

Maximum Number of Individuals per Dwelling Unit (R-1 District)

BACKGROUND

In 2004-05 the City Council had discussions concerning the number of occupants allowed in dwelling units in an R1 zoning district. The ordinances at that time allowed a single family, or a maximum of 5 unrelated occupants in a dwelling unit in *any* zoning district. The permitted number of occupants is determined by the definition of “family” in Section 17.04.020 of the Zoning Ordinance and Section 15.16.080 of the Building Code which regulates occupants based on building size and the number and size of bedrooms.

In February 2005, the City Council adopted Ordinance 2005-01 which reduced the number of unrelated occupants that may occupy a dwelling unit in the R1 zoning district from a maximum of 5 to 4 individuals. The ordinance was adopted with a delayed effective date of 15 years for pre-existing dwelling units, meaning that the ordinance will come into full effect in February 2020. All dwelling units in the R1 district must comply with the new standards on or before February 3, 2020.

WHY WAS THE ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDED?

It was determined by the City Council that the conversion of single family homes into rental properties had reduced the availability of affordable single-family homes. The R1 Single Family zoning destination is geared toward homeownership. The intent of the ordinance change was to direct rental activity to higher density residential zoning districts (i.e. R2 and R3) where the definition of family remains at 5 unrelated occupants.

HOW DOES THIS CHANGE AFFECT RENTALS?

Under the old ordinance, up to 5 unrelated occupants could occupy a dwelling unit in an R1 zoning district, the new ordinance only allows up to 4 unrelated occupants per dwelling in the R1 district.

WHICH PROPERTIES ARE IMPACTED?

This ordinance impacts properties with rental licenses that were issued prior to 2005 in the R1 zoning district; specifically, those properties in the R1 district that currently house up to 5 unrelated individuals. Refer to the exhibit map on the following page that depicts the locations of the R1 district in the City. The City estimates approximately 60 properties that will need to come into compliance by the 2020 effective date.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Community Development staff at City Hall
222 Lewis Street, River Falls WI 54022
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AREAS IN THE CITY ZONED R-1 SINGLE FAMILY

