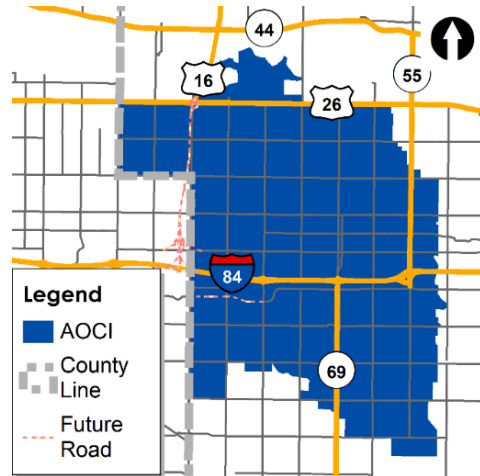


DEPARTMENT REPORT
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



HEARING DATE: 9/3/2026
TO: Planning & Zoning Commission
FROM: Caleb Hood, Deputy Director
208-884-5533
SUBJECT: ZOA-2026-0001
2026 Legislative UDC Text
Amendment
LOCATION: Citywide



I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Meridian Planning Division has applied for a Unified Development Code (UDC) text amendment to update the UDC to be compliant with recently passed Idaho Code (IC). There are three (3) primary topics: 1) manufactured dwelling units (homes); 2) accessory dwelling units; and 3) starter home subdivisions. The proposed amendments include modifications, additions, and clarifications within Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 of the UDC.

II. RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the proposed Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment.

III. APPLICANT INFORMATION

A. Applicant:
City of Meridian Planning Division
33 E. Broadway Ave, Suite #102
Meridian, ID 83642

IV. NOTICING

	Planning & Zoning Posting Date	City Council Posting Date
Notification published in newspaper	8/18/2026	
Nextdoor posting	08/24/2026	

V. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ANALYSIS ([*Comprehensive Plan*](#))

A. Comprehensive Plan Text (<https://www.meridiancity.org/compplan>):

3.01.01B - Update the Comprehensive Plan and **Unified Development Code** as needed to accommodate the community's needs and growth trends.

The requested UDC changes associated with this text amendment are meant to serve community needs, support current growth trends as directed by the Idaho State Legislature.

3.04.01B – Maintain and update the Unified Development Code and Future Land Use Map to implement the provisions of the Comprehensive Plan.

There is a companion request to update the Comprehensive Plan to also address accessory dwelling units and starter home subdivisions. Staff believes the proposed UDC changes coupled with the companion Comp Plan policy changes encompass the vision of the plan and is largely supported by those who participated in the process, as directed by the Idaho State Legislature.

VI. UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE ANALYSIS ([*UDC*](#))

The proposed UDC amendments include modifications, additions, and clarifications within Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 of the UDC. Below is both a summary and details of the proposed UDC changes:

1. Manufactured Homes

During the 2026 Legislative session, the State adopted House Bill 0800, legislation amending IC §39-4105 and §67-6509A. This legislation requires local jurisdictions in Idaho to permit manufactured units the same as traditional (stick-built, on-site) dwelling units - wherever a traditional dwelling unit is allowed, a manufactured unit must also be allowed. This applies to citing both single-family as well as multi-family dwelling units on a property. Current City Code (UDC) addresses and allows manufactured units as single-family dwellings in all residential zoning districts, but the UDC does not currently explicitly address the allowance of multi-family manufactured units. Therefore, to comply with the subject legislation, below in underline (new text) and ~~strike through~~ (removed text) format is Staff's proposal.

(UDC 11-1A-1, Definitions)

Dwelling, multi or multi-family. A structure, or portion thereof, that contains three (3) or more primary dwelling units or apartments, where all such units are located on the same property.

Multi dwelling unit manufactured homes that are constructed in accordance with HUD manufactured home construction and safety standards are included in this definition. For the purposes of this title, a multi-family dwelling shall be deemed multi-family development.

2. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)

In 2026, the Idaho State Legislature amended IC §67-6541 preempting cities of 10,000 or more population from banning Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's) in residential zoning areas, as well as limiting or prohibiting certain elements a city can regulate like size, parking and fees. Meridian currently allows ADU's in all residential zoning areas so the changes below are fairly minimal for compliance with recent State law requirements. See underline and ~~strike through~~ below for proposed changes to the UDC.

