

COMMISSION ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: TEXT AMENDMENTS TO AMES MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTER 29 (ZONING ORDINANCE) & CHAPTER 31 (HISTORIC PRESERVATION) TO ALLOW ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUS) IN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

BACKGROUND:

City Council identified implementing Ames Plan 2040 initiatives related to infill development options for housing as priority for 2023 and directed staff to prepare draft standards and seek public input for allowing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) within residential zoning districts as one of these measures. An ADU is a detached secondary dwelling unit on the same property as the principal residence. An ADU functions independently with its own bathroom, sanitation, and kitchen. It must be a building and is required to be on a permanent foundation and have utility connections. ADUs are not currently allowed in Ames, so this would introduce a new type of housing option to Ames.

At the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting of October 4, 2023, staff reviewed the