

Part 1 - Definitions

Updated: 7.28.2026

Purpose: To identify and define broader types of housing for clear inclusion in the zoning ordinance.

Most Notable Revisions:

- The addition of new housing types, specifically “missing middle” housing types (those more dense than single-family residential but less dense than a typical apartment complex). New definitions include three-family residential, townhomes, patio homes, cottage court, and apartment homes.
- Rather than one definition for all multi-family residential uses, they are distinguished between small scale (4 to 12 units), neighborhood scale (13 to 60 units), and community scale (61+ units).
- Updated definitions are provided for housing for those in need including the terms shelter, permanent supportive housing, and substance abuse recovery home.

New Text: Red Underline

Deletions: ~~Strikethrough~~

14.2 Definitions

Residential Root Definitions:

Dwelling: Any structure or portion thereof designed for or used for residential purposes for one family and having permanently installed sleeping, cooking, and sanitary facilities.

Dwelling, Accessory: A separate and complete dwelling unit established in conjunction with and clearly subordinate to the dwelling that is the primary use ~~and/or structure~~ on the property. An accessory dwelling may be a part of / within the same structure as the primary dwelling or may be a separate, accessory structure. The separateness and completeness of the accessory dwelling shall be determined by such features as ~~an independent~~ sleeping, cooking, and sanitary facilities ~~kitchen, bathroom, living quarters, and~~ as well as a separate exterior entrance.

Family: One or more persons occupying a dwelling as a single unit and therefore using common facilities for cooking, sanitation, and gathering. The term family includes residential facilities for the mentally ill as well as residential facilities for the developmentally disabled with 8 or fewer residents and substance abuse recovery homes with 8 or fewer residents. ~~A family shall include a residential facility for the developmentally disabled type I and residential facility for the mentally ill as required and defined by the Indiana Code (and repeated in the definitions of this Ordinance).~~ However, a family shall not include any other grouping of more than 5 adults; any one of which is not related to the others by blood, marriage, adoption, guardianship, or other custodial responsibility. Further, a family does not include any society, club, fraternity, sorority; group living in a ~~boarding~~ rooming house, hotel, motel, or bed and breakfast facility; or any group of individuals whose association with each other is seasonal. See also Shared Housing Facility, Residential Facility for the Developmentally Disabled, Substance Abuse Recovery Home.

Note: A definition of family is provided for the sole purpose of creating a baseline for population density, anticipated traffic patterns volumes, likely needs for services and open space, and other characteristics of single and multi-dwelling unit (“family”) zoning districts. In no instance shall this Ordinance be interpreted as defining family for any other purpose.

Single-, Two-, and Three-Family Residential Definitions:

Dwelling, Single-Family: A structure designed for and occupied by 1 family, and therefore including no more than 1 dwelling unit. Single-family dwellings shall include type I manufactured homes designed, placed, and used on a site consistent with the development standards for the zoning district in which they are located. A dwelling, single-family may include domestic servants' quarters which are clearly accessory to the primary living area of the structure. See Residential Use, Single-Family. See also *Dwelling, Manufactured Home.*

Residential Use, Single-Family: A structure designed for and occupied by 1 family, and therefore including no more than 1 dwelling unit. Single-family dwellings shall include manufactured homes designed, placed, and used on a site consistent with the development standards for the zoning district in which they are located.

Dwelling, Industrialized Residential Structure: A single-family detached dwelling or dwellings that is the product of an industrialized building system and therefore in whole or in substantial part is fabricated in an off-site manufacturing facility for installation or assembly at a building site, excluding those that are capable of inspection at the building site consistent with Indiana Code Sections 16-41-27-2.1 and 22-12-1-14. This term specifically does not include mobile homes and manufactured homes.

Industrialized Residential Structure: see *Dwelling, Industrialized Residential Structure*

Dwelling, Manufactured Home: A single-family detached dwelling that is factory assembled to the standards of the federal Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Law of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5401 et seq.) and specifically meets the definition provided by 42 U.S.C. 5402.

Manufactured Home: see *Dwelling, Manufactured Home*

Dwelling, Mobile Home: A single-family detached dwelling, including the equipment sold as a part of that dwelling, that is factory assembled, is transportable, is intended for year-round occupancy, is designed for transportation on its own chassis, and was manufactured before the effective date of the federal Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Law of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5401 et seq.).

