

DIRECTOR'S INTERPRETATION: COTTAGE HOUSE

REQUEST SUMMARY

What is the maximum size allowed for a residence under the category of Cottage Housing?

INTERPRETATION

In order to meet the intent of the Middle Housing regulations and contribute to the diversity of housing options, cottage housing shall be no larger the size of a residential unit that is exempt from the Inclusionary Affordable Housing Program. As of August 2025, that square footage is limited to 1,500 square feet or less of gross floor area. This square footage may be modified in accordance with any amendments to [SMC 21.10.100](#).

David Pyle

David Pyle, Director of Community Development

CONTEXT, FACTS, AND FINDINGS

Cottage Housing fall within the category of Middle Housing. As such, cottage homes are intended to contribute to the diversity of housing options, both in physical form and affordability.

Cottage housing is generally groups of smaller detached homes, typically 800 to 1,200 square feet, which are oriented around a common open space like a courtyard, garden, or walkway. This provides a degree of privacy and some of the benefits of single-family housing, combined with the lower cost and maintenance of townhomes or flats.

[RCW 36.70A.030\(9\)](#) states that "Cottage housing" are *residential units on a lot with a common open space that either: (a) Is owned in common; or (b) has units owned as condominium units with property owned in common and a minimum of 20 percent of the lot size as open space*. However, there is no square footage or size limitation associated with this definition.

In order for cottage housing to provide a level of affordability within the City of Sammamish, any such development should be limited as to be exempt from Inclusionary Affordable Housing regulations. As such, the size of cottage homes shall not exceed 1,500 square feet.

Related Code References

[SMC 21.10.100](#)

[RCW 36.70A.030](#)

[King County 21A.14.025](#)

[Bellevue 20.20.250](#)

[Issaquah 18.602.100.E](#)

[Kirkland 113.15](#)

Resources

[King County iMap](#)

[Sammamish Property Tool](#)

Questions?

[Submit Project Guidance](#)

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COTTAGE HOUSING

SIMILAR REGULATIONS IN NEARBY JURISDICTIONS

[King County 21A.14.025.B](#)

Cottage housing limited to 1,200 square feet per unit.

[City of Bellevue - LUC 20.20.250 \(Ordinance 6851\)](#)

Cottage housing limited to 1,500 square feet per unit.

[City of Kirkland Zoning Code 113.15](#)

Cottage housing limited to 1,700 square feet per unit.

[City of Issaquah LUC 18.602.100.E](#)

Cottage housing limited to 1,700 square feet per unit.





Cottage Housing Code Interpretation

Final Audit Report

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