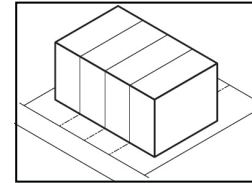


# Front Garages and Parking for Small Residential Structures (BHD & RIP)





(Houses, Attached Houses, Duplexes, Attached Duplexes, Manufactured Homes, Townhouses)


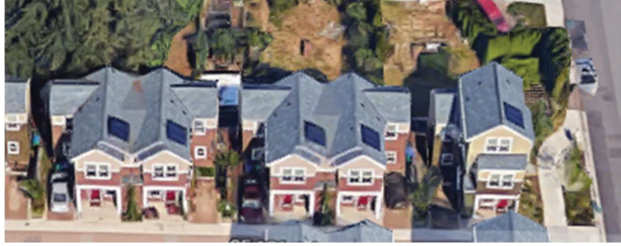


**Note on housing types**

“Attached houses” are attached units located on separate lots. “Townhouses” are otherwise identical side-by-side units, but located on an undivided lot. Townhouses are a building code classification and are not defined in the zoning code, under which they can be duplexes, triplexes, or fourplexes, depending on numbers of units.

**Topics and Options** (see also *Background* information starting on third page)

<p><b>1</b></p>	<p><b>Front Garages</b></p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">   </div> <p><b>Issue: Should the 50% limit on the width of front garages be based on the combined frontage of attached units, or be calculated separately for each unit? Does it make a difference if side-by-side units are on separate lots (attached houses), or are located on an undivided lot (townhouse-type duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes)?</b></p> <p>Both the BHD and RIP proposals limit front garages to no more than 50% of façade width. Examples show projects where garages occupy less than 50% of the combined façade width, but more than 50% of some unit facades.</p> <p><b>The following options relate to whether or not these examples, which meet the 50% garage limit based on the combined frontage of units, should be allowed.</b></p>			
<p><b>Options</b></p>	<p><b>A. Allow for duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and attached houses.</b> The 50% garage limit applies to the combined frontage of attached units, whether or not on separate lots. (BHD)</p>	<p><b>B. Allow for duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, but not for attached houses</b> (on individual lots). For attached houses, the 50% limit applies to each individual façade. (RIP)</p>	<p><b>C. Both “A” and “B”.</b> It is fine for the two types of zones to have different regulatory approaches.</p>	<p><b>D. Never allow.</b> Limit front garages to 50% of <u>individual unit façades</u>, regardless of whether or not units are on separate lots. Do not calculate the garage limitation based on combined façade width for side-by-side units with individual garages.</p>
<p><b>2</b></p>	<p><b>Front Parking</b></p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">   </div> <p><b>Issue: Should limitations on front surface parking vary by housing type/lot configuration, or should the same limitations (if any) apply to all housing types?</b> Both BHD and RIP limit front vehicle areas to 40% of frontage and both disallow front parking for fourplexes, but differ in how other types of housing are regulated. Front parking without garages allows ground-level living space instead of garages, but the front vehicle areas still impact the pedestrian environment of streets, reduce on-street parking, and interrupt the context of neighborhood street frontages characterized by front yards and gardens.</p>			
<p><b>Options</b></p>	<p><b>A. Do not allow parking in front of the front building line for any type of housing</b> (including duplexes, triplexes, attached houses). Left example would not be allowed, whether a duplex or pair of attached houses. (BHD)</p>	<p><b>B. Allow front parking for duplexes and triplexes, but not for attached houses with facades less than 22-feet wide or fourplexes.</b> Left example would be allowed if a duplex, but not if it is a pair of attached houses. (RIP)</p>	<p><b>C. Both “A” and “B”.</b> It is fine for the two types of zones to have different regulatory approaches.</p>	<p><b>D. Allow front parking for all housing types,</b> as long as vehicle areas occupy no more than 40% of frontage. Limitations would still apply to front garages.</p>