Mobile Home: see *Dwelling, Mobile Home*

Dwelling, Two-Family: A structure designed for occupancy by 2 families and therefore including no more than 2 dwelling units. The term dwelling, two-family may also include two single-family dwellings located on a single lot. See Residential Use, Two-Family.

Residential Use, Two-Family: A structure or structures designed for and occupied by a total of 2 families, and therefore including no more than 2 total dwelling units.

Duplex: See *Dwelling, Two-Family.* A type of Two-Family Residential Use that features a single structure that includes 2 separate dwelling units typically arranged either side-by-side or stacked one above the other, each with a separate entrance from the outside or from a common entry hall. See also Residential Use, Two-Family and Dwelling, Accessory.

Dwelling, Three-Family: See *Residential Use, Three-Family.*

Residential Use, Three-Family: A structure or structures designed for and occupied by a total of 3 families, and therefore including no more than 3 total dwelling units.

Triplex: A type of Three-Family Residential Use that features a single structure that includes 3 separate dwelling units typically arranged either side-by-side or stacked one above the other, each with a separate entrance from the outside or from a common entry hall. See *Residential Use, Three-Family.*

Multi-Family Residential Definitions:

Dwelling, Multi-Family: ~~One or more structures designed for and occupied by 3~~ **4** or more **total** families, with the number of families in residence not exceeding the number of dwelling units provided. The term dwelling, multi-family includes multiple single, two, three and/or multi-family dwelling structures located on a single lot, possibly organized as an apartment complex or under condominium ownership. See Residential Use, Multi-Family. See also Residential Use, Small Scale Multi-Family; Residential Use, Neighborhood Scale Multi-Family; and Residential Use, Community Scale Multi-Family.

Multi-Family Dwelling: see ~~Dwelling~~ **Residential Use, Multi-Family**

Residential Use, Multi-Family: A structure or structures designed for and occupied by a total of 4 or more families, and therefore including a total of 4 or more dwelling units (with the number of families in residence not exceeding the number of dwelling units included). See also Residential Use, Small Scale Multi-Family; Residential Use, Neighborhood Scale Multi-Family; and Residential Use, Community Scale Multi-Family.

Residential Use, Small Scale Multi-Family: A structure or structures designed for and occupied by a total of no less than 4 and no more than 12 families, and therefore including a total of 4 to 12 dwelling units (with the number of families in residence not exceeding the number of dwelling units included). Small Scale Multi-Family Residential Uses include, but are not limited to, an apartment house, an apartment building, townhomes, patio homes, and a cottage court development. See also Residential Use, Multi-Family; Residential Use, Neighborhood Scale Multi-Family; and Residential Use, Community Scale Multi-Family.

Townhouse: ~~A one-family dwelling with a private entrance that is attached horizontally to other dwelling units in a linear arrangement, with a front and a rear wall that are totally exposed for light, access, and ventilation.~~

Townhomes: A type of residential use that features a grouping of individual dwelling units attached side-by-side to each other a shared wall or walls, each with a separate entrance from the outside. Townhomes are generally urban in character with a front door to each unit facing a public street and parking access at the rear of the property, likely from an alley. The type of residential use, Small Scale Multi-Family, Neighborhood Scale Multi-Family, etc., is determined by the number of units. See also *Patio Homes*.

Patio Homes: A type of residential use that features a grouping of individual dwelling units attached side-by-side to each other by a shared wall or walls, each with a separate entrance from the outside. Patio homes are generally suburban in character with parking access at the front of the property from the adjacent public street. The type of residential use, Small Scale Multi-Family, Neighborhood Scale Multi-Family, etc., is determined by the number of units. See also *Townhomes*.

Cottage Court: A type of residential use that features a grouping of individual dwelling units either detached or attached to each other by a shared wall or walls, each with a separate entrance from the outside, and arranged around a shared courtyard, with unit entrances typically oriented towards the shared courtyard. The type of residential use, Small Scale Multi-Family, Neighborhood Scale Multi-Family, etc., is determined by the number of units.