(UDC 11-1A-1, Definitions – Background info only; no change proposed to definition)

Dwelling, accessory. A habitable dwelling unit, either attached or detached from but established on the same property and subordinate to a primary dwelling unit. The term shall include guesthouse, granny flat,

tiny house, in-law unit, accessory dwelling unit (ADU), carriage house, secondary dwelling, garage apartment and caretaker unit.

(UDC 11-4-3-12, Specific Use Standards for Accessory Dwelling Units)

11-4-3-12. — Dwelling, accessory. The following standards shall apply to the building, placement, and maintenance of an accessory dwelling unit:

A. *Limit One.* The property owner shall build, place, or maintain no more than one (1) accessory dwelling unit per property.

B. *Accessory to primary dwelling.* An accessory dwelling unit shall be located only on the same property as, in conjunction with, and clearly subordinate to, a primary dwelling.

C. *Permit Required.* The property owner shall obtain city permitting approval for an accessory dwelling unit prior to building, placing, or maintaining an accessory dwelling unit on any property.

D. *Owner of Record.* Ownership of the primary dwelling shall be confirmed through Ada County records. The accessory dwelling shall be confirmed through Ada County records. The accessory dwelling shall not be subdivided or otherwise segregated in ownership from the primary dwelling.

E. *Maximum size.* An accessory dwelling unit shall be limited to a maximum of ~~nine hundred (900)~~ one thousand (1000) square feet or no more than ~~fifty (50) seventy-five (75)~~ percent of the primary dwelling, whichever is ~~less~~ greater, and ~~no more than two (2) bedrooms~~ constructed in accord with the adopted residential building code.

F. *Location.* An accessory dwelling unit may be located within or attached to the primary dwelling; a detached structure; or above, beside, or within a detached structure. A detached accessory dwelling shall be located to the side or rear of a primary dwelling.

G. *Parking.* ~~Required parking for a property with an accessory dwelling unit shall be as set forth in Section 11-3C-6, Table 11-3C-6 of this Title for single family dwellings, as determined by the total number of bedrooms on the property.~~ The conversion of a covered parking area (garage/carport) into an accessory dwelling unit is not allowed unless the required parking for the primary dwelling can be provided elsewhere on site.

H. *Separate entrance.* Both the primary dwelling unit and the accessory dwelling unit shall each have at least one (1) exterior egress door; no openings are allowed between dwelling units.

I. *Design.* The accessory dwelling unit shall be generally consistent in design with the primary dwelling, including building height (no taller than the primary dwelling), roof pitch, siding, color, materials, and window treatments.

J. *Prohibited dwelling units.* Only a building constructed on a foundation shall be used as an accessory dwelling unit. A vehicle, motorhome, camper, recreational vehicle, tiny home on wheels or tent shall be prohibited for use as an accessory dwelling unit.

K. *Number of occupants.* The total number of occupants in both the primary dwelling and the accessory dwelling shall not exceed the maximum number established for a “family”, as defined in Chapter 1, Article A, “definitions”, of this Title.

L. *Utilities.* An accessory dwelling unit shall be connected to City water and sewer systems, and shall obtain solid waste collection services as required within the City. The property owner shall be responsible for connecting an accessory dwelling unit to municipal water and sewer services, and for obtaining solid waste collection services.

M. *Address required.* An accessory dwelling unit shall have its own separate address from the primary residence. The property owner shall be responsible for obtaining an address for an accessory dwelling unit.

N. *Responsible party.* The owner of any property where an accessory dwelling unit is built, placed or maintained shall be responsible for compliance with all laws that apply to such dwelling, including this section.

(UDC 11-3C-6, Required Parking)

UDC 11-3C-6, Required number of off-street parking spaces.

A. The minimum number of required off street vehicle parking spaces for residential uses shall be in accord with table 11-3C-6 of this subsection.

TABLE 11-3C-6 REQUIRED PARKING SPACES FOR RESIDENTIAL USE

Use and Form	Number Of Bedrooms (Per Unit)	Required Parking Spaces ¹
Dwelling, duplex and dwelling, single-family (detached, attached, townhouse)	1/2	2 per dwelling unit; at least 1 in an enclosed garage, other space may be enclosed or a minimum 10-foot by 20-foot parking pad ²
	3/4	4 per dwelling unit; at least 2 in an enclosed garage, other spaces may be enclosed or a minimum 10-foot by 20-foot parking pad ²
	5+	6 per dwelling unit; at least 3 in an enclosed garage, other spaces may be enclosed or a minimum 10-foot by 20-foot parking pad ²
	Studio	1 per dwelling unit
Dwelling, multifamily ^{3,4,5} (triplex, fourplex, apartments, etc.)	1	1.5 per dwelling unit; at least 1 in a covered carport or garage
	2	2 per dwelling unit; at least 1 in a covered carport or garage
	3	3 per dwelling unit; at least 1 in a covered carport or garage

