

10/28/2025

To: Wauwatosa Common Council  
From: Wauwatosa Joint Housing Coalition

Dear Alders,

The Wauwatosa Joint Housing Coalition supports the intent of the draft amendments to the City of Wauwatosa Zoning Ordinance (the “Draft”). We believe the proposed updates will help Wauwatosa implement the vision of the Tosa Tomorrow 2045 Comprehensive Plan, to increase affordable, accessible, and sustainable housing. However, we do not believe the current document goes far enough to address this goal, and to attract more families to the city to support the school system. We have some suggestions for how to accomplish this within the context of a largely built-up city.

We support the Draft’s provisions encouraging “gentle densification,” allowing two-unit houses — by right — in every Residential and Multi-Unit District; and allowing up-to 12-unit residential buildings in the Mixed Residential and Multi-Unit Districts. We further support the changes allowing a mix of residential housing types in the R0 and R1 Commercial Districts, the reduction of parking requirements, and the incentives for development projects that include affordable housing.

However, we do not believe the proposed changes in the Residential Districts are sufficient to meet the demand for housing in Tosa. As the School District’s long-range planning demonstrates, Wauwatosa needs to attract more families at all income levels in order to maintain the health of the school system. Additionally, the city needs to increase affordable options, integrated into neighborhoods, for seniors, persons with disabilities, and lower income persons/families. This would require more areas of the city to be zoned as Mixed Residential (per the Draft), allowing “missing middle” housing, from 2 units up to 12 units. The Comprehensive Plan identified large areas of the east side of Tosa that could be rezoned for this designation on its [Future Land use map](#) (scroll to page 29).

In addition, schools and churches represent most of the large parcels of land that could become available in or near residential areas over the course of the Comprehensive Plan. The School District has already identified that some buildings may not be needed relatively soon. We believe that all of these parcels not currently zoned for Mixed Residential or denser residential uses should be rezoned to allow that designation. [See list of current zoning for many of these parcels below the signatures.]

The Housing Coalition understands that the proposed zoning changes in the Draft manifest “Text Only” amendments to the written Zoning Ordinance, and does not address changing the boundaries of zoning districts. In this context, we ask that:

- You pass the Draft; AND
- You also pass a resolution to require the Planning Dept to initiate processes to:

- Change zoning district boundaries, to more closely correspond to the Future Land use map on page 27 of the Comprehensive Plan, and
- Examine and change the base zoning districts of schools and churches to allow for Mixed Residential or denser usage should they become available for development. (See additional information after signatures)

Because Wauwatosa is already a built-up community, we believe implementing these changes will not lead to any rapid changes to neighborhoods, but will, over time, result in increased tax base, more family appropriate housing supporting our schools and more opportunities for affordable and accessible housing for seniors, persons with disabilities, and lower income persons and families.

Thank you,

For the Wauwatosa Joint Housing Coalition,

- Rosemary Fox - Equity and Inclusion Commission - 2020 N. Wauwatosa Ave, Wauwatosa, WI 53213
- Mary Walz-Chojnacki - Commission for Persons with Disabilities, 8007 Portland Ave, Wauwatosa, WI 53213
- Dain Maddox - Senior Commission – 105 N 88th Street, Wauwatosa, WI 53226
- Kathy Causier - Senior Commission - 8213 Aberdeen Court, Wauwatosa, WI 53213
- Mike Arney, Sustainability Commission
- John Horky, Sustainability Commission
- Ann Heidkamp – Tosa Together – 2330 N. Swan Blvd, Wauwatosa, WI 53226
- Ursula Twombly – Tosa Together

### **Current base zoning for Tosa Schools and some of the larger church parcels**

#### **Suburban Residential (1 - 2 family homes only)**

- Tosa West
- Whitman
- Eisenhower
- St Joseph's
- Mt Zion
- Several churches on Mayfair Rd north of Capitol

**Neighborhood Residential (1 – 2 family homes only)**

- Roosevelt
- McKinley
- Washington
- Christ King

**Already zoned for higher density residential uses:**

- Mixed Residential: Lincoln, Wilson, Tosa East, St John's
- Mixed Residential and Medium Density Multi-family: Longfellow,
- Mixed Residential and Low-Density Multi-family: St Jude's
- General Commercial and Mixed Residential: St Pius
- Medium Density Multi-family: Our Redeemer
- Commercial Office: Fischer.
- Commercial Neighborhood/Village Trade: St Matthew's, Tosa Methodist