<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>Parking to Side of Front of Building</b></p>				
	<p><b>Issue: Should parking located in front of portions of buildings, but set behind the front building line, be allowed for narrow lots?</b> Example shows attached units (approximately 20-feet wide) on narrow, 25-foot wide lots, with parking pads set to the side of the front building line. BHD would allow this configuration (as long as parking is set behind the front building line and occupies no more than 40% of the frontage). RIP would not allow this front parking arrangement for units with facades less than 22-feet wide located on separate lots (parking is not allowed in front of any portion of a building in these situations), but would allow it for otherwise similar duplexes or triplexes. RIP would allow a parking pad to the side of the narrow attached house, similar to the example, except that there could not be building area set behind the parking pad.</p>				<p><i>Note: this example is of housing located on a "shared court" (type of private street), but could also be built along a standard street, with the addition of a 10-foot front setback for the buildings.</i></p>
<p><b>Options</b></p>	<p><b>A. Allow for attached houses, as well as duplexes and triplexes.</b> Allow front parking when set behind the front building line, as long as vehicle area occupies no more than 40% of the width of the frontage. (BHD)</p>	<p><b>B. Allow for duplexes and triplexes, but <u>not for attached houses with facades less than 22-feet wide.</u></b> The example would be allowed for duplexes with units on shared lots, but not if the units are located on separate lots (unless no portion of building is behind the parking). (RIP)</p>	<p><b>C. Both "A" and "B".</b> It is fine for the two types of zones to have different regulatory approaches.</p>	<p><b>D. Never allow.</b> Do not allow parking in front of any portion of a building for any type of side-by-side units with narrow facades, regardless of whether or not units are on separate lots.</p>	

**Other work session item for Better Housing by Design:**

**Visitability bonus.** PSC provided direction during the November 13<sup>th</sup> work session that staff return with a proposal for a voluntary incentive/bonus for projects providing visitable units (instead of making visitable units mandatory). Project staff propose the creation of a bonus allowing 25% additional FAR when at least 25% of units are designed to provide visitable access (using the same visitability standards in RIP). This would serve as an incentive for visitable units by helping defray the costs of meeting the visitability standards. For smaller project not subject to mandatory inclusionary housing, the visitability bonus could be combined with the moderate-income 3-bedroom bonus to achieve a total FAR increase of 50%.

## Front Garages and Parking for Small Residential Structures

(Houses, Attached Houses, Duplexes, Attached Duplexes, Manufactured Homes, Townhouses)

### Background

Both the Better Housing by Design (BHD) and Residential Infill Projects (RIP) propose code amendments that would place additional limitations on front garages and parking along the street frontages of residential development. These code amendments are intended to implement multiple policies that call for guiding development to contribute to pedestrian-oriented street environments, with street-oriented buildings featuring entrances and windows that connect to and activate the street environment (relevant Comprehensive Plan polices include 3.4 and policies 4.5 through 4.7). These policies are also reflected in priorities identified in the DOZA project (updating design guidelines and standards), which identifies orientation of buildings to the “public realm” of streets as one of Portland’s fundamental urban design values.

The December 11, 2018, PSC work session provides an opportunity for the PSC to reconcile differences between how the BHD and RIP proposals would regulate front garages and parking for small-scale housing types (houses, attached houses, duplexes, attached duplexes, triplexes, and townhouses), which are built in both the multi-dwelling and single-dwelling zones.

### Current Regulations

#### Single-dwelling zones (Chapter 33.110):

- Front garages can be no more than 50% of the width of street-facing facades.
- Front garages are not allowed on new narrow lots (detached or attached houses) with facades less than 22-feet wide.
- Exemption provided for pre-existing narrow lots, where a front garage up to 12-feet wide is allowed even if it exceeds the above limits.
- Vehicle area (driveways and front parking) limited to 40% of street frontage.

**Proposed RIP changes** would eliminate the exemption for existing narrow lots and prohibit front garages and front parking for all narrow lot development with facades less than 22-feet wide.

#### Multi-dwelling zones (Chapter 33.120):

- Front garages for detached houses and duplexes can be no more than 50% of the width of facades, except that every detached house is allowed up to a 12-foot wide garage.
- No limit on the width of front garages for attached houses or for multi-dwelling structures such as triplexes or fourplexes.
- Vehicle area (driveways and front parking) limited to 50% of street frontage.

**Proposed BHD changes** would expand the 50% limit on front garages (and structured parking) to apply to all types of housing, with no exceptions for narrow detached houses. The BHD changes would also reduce the amount of front vehicle area to 40% (consistent with single-dwelling zones) and not allow parking between the front of buildings and the street. The BHD proposals differ from the RIP proposals in that the 50% limit on front garages for attached houses is calculated for the combined facades of the attached units, instead of separately for each attached house façade (allowing projects with a mix of attached units with and without front garages). Also, the BHD proposals disallow parking in front of buildings for all types of housing, which differs from the RIP proposals, which allow front parking except for narrow-lot housing with facades less than 22-feet wide. Both the RIP and BHD proposals allow for projects to include no off-street parking, so that the limitations on front garages and parking do not prevent the ability to undertake compact development on small sites.

