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# **Planning Commission Recommendation: Municipal Code Text Amendment**

## **Increase Maximum Height in R-4 Multiple Family Residence Zoning to 60 Ft.**

**April 27, 2026**



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# Text Amendment

## Key Points from the Staff Report / PC:

- **Goal:** identify a path for economically viable development that complies with site development requirements
- **Issue:** current R-4 maximum height restricts projects otherwise appropriate for the zoning
- **Review:** based on analysis of recent multiple family projects in various zoning designations
- **Process:** the Planning Commission recommends a text amendment to the City Council for consideration



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# Text Amendment

## A Note on How the Zoning Ordinance Defines Height:

- ***Building height*** means the distance between the average ground level at the building line and the highest point of the roof or flat roof, to the deck line of a mansard or to the highest gable on a pitched or hipped roof. In a shoreland district, the height of building means the vertical distance between the highest adjoining ground level at the building or ten feet above the lowest ground level, whichever is lower, and the highest point of a flat roof or average height of the highest gable of a pitched or hipped roof.

**R-4 zoning height is measured to the peak or highest point of the roof.**



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# Text Amendment

## Pillars of Grand Rapids

**56' 6"**

(Planning Commission  
variance)





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# Text Amendment

## Mill + Miss

**57' 6"**

(Planning Commission  
variance)





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# Text Amendment

## Mill + Miss





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## Riverview (near library)

**50' 6"**  
(CBD Max Height is 60')





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# **Text Amendment**

## **Updating the Municipal Code to reflect current building and land use trends:**

- **The last district wide height change was 2018 when the General Business (GB) maximum height increased from 35 ft. to 50 ft.**
- **A couple of GB developments have utilized the increased height**
- **Recent projects in other zoning show what potential R-4 projects might look like with an increase in maximum height**



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# Text Amendment

Benefits of  
General  
Business GB  
height increase





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# Text Amendment

## Benefits of General Business GB height increase





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# Text Amendment

## Updating the **Municipal Code** to reflect current building and land use trends:

- **2040 Comprehensive Plan – Chapter 4 (Land Use):**

*Promote the best use of the land, from the community's long-term perspective, for conservation, new development, or redevelopment.*



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# Text Amendment

## Planning Commission Considerations:

### PLANNING COMMISSION

#### Considerations

#### ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

1. Will the change affect the character of neighborhoods?

Why/Why not?

2. Would the change foster economic growth in the community?

Why/Why not?

3. Would the proposed change be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance?

Why/Why not?

4. Would the change be in the best interest of the general public?

Why/Why not?

5. Would the change be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan?

Why/Why not?



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# Text Amendment

## Planning Commission Findings

- The amendment will not have an adverse effect on the character of neighborhoods. R-4 is already a high-density zoning district.
- The amendment would foster economic growth in the community by encouraging future projects and better land use.
- That the amendment to Chapter 30 would be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the Zoning Ordinance by maintaining an updated Ordinance responsive to community needs.
- That the amendment would be in the best interest of the public by allowing for development of more housing.
- That the amendment would be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, as the amendment will directly address the need for housing units.



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# Questions?