use zones. It is allowed with a conditional use permit in the moderate density residential zone. When a conditional use permit is required, the project is reviewed by the Pierce County Hearing Examiner and there are opportunities for the public to comment built into the permit approval process.

### Proposed & Adopted locations:



## Is Shared Housing Village considered single family development?

It's hard to characterize what different people mean by single-family development. Sometimes people associate detached housing units on individual lots with a single-family development. In the comprehensive plan and zoning code, that housing type is allowed in areas designated for single-family land use. However, some single-family areas also allow duplexes, townhomes, rooming houses, and mobile home parks. Each of those housing types has some things in common with single-family detached housing, and some things that are different. State, regional, and Pierce County policies support single-family areas including a broad range of housing types to provide different living options at different price points for Pierce County residents. A Shared Housing Village is similar to detached single-family housing because it consists of tiny homes, but the shared facilities and community lay out make it different as well.

## What is already allowed in the Residential Resources Zone?

The Pierce County Code describes the RR zone as an opportunity as a low-density single-family zone developed to be compatible with environmentally sensitive open spaces. Policies in the Parkland-Spanaway-Midland, South Hill, Mid-County and Frederickson Communities Plans support this by focusing on development that avoids fragmentation of open spaces and applies environmentally sensitive design. The RR zone allows densities of 1-3 units per acre. The zone also allows for group homes, small day care centers, parks, religious assemblies, utilities, and other similar activities appropriate in residential neighborhoods.



## Do the Comprehensive Plan and Community Plan policies support shared housing village concepts?

The Comprehensive Plan encourages a range of housing types in the County and supports innovative solutions to address affordable housing issues. Recent changes in the state's Growth Management Act require the County to plan for housing, and to ensure there is adequate capacity for housing, for households of every income. Additionally, Pierce County Council recently adopted a Housing Strategy aimed at increasing housing for all income levels. Future updates to the Comprehensive Plan will need to strengthen policies supporting a variety of housing types. Future code updates will need to accommodate a wider variety of housing types in all urban residential zones. This proposed change is supported by the current Comprehensive Plan policies and is aligned with the future state and regional direction of housing policies.

## Will the proposed code amendment bring homeless people into my neighborhood?

Sadly, some of our neighbors are already experiencing homelessness, living in their cars or on the streets. Shared housing, including shared housing villages, is a type of housing helps prevent homelessness by providing a decent, affordable accommodation for people with low incomes. It not only serves people who have experienced homelessness but also others who may have low incomes such as younger adults, older adults, students, people living on fixed incomes, and people who are disabled. Many people benefit when there are affordable housing options in our community.

## **Will this code amendment approve the proposed tiny home village for the homeless in unincorporated Pierce County?**

No. The proposed code amendment would allow shared housing villages in some additional areas of Parkland-Spanaway-Midland, South Hill, Frederickson and Mid-County. See the map to see where shared housing villages are already allowed and where they are proposed to be allowed with this change. This would allow a Shared Housing Village proposal to apply for the permits at specific site location with the RR zoning. . One of the permits they would need is a conditional use permit to demonstrate compliance with all development regulations at a public hearing before the Pierce County Hearings Examiner, an independent, third-party review authority. A conditional use permit includes notification of neighbors and the opportunity to comment before applicable Land Use Advisory Committees prior to the public hearing before the Hearings Examiner.

To find out more information on the proposed Pierce County Village: [Pierce County Village | Pierce County, WA - Official Website \(piercecountywa.gov\)](https://www.piercecountywa.gov).

## **How will impacts of a shared housing village be addressed?**

Like all development, the impacts of a particular proposal are addressed at the time of permit application. Specific site impacts are addressed through the application review and environmental review process. This includes reviews for adequate: environmental protection, parking, safe access, stormwater, utilities, traffic solutions, and public safety measures. Proposals must meet all the development standards in the code. The public has the opportunity to submit input during the environmental review process and through public hearings when a conditional use permit is required.

## **Will wetlands and other natural features be negatively affected by the development of these villages?**

Pierce County's critical area regulations require the County to review projects for impacts to environmentally sensitive features including wetlands, streams, habitat areas, and more. Avoiding impacts is a top priority. This is part of the review process that occurs when applicants apply for permits.