Apartment House: A type of residential use that features a single, detached primary structure that has been constructed or reconfigured to include 4 or more dwelling units, each with a separate entrance from the outside or from a common entry hall. An apartment house, in addition to the units in the primary structure, may include units provided as accessory structures, including those located above or as part of a detached garage. The type of residential use, Small Scale Multi-Family, Neighborhood Scale Multi-Family, etc., is determined by the total number of units.

Permanent Supportive Housing: A type of residential use providing long-term housing as well as supportive programming and resources for those who are homeless, victims of domestic violence, or

similarly in need. The type of residential use, Small Scale Multi-Family, Neighborhood Scale Multi-Family, etc., is determined by the number of units. See also *Shelter*.

Residential Use, Neighborhood Scale Multi-Family: A structure or structures designed for and occupied by a total of no less than 13 and no more than 60 families, and therefore including a total of 13 to 60 dwelling units (with the number of families in residence not exceeding the number of dwelling units included). See also *Residential Use, Multi-Family; Residential Use, Small Scale Multi-Family; and Residential Use, Community Scale Multi-Family*.

Residential Use, Community Scale Multi-Family: A structure or structures designed for and occupied by a total of 61 or more families, and therefore including a total of 61 or more dwelling units (with the number of families in residence not exceeding the number of dwelling units included). See also *Residential Use, Multi-Family; Residential Use, Small Scale Multi-Family; and Residential Use, Neighborhood Scale Multi-Family*.

Other Residential Use Definitions:

Assisted Living Facility: A residential facility providing personal care services that assist residents with daily activities, such as dressing, grooming, bathing, ~~etc.~~ and medication management. An assisted living facility also typically provides meals, transportation, and social activities but not medical care. See also *Nursing Home and Retirement Facility*.

Nursing Home: A ~~private home for the~~ residential facility providing long-term, 24-hour per day ~~care of the aged, infirm, or any other person in need of nursing~~ and medical care for residents who are unable to care for themselves due to chronic illness, disability, or age. A nursing home also typically provides meals, transportation, and social activities. A nursing home does not provide ~~which does not contain equipment for surgical care, the or for treatment of~~ significant, acute disease or injury, and is not primarily designed or treatment for mental patients or ~~alcoholics~~ those experiencing or recovering from substance abuse. A nursing home ~~does~~ may, however, include physical therapy ~~equipment used in an on-going basis for the~~ and rehabilitation services ~~of patients~~. See also *Assisted Living Facility and Retirement Facility*.

Retirement Facility: A residential ~~facility complex containing multi-family~~ multiple dwellings in a structure or structures designed for and occupied primarily by senior citizens and providing residents with services such as housekeeping, meals, transportation, and social activities. Such facilities ~~may include a common gathering and dining facilities, but exclude nursing care~~. A retirement facility does not typically include personal or nursing care services, but may be co-located with an assisted living facility and/or a nursing home to provide for a continuum of such services. See also *Assisted Living Facility and Nursing Home*.

Shared Housing Facility: A dwelling unit occupied as a single housekeeping unit, and therefore using common facilities for cooking, sanitation, and gathering, by more than 5 adults, any one of which is not related to the others by blood or marriage. A shared housing facility also includes, regardless of the number of adult occupants, a ~~boarding house, shelter (for those who are homeless, victims of domestic violence, etc.),~~ rooming house, co-housing facility community, housing co-operative, and other similar facilities. A shared housing facility shall also include a residential facility for the developmentally disabled ~~type II~~ with more than 8 residents and a substance abuse recovery home with more than 8 residents defined by the Indiana Code (and repeated in the definitions of this Ordinance). A shared housing facility does not include any society, club, fraternity, sorority, or group living in a hotel, motel, or bed and breakfast facility. See also *Dwelling, Single Family and Family, Residential Facility for the Developmentally Disabled, Substance Abuse Recovery Home*.

Shelter: A residential facility providing transitional, temporary housing, addressing safety and other basic short-term needs, and potentially including supportive programing and resources for those who are homeless, victims of domestic violence, or similarly in need. See also *Permanent Supportive Housing*.

Dwelling, Secondary Use Apartment(s): A dwelling or dwellings co-located on a property with another, non-residential use and designed and located to be secondary in outward appearance and public accessibility to that other use located on the upper floors of structures housing another use as the primary use on the ground floor. Examples would include apartments or condominiums located above, at basement level, or behind a commercial businesses on the same property.