See the **Topics and Options** portion of this document and the attached **RIP and BHD Front Garages and Parking Regulations Comparison** for more information on differences between the BHD and RIP proposals.

Multi-unit buildings especially should contribute to the street.



## Background – Issues Related to Front Garages

In the multi-dwelling zones, front garages have been the typical parking arrangements for most new narrow-lot houses and attached houses. With the BHD proposals, front garages would only be allowed for units that are wide enough to meet the 50% limitation on garages. This would only be possible for street-oriented attached houses at the lowest allowed densities in the RM1 zone (A 100-foot wide double lot could have four attached houses, each 22.5-feet wide, which would allow for narrow garages 11-feet wide under the 50% garage limit [this configuration would also be allowed in the R2.5 zone]). Development of a single 50-foot wide lot could accommodate two 20-foot wide attached units, which would only allow for front garages in multi-dwelling zones if kept to a substandard width of 10 feet, and would not be allowed for attached houses on separate lots under the RIP proposals). However, at densities any higher than the lowest RM1 density, attached houses are too narrow to allow for front garages that meet the 50% limit (five attached houses on a 100-foot wide site would each be up to 18-feet wide, which is too narrow to fit a front garage within the 50% limit).

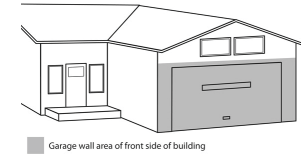
In order to meet the 50% garage limit, most attached house projects in the multi-dwelling zones above the lowest densities would need to have rear/alley-accessed garages, provide a shared-accessway (such as a “shared court”), or could choose in most situations to include no off-street parking. The rear parking and no parking options would also be available in the single-dwelling zones. Another option that would be available in the multi-dwelling zones (per BHD) for both side-by-side townhouses (on an undivided lot) and attached houses (on individual lots) are allowances for the 50% garage limit to be met by having some units in project with front garages and others without (see **Item 1** under **Topics and Options**). This approach is intended to provide a consistent approach for regulating street-oriented townhouses and attached houses, given that both types of housing are common in the multi-dwelling zones and differ only in that the latter involves a land division. The RIP project would allow townhouse-type housing (duplexes, triplexes, or fourplexes) with a mix of units with and without front garages to meet the 50% garage limit, but this option would not be allowed for attached houses – for which the 50% garage limit applies to each attached house façade on an individual lot.

See next page for more information on the **Residential Infill Project’s parking principles and considerations**. For examples showing rear parking and shared access arrangements in the multi-dwelling zones that would meet the front garage limitations, see the attached **Infill Design Prototypes**.

### Some considerations related to front garages

Development without front garages or front parking contributes to pedestrian-friendly street frontages, continues neighborhood patterns of front yards and gardens, reduces conflicts with pedestrians, allows for more street trees and preserves on-street parking (some of which is lost when curb cuts are created for driveways). Reasons builders provide for why they prefer to provide front garages include:

- Many lenders are hesitant to finance ownership housing without off-street parking/garages;
- Home buyers tend to want garages (to use as storage or flex space, if not for parking) and like the certainty of parking availability provided by private driveways;
- Attached houses with garages have proven easier to sell than those without garages;
- It can be difficult to find space for garbage and recycling/composting bins without front garages, especially for attached houses without any side setbacks;
- Rear parking arrangements often mean the loss of backyards, can be difficult to maneuver or to fit on small sites that are not on corners, and can require more paving; and
- Creating access easements or tracts for rear alleys or other shared accessways creates “common elements” with attendant legal and maintenance issues.



#### Garage width measurement

In the zoning code, measurement of garage width includes the garage door, as well as garage space behind the garage wall and structural components. A narrow single-car garage is typically 12-foot wide (with an eight-foot wide garage door). Garages as narrow as 10-feet wide are also possible, although builders indicate this dimension is highly constrained and not very practical for fitting cars.



Both the RIP and BHD proposals disallow garages from occupying the majority of ground-level facades (upper left), support arrangements with no front garages (upper right), and allow front garages when occupying less than 50% of building frontages (left).

## Background: Residential Infill Project – Parking Principles and Considerations

**Curb cuts** – Generally limit, but provide allowances on wider lots.

Problems: impacts on-street parking availability, increased conflicts between pedestrians and cars, reduced street tree opportunities.

However, curb cuts allow mid-block bicycle, stroller or wheelchair access from the street and provide queuing refuge opportunities on narrow streets.