	4+	3 per dwelling unit; at least 2 in a covered carport or garage
	Guest spaces	1 per 10 dwelling units
Dwelling, secondary	1	As set forth above for single family dwellings as determined by the total number of bedrooms on the property
Nursing and residential care facility	1	0.5 per bed
Vertically integrated residential ⁴	Studio/1	1 per dwelling unit
	2/3	1.5 per dwelling unit
	4+	2 per dwelling unit

3. Starter Home Subdivisions

Idaho Code was amended earlier this year, IC §67-6541 requires cities of 10,000 or more population to allow “Starter Home” Subdivisions. The law preempts local jurisdictional authority and has a fairly substantial impact on Meridian’s current zoning ordinance. In summary, the new Statute restricts cities from banning starter home subdivisions (detached single-family dwellings on 1,500 sq. ft. lots) in *any* residential zone, on property of four (4) acres or more.

Due to this new law, Chapter 2 of the UDC will need to be amended in multiple sections: 11-2A-2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 as well as amending Definitions in Chapter 1 of the UDC (11-1A-1). In addition, Staff is proposing an amendment to UDC 11-6B-6, findings for subdivisions. This is an optional change, but one Staff believes helps in the overall subdivision review and approval process.

Proposed changes to the UDC are listed below in underline and ~~strike through~~:

(UDC 11-1A-1, Definitions)

Subdivision, starter home – A subdivision as herein defined located within a residential zoning district on at least four (4) acres of land with lot sizes for single family detached dwellings on lots no greater than one thousand five hundred (1,500) square feet per lot.

(Table 11-2A-2)

(Add superscript ⁵ to “dwelling, single-family detached” in the Use Table; add corresponding Note 5 below table stating: “⁵ Within a Starter Home Subdivision, single family detached dwellings are principally permitted in all districts.”)

(UDC 11-2A-3, Residential District Standards)

11-2A-3 - Standards

The standards for development in all residential districts shall be as follows:

A. Minimum property size.

1. Each property shall be of sufficient size to meet the minimum setbacks as established in this section ~~and dwelling unit size requirements in accord with subsection (F) of this section.~~

2. Minimum property size shall be determined exclusive of land that is used for the conveyance of irrigation water, drainage, creek or river flows unless:

- a. The water is conveyed through pipe or tile; and

- b. Included as part of a utility easement that generally runs along the property lines.
- 3. When two (2) or more parcels of land, each of which is of inadequate area and dimension to qualify for a permitted use under the requirements of the district in which the parcels are located, are held in one ownership, they shall be used as one (1) property for such use.

B. Minimum street frontage.

- 1. Properties with street frontages on cul-de-sacs or at approximately a ninety-degree angle shall be a minimum of thirty (30) feet measured as a chord measurement.
- 2. Street knuckles shall be separated from through traffic by a landscape island. Properties with frontages on such knuckles shall be a minimum of thirty (30) feet measured as a chord measurement.
- 3. Properties taking access from common driveways do not require street frontage.
- 4. Street frontage for flag properties shall be a minimum of thirty (30) feet.

C. Corner lot setbacks. Corner properties shall have one (1) interior side setback and one (1) rear setback.

D. Encroachments allowed in any setback.

- 1. Open structures such as porches, canopies, balconies, platforms, covered patios, cornices, eaves or other projections, which do not increase the volume of space enclosed by the building and do not project into any required setback by more than two (2) feet.
- 2. Chimneys, pop out windows, direct vent gas fireplaces, entertainment centers, window seats and other projections which do not increase the usable floor area and do not exceed eight (8) feet in width may project up to two (2) feet into any required setback. Where building setbacks are below five (5) feet encroachments into the required setback may project up to one (1) foot.
- 3. One (1) detached accessory building that is exempt from a permit as defined by the currently adopted international residential code shall be allowed in the required rear yard. In no case shall an accessory building be allowed in the street yard or the required side yard.

E. Maximum height limit.

- 1. Residential structures shall not exceed the maximum height of the district as defined in chapter 1 of this title.
- 2. The maximum height limitations shall not apply to the following architectural features not intended for human occupation. steeple, belfry, cupola, chimney. Such architectural features shall have a maximum height limit of twenty (20) feet as measured from the roofline.
- 3. The maximum height limitations shall not apply to the following: spire; amateur radio antenna; bridge tower; fire and hose tower; observation tower; power line tower; smokestack; water tank or tower; ventilator; windmill; wireless communication facility, or other commercial or personal tower and/or antenna structure; or other appurtenances usually required to be placed above the level of the ground and not intended for human occupancy.