Rooming House: A structure in which individual rooms, often referred to as “sleeping rooms”, are rented as separate dwellings; often with each room intended and used as an individual unit, with no, optional, or minimal shared use of common cooking, sanitation, and/or gathering spaces. A type of Shared Housing Facility. See also Shared Housing Facility.

Boarding House: ~~A building or part of a building that contains accommodation facilities for lodging for definite periods of time, typically with meals served from a single kitchen. Boarding houses do not include bed and breakfasts, multifamily dwellings, hotels, or motels.~~ See Rooming House.

Co-Housing Community: An intentional, self-governing cooperative community where residents live in private dwelling units often clustered around shared indoor and/or outdoor space. These shared spaces typically include at least one of the following amenities: large kitchen and dining area, laundry facilities, recreational spaces such as walkways or playgrounds, or community rooms. A type of Shared Housing Facility. See also Shared Housing Facility.

Accessory Dwelling Suite: A distinct grouping of spaces included within, but accessory to a single-family dwelling intended to support occupancy of the structure as a whole by multiple generations or other subgroups of the same family. An accessory dwelling suite has direct internal access to the rest of the dwelling unit, but has a separate living area, kitchen, and exterior entrance to provide space and privacy.

Living Area: The total heated and/or cooled space of a dwelling unit, including spaces where people live, sleep, eat, and cook. Living area does not include spaces such as unfinished basements or attics, or garages.

Residential Zoning Districts, Single-Family: ~~Refers to the RR, Residential: Rural; RS1, Residential: Single family 1; RS2, Residential: Single family 2; RS3, Residential: Single family 3; RS4, Residential: Single family 4; RE, Residential: Established; and/or RT, Residential: Two-family zoning districts.~~

Residential Zoning Districts, Multi-Family: ~~Refers to the RM, Residential: Multi-family and/or RMH, Residential: Manufactured Home Park zoning districts.~~

Residential Zoning Districts: Refers to the RR, Residential: Rural; R1, Residential 1; R2, Residential 2; R3, Residential 3; R4, Residential 4; R5, Residential 5; RM, Residential: Multi-Family; RMH, Residential: Mobile Home Community; RE1, Residential: Established 1; RE2, Residential: Established 2; and RE3, Residential: Established 3 zoning districts.

Other Definitions:

Residential Facility for the Developmentally Disabled Type I: A residential facility which provides residential services for ~~not more than 8~~ developmentally disabled individuals and meets the applicable requirements of Indiana Code. ~~The term includes those recovering from substance abuse (per the 1988 Fair Housing Act Amendment).~~ See also IC 12-28-4-8.

Residential Facility for the Developmentally Disabled Type II: A residential facility which provides residential services for ~~more than 8~~ developmentally disabled individuals. ~~The term includes those recovering from substance abuse (per the 1988 Fair Housing Act Amendment).~~ See also IC 12-28-4-8.

Street, Urban: A street within the urban area recognized by the City of Columbus Throughfare Plan or otherwise identified as intended to serve diverse forms of transportation (vehicles, pedestrians, bicycles,

and transit services), characterized by close building proximity, and serving potentially mixed land uses. See also *Street and Road*.

Street, Suburban: A street outside of the urban area recognized by the City of Columbus Throughfare Plan or otherwise characterized by buildings set back from front property lines and serving generally separated land uses. See also *Street and Road*.

Substance Abuse Recovery Home: A location that provides supported housing and recovery services for individuals with chronic addiction and meets the applicable requirements of Indiana Code (specifically including registration with the Indiana Division of Mental Health and Addiction required by Indiana Code Section 12-23-25). See also *IC 12-23-25 and the 1988 Fair Housing Act Amendment*.

Two-Family Residential Structure: A single structure designed for and occupied by a total of 2 families, and therefore including 2 separate and distinct dwelling units. The dwelling units may be arranged side-by-side with a common wall or stacked one above the other, and may each have a separate entrance from the outside or from a common entry hall. See also *Duplex*.

Single-Family Attached Residential Structure: A single structure designed for and occupied by one family, and therefore including one dwelling unit that shares at least one common wall with another residential structure.

Single-Family Detached Residential Structure: A single structure designed for and occupied by one family, and therefore including one dwelling unit that does not share any common walls with another residential structure.