

STAFF REPORT

Date: July 31, 2024

To: Mayor and City Council

Through: Jackie Bryant, Interim City Manager

Subject: Staff Report (For Possible Action): Presentation and direction to staff regarding updates to the amendments to Title 18 of the Reno Municipal Code (RMC) pertaining to accessory structures and accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

From: Grace Mackedon, Senior Management Analyst

Department: Development Services - Planning

Summary:

An accessory dwelling unit (ADU) is a smaller independent residential dwelling unit located on the same lot as a stand-alone single-family home. ADUs are currently not permitted in most areas of the City of Reno, but a text amendment has been initiated by Council to allow for ADUs with certain restrictions. These restrictions may include the following: size of the ADU, size of the lot, location of the ADU, height, parking, architectural compatibility, and other development standards. Prior to moving forward with community input, staff is seeking direction from Council on the ADU development standards. Staff recommends that Council provide feedback of the proposed ADU development standards.

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

Economic and Community Development

Previous Council Action:

November 1, 2023, during a housing workshop, Council initiated a text amendment to Title 18 of the Reno Municipal Code (RMC) to allow for ADUs within certain zoning districts and neighborhoods.

March 27, 2024, City staff presented the results of a survey that was published to garner public feedback regarding ADUs. Council directed staff to come back to Council to discuss specific proposals to Title 18.

Background:

On March 27, 2024, staff presented the results of an ADU survey that was open from January 1 to February 29. Just over 2,000 responses were collected with 1,361 people generally in support of ADUs, 309 people generally opposed to ADUs, and 318 people in support of ADUs if there are area restrictions. Based on this information, Council directed staff to return to Council and provide specific development proposals that will be included in the upcoming ordinance.

Discussion:

An ADU ordinance was proposed in 2018 and failed due to a lack of community support. Although this ordinance failed, there was a tremendous amount of work and community involvement that went into the final product. Staff revisited this ordinance to build off it and modernize it (**Exhibit A**). Additionally, staff looked at current versions of other similar jurisdictions and compared their standards with what was proposed in 2018 (**Exhibit B**).

Based on the research done with previous ordinances and other jurisdictions, staff provided ten development standards that appear to be addressed consistently in other jurisdictions and would be something necessary to address in a potential ADU ordinance. Below are the development standards with staff's recommendations.

Development Standard	Staff Recommendation	Justification for Recommendation
Minimum Lot Size	N/A	Staff recommends no minimum lot size specific to ADUs. The minimum lot size for each zoning district and lot coverage would regulate whether or not an ADU could be on a lot.
Maximum ADU Size	Same as accessory structures	It is clear that there should be a maximum size for ADUs, but staff recommends keeping this consistent with other accessory structures (Exhibit C). This will allow people to convert existing structures to ADUs.
Setbacks	Same as accessory structures	Staff recommends keeping this consistent with other accessory structures which varies based on zone. This will allow people to convert existing structures to ADUs.
Parking	One off-street parking space per ADU	Parking was one of the number one concerns with the survey. One per unit is consistent with our general parking standards.
Design of ADUs	Same as guest quarters standards	Compatibility is important to be able to preserve neighborhood character. The Title 18 (18.03.405(i)) guest quarters standards are fairly

		robust (Exhibit D), and they allow for some consistency in the code.
Discretionary Review	No	Some are in favor of requiring discretionary review, but some are not. Many other jurisdictions do not require discretionary review for ADUs since they are very similar to other accessory structures.
Neighborhood Restrictions	No, unless ADUs are explicitly prohibited by more specific standards.	Based on the mapped results of the survey (Exhibit E), there were more favorable responses in each neighborhood than negative. If the regulations are appropriate, these should fit in each neighborhood.
Height	29 feet or no taller than the primary structure. Whichever is less.	This is more restrictive than general accessory structure standards (RMC 18.03.402) and it ensures that the ADU will be compatible and not tower over the home.
Number of ADUs per Lot	One per lot	This is consistent with other jurisdictions, the previous text amendment, and feedback from the survey.
Allowed Zoning Districts	All zoning districts where detached single-family are allowed	Since ADUs are intended to be accessory to single-family homes, staff thought it was appropriate to allow ADUs in all districts where single-family homes are allowed. This includes: LLR-2.5, LLR-1, LLR-.5, SF-3, SF-5, SF-8, SF-11, MF-14, MF-21, MF-30, MD-ED, MD-UD, MD-ID, MD-NW, MD-PD, MD-RD, PO, MU, MS, MU-MC, MU-RES, PGOS, PF, UT-5, UT-10, and UT-40.
Short-Term Rental (STR) Restrictions	No	The City of Reno does not currently regulate STRs, and staff is not recommending that change.

Financial Implications:

There is no financial impact at this time.

Legal Implications:

Legal review completed for compliance with City procedures and Nevada law.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends Council provide feedback for staff regarding proposals for an ADU ordinance and potential next steps.

Proposed Motion:

I move to direct staff to move forward with the text amendment based on feedback from Council.

Attachments:

Exhibit A – 2018 ADU Ordinance

Exhibit B – Comparison to Other Jurisdictions

Exhibit C – Accessory Structure Standards

Exhibit D – Guest Quarters Design Standards

Exhibit E – Mapped Survey Responses