4. Notwithstanding other height limitations as set forth in this chapter, the maximum height for education facilities shall be fifty (50) feet.

5. No exception shall be allowed to the height limit where the height of any structures will constitute a hazard to the safe landing and takeoff of aircraft in an established airport.

~~F. *Living space.* Excluding the garage, all detached residential dwelling units in the R-2 and R-4 districts shall meet minimum living space size requirements in accord with Sections 11-2A-4 and 11-2A-5 of this Article.~~

~~F.G. *Roof design.*~~ All residential dwelling structures shall have a pitched roof not less than three (3) feet in height for each twelve (12) feet in length. Alternative roof designs for attached single-family, duplex, townhouse, and multi-family residential dwelling structures may be approved through administrative design review.

~~G.H. *Drainage.*~~

1. In no case shall a development propose less than a five-foot setback adjacent to a property that is not part of the development application.

2. Properties shall provide adequate area to maintain drainage on the site.

(UDC 11-2A (Residential Districts) - Tables 11-2A-4, 5, 6 and 7)

Staff is proposing a “note” or asterisk in Tables 11-2A-4, 11-2A-5, 11-2A-6 and 11-2A-7 (all residential districts) that says: “The dimensional standards noted above for minimum property size, street frontage, street setback and side setback do not apply within Starter Home Subdivisions. Within Starter Home Subdivisions, lots shall be no greater than one thousand five hundred (1,500) square feet, with a minimum front and rear setback of fifteen (15) feet, and a minimum side setback of five (5) feet.”

The City does have some limited discretion when it comes to reviewing and approving Starter Home Subdivisions, especially when determining compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods and infrastructure limitations. Therefore, staff is proposing to amend the findings for subdivisions as shown below.

(UDC 11-6B-6, required subdivision findings)

11-6B-6 - required findings.

In consideration of a starter home subdivision, preliminary plat, combined preliminary and final plat, or short plat, the decision-making body shall make the following findings:

A. The plat is in conformance with the comprehensive plan and is consistent with this Unified Development Code;

B. Public services are available or can be made available and are adequate to accommodate the proposed development;

C. The plat is in conformance with scheduled public improvements in accord with the city's capital improvement program;

D. There is public financial capability of supporting services for the proposed development;

E. The development will not be detrimental to the public health, safety or general welfare; ~~and~~

F. The development preserves significant natural, scenic or historic features; and

G. The plat is compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.

In summary, City Staff believes the proposed changes detailed above will make the implementation and use of the UDC more understandable, consistent and enforceable.

VII. DECISION

A. Staff:

Staff recommends approval of the proposed text amendments to the UDC based on the analysis provided in Section V and VI and the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law in Section IX.

B. Commission:

C. City Council:

Enter Summary of City Council Decision.

VIII. EXHIBIT

A. Proposed Code Changes (Narrative) – [2026 Legislative UDC Text Amendment ZOA-2026-0001](#)
(Insert this link into your preferred browser to review the application materials.)

IX. FINDINGS

1. UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE TEXT AMENDMENTS: (UDC 11-5B-3E)

Upon recommendation from the Commission, the Council shall make a full investigation and shall, at the public hearing, review the application. In order to grant a text amendment to the Unified Development Code, the Council shall make the following findings:

A. The text amendment complies with the applicable provisions of the comprehensive plan;

Staff finds that the proposed UDC text amendment complies with the applicable provisions of the Comprehensive Plan. Please see Comprehensive Plan Policies and Goals, Section V, of the Staff Report for more information.

B. The text amendment shall not be materially detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare; and

Staff finds that the proposed zoning ordinance amendment will not be detrimental to the public health, safety or welfare if the changes to the text of the UDC are approved. It is the intent of the text amendment to further the health, safety and welfare of the public.

C. The text amendment shall not result in an adverse impact upon the delivery of services by any political subdivision providing public services within the City including, but not limited to, school districts.

Staff finds that the proposed zoning ordinance amendment does not propose any significant changes to how public utilities and services are provided to developments. All City departments, public agencies and service providers that currently review applications will continue to do so. Please refer to any written or oral testimony provided by any public service provider(s) when making this finding.