CITY OF JOPLIN
COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

ITEM:
2026-261 – Text Amendment

MEETING DATE:
April 6, 2026

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT:
Planning, Development and Neighborhood Services

REVIEWED BY:
Director of Planning, Development & Neighborhood Services – Troy Bolander
Director of Finance – Leslie Haase
City Attorney – Peter Edwards
Assistant City Manager – Tony Robyn
City Manager – Nicholas Edwards

FUNDING SOURCE:

Not applicable for this item.

SUMMARY REQUEST:

Case 010-26: Text Amendment – A request to amend the Joplin Development Code, Table 5-02, to permit Duplex - Multi-Unit Home under R-2 (Two-Family Residential), through limited applicability – Tyler Casey/Pro X, Inc.

BACKGROUND:

The current zoning code is a form-based code, that takes into consideration the type of structure being built, and the context of the neighborhood in which it is constructed. The code currently defines two types of duplex developments. Duplex, Suburban vs Duplex, Multi-Unit house, and differentiate the building types based on the existing contexts of the neighborhood.

Duplex, Multi-Unit House, falls within the context of an urban neighborhood. This type of structure has the scale and massing of a detached house that happens to be divided into multiple units. These types of structures are typically within the older, walkable neighborhoods, or neighborhoods within the original street grid, where the design is compatible with the existing pattern of development, typically at a higher density (3,000 square feet per unit, or 6,000 for a duplex). This housing type is currently permitted through limited applicability (allowed as infill based on surrounding context) in an R-3 District, and within the R-4 District. Currently, this is not permitted on a 6,000 square foot lot within the R-2 District.

Duplex, Suburban, is permitted in R-2 and R-3 by right, provided the lot is at least 7,800 square feet. This is at a lower density than Duplex, Multi-Unit House. Suburban Duplexes are duplexes that have the scale and massing of two attached houses.

The proposed change will be to allow Duplex, Multi-Unit house, through limited applicability through infill, or through a Planned Development application if not infill development, within the R-2 District. The request will be for limited applicability, in contexts where varieties of housing types exist, and the structure proposed is compatible with the buildings in the neighborhood. The limited applicability will protect single-family residential neighborhoods, while still allowing higher density housing in R-2 Districts in appropriate contexts.

The intent of the R-2 District states "The R-2 district provides residential living that mixes multi-unit building formats into low- or moderate-density suburban neighborhood settings, allowing a mix of housing options at strategic locations in which transition to complimentary and supporting uses."

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION TESTIMONY:

The applicant presented the case. Mr. Bellairs elaborated that the request adjusts the density standard to 6,000 square feet for a specific type of construction (multi-unit home) in infill situations where it is consistent with the existing neighborhood.

The Commission asked if this could be accomplished through a variance. Mr. Bellairs responded that the Board of Adjustments does not have authority over zoning standards, only on development standards. The Commission asked if this could be accomplished through a PD. Mr. Bellairs responded that a PD is meant to benefit the area as a whole and has a minimum size requirement. They cannot be used to make adjustments for a single infill lot.

Ms. Klue-Michael asked if there were any cons. Mr. Bellairs said that this will be context based, because the way it was written it is limited applicability only in infill situations. We reduced the lot size for single-family homes to 6,000 in an R-2. So in neighborhood like the Schuber Mitchell subdivisions that were just done were at 6,000 square foot lots, that would be a suburban context that would not be infill. Think more like the walkable neighborhoods, the original street grids that are much more urban style of development where a variety of housing types already exist, that would be an ideal location where this would be permitted only through infill. More suburban neighborhoods, the way it is written it still protects those developments from being changed to two-family or multi-family. So it does have protections in there based off the way it was written and anything that is outside infill they have to go to the commission and council through a planned development review, we can't approve that administratively it is only in the defined very narrow context that this is allowed. It still has those protections that would ideally prevent any negative outcomes from lowering that density.

Ms. Phillips stated that just because something is zoned R-2, does not mean that we should put a duplex on the lot. Infill houses that she is seeing are not sympathetic to the neighborhoods.

PUBLIC COMMENT;

There was none.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff recommends approving Council Bill 2026-261

Planning & Zoning Commission recommends denying Case 010-26 (Motion to pass failed - 3 in Favor, 4 Opposed, 0 Absent)

ATTACHMENTS

Staff Planning Report
P&Z Commission Minutes
Applicant Materials