**Driveways and parking**– Restrict amount allowed in front yards.

Problems: stormwater impacts of impervious surfaces and reduced area for front yard landscaping.

However, they can provide additional off-street parking.

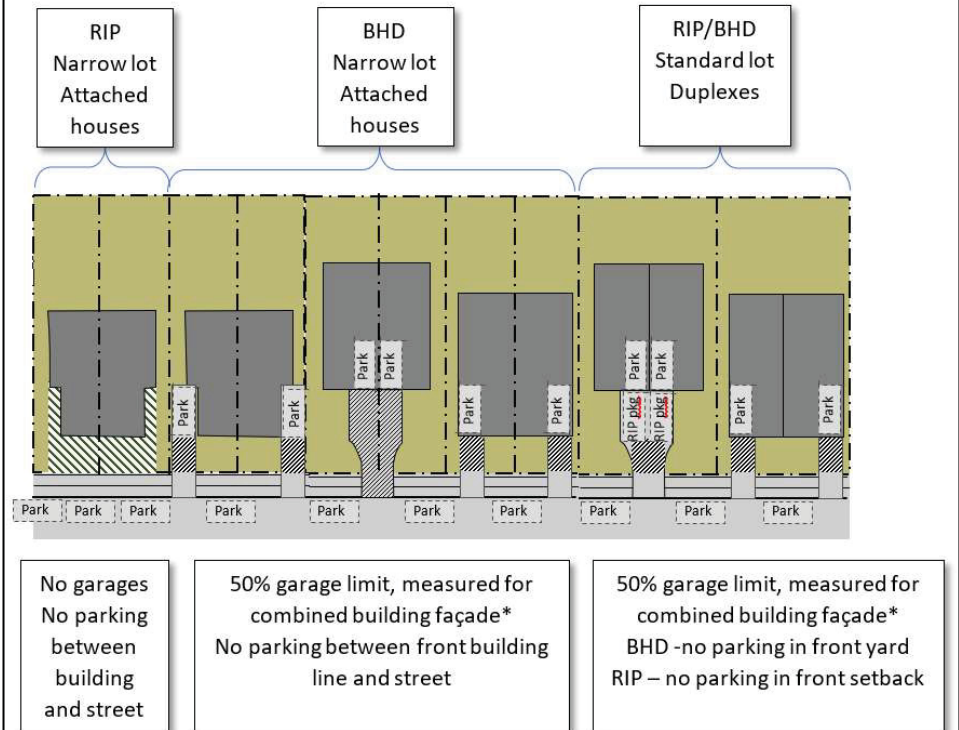
**Garages** – limit on narrow house facades

Problems: garages can dominate the front of a house and reduce the visual connection between the living area and the street. Often not actually used for vehicle parking.

However, they provide utility space, bicycle and recycling storage, and when used for vehicles they provide additional off-street parking.

**For duplexes and triplexes**, the RIP proposal did not impose additional limits on garages and driveways (as are proposed for narrow-lot attached houses), but these housing types are instead subject to similar regulations as apply to a house on a standard lot. This was intended to reduce barriers to encouraging these additional housing types as alternatives to single houses on standard lots. On the other hand, attached houses are the only option on narrow lots. The RIP proposals for additional restrictions for narrow lots are intended to address design issues and achieve a more desired form and outcome.

### Summary Comparison of RIP and BHD Standards



*\*Front garages for a pair of attached units on a standard 50-foot side lot may not always be practical, since perimeter setbacks limit total building width to 40-feet (20-feet per unit), for which the 50% garage limit restricts individual garages to no more than 10-feet wide. This is narrower than the more standard 12-foot dimension for single-car garages (and less than what many builders consider a practical dimension for parking a car).*

## Background – Infill Design Prototypes

The following examples, from the [Infill Design Toolkit \(www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/49254\)](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/49254), illustrate ways of meeting limitations on front garages in the multi-dwelling zones through various configurations with rear parking/alleys or other shared accessways that consolidate parking access (instead of multiple front garages and driveways along the public street frontage). These examples illustrate attached or detached housing – most of which could either involve a land division with units on separate lots, or could involve multiple units on an undivided lot (not all of these configurations could be built in the single-dwelling zones). While these examples focus on family-sized housing types that lend themselves to ownership configurations, a much broader range of smaller-unit housing types are also allowed in the multi-dwelling zones. Also, while these examples show how off-street parking can be achieved on small sites (and focus on mid-block sites that are more problematic to provide rear parking for compared to corner sites), projects also could choose to include no off-street parking.

