

RESOLUTION 2024-25

TO INITIATE A PROPOSAL TO AMEND TITLE 20 (UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE)  
OF THE BLOOMINGTON MUNICIPAL CODE Re: Single-Room Occupancy Residential Buildings  
as a Permitted Use

- WHEREAS the Common Council, by its Resolution 18-01, approved a new Comprehensive Plan for the City of Bloomington, which took effect on March 21, 2018; and
- WHEREAS thereafter the Plan Commission initiated and prepared a proposal to repeal and replace Title 20 of the Bloomington Municipal Code, entitled "Unified Development Ordinance" ("UDO") in order to implement the vision for community development put forward in the Comprehensive Plan; and
- WHEREAS on December 18, 2019, the Common Council passed Ordinance 19-24, to repeal and replace the UDO, and the Mayor signed and approved this ordinance; and
- WHEREAS the UDO has since been revised by action of the Plan Commission and the Common Council seven times; and
- WHEREAS there is an insufficient housing supply in Bloomington, especially for low-income households, as described in the Regional Opportunity Initiatives (ROI) Housing Study update of 2024; and
- WHEREAS the Housing Action Plan released in August 2024 by Heading Home of South Central Indiana calls for increasing the number of housing units with rents under \$500/month; and
- WHEREAS according to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, a single room occupancy (SRO) unit provides living and sleeping space for the exclusive use of the occupant, but requires that the occupant share sanitary and/or food preparation facilities with others<sup>1</sup>; and
- WHEREAS SROs can provide housing at more affordable rental rates than many other housing types; and
- WHEREAS the Common Council held a deliberative session with the public on September 11, 2024 during which the SRO model was discussed, and participants agreed that allowing such housing could prevent homelessness in some cases and in other cases provide homes for previously unhoused people in Bloomington; and
- WHEREAS pursuant to IC 36-7-4-602, the Common Council may initiate a proposal to amend or partially repeal the text of the UDO and require the Plan Commission to prepare it; and
- WHEREAS the Common Council wishes to initiate a proposal to amend the UDO to allow SROs in the city; and
- WHEREAS in preparing and considering this proposal, the Plan Commission and Common Council shall pay reasonable regard to:
- a) the Comprehensive Plan;
  - b) current conditions and character of current structures and uses in each district;
  - c) the most desirable use for which land in each district is adapted;
  - d) the conservation of property values throughout the jurisdiction; and responsible development and growth

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLOOMINGTON, MONROE COUNTY, INDIANA, THAT:

SECTION 1. The Common Council directs the Plan Commission to prepare a proposal consistent with this resolution to amend the text of the UDO to define Single Room Occupancy buildings (SROs) and to allow their use, while paying special attention to the following:

- 1) Allowing flexible building types, including conversion of hotels, single-family houses, and commercial spaces;

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<sup>1</sup> [Housing Choice Voucher Program Guidebook](#), Special Housing Types, HUD (November 2020).

- 2) Distinguishing between the existing “Residential Rooming House” use and an SRO, or replacing Residential Rooming House with SRO, while allowing uses that would fall under the RRH definition as well as under the SRO definition;
- 3) Allowing SROs as a permitted use in multiple zoning districts, including residential zoning districts, perhaps with use-specific standards;
- 4) Not requiring owner-occupancy for SROs in any zoning districts;
- 5) Encouraging a diversity of residents including those who need ongoing support and those just seeking a low-cost, simple housing option. SROs should not become another form of group care housing or supportive housing, as those are already defined and allowed in the UDO;
- 6) Allowing SRO units to be integrated into a mixed-use building with other housing types and/or commercial/office space; and
- 7) Allowing two people per SRO.

SECTION 2. Upon passage of this resolution, the Plan Commission shall review and recommend amendments to the Unified Development Ordinance to the Common Council in response to this resolution. Pursuant to Indiana Code 36-7-4-602, the Plan Commission is instructed to prepare and submit this amendment in the same manner as any other amendment to the Unified Development Ordinance. The Plan Commission is instructed to prepare and submit the amendment within 90 days from the effective date of this resolution, unless granted an additional extension of time, of specified duration, in which to prepare and submit the amendment.

SECTION 3. If any section, sentence or provision of this legislation, or the application thereof to any person or circumstances shall be declared invalid, such invalidity shall not affect any of the other sections, sentences, provisions, or applications of this legislation which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this legislation are declared to be severable.

PASSED by the Common Council of the City of Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana, upon this day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 ISABEL PIEDMONT-SMITH, President  
 Bloomington Common Council

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 NICOLE BOLDEN, Clerk  
 City of Bloomington

PRESENTED by me to the Mayor of the City of Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana, upon this day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 NICOLE BOLDEN, Clerk,  
 City of Bloomington

SIGNED and APPROVED by me upon this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 KERRY THOMSON, Mayor  
 City of Bloomington

SYNOPSIS

This resolution, sponsored by Councilmember Piedmont-Smith, directs the Plan Commission to prepare amendments to the Unified Development Ordinance to add Single-Room Occupancy buildings as a permitted use in the City, with further guidance as to what should be considered regarding the definition, location, and use of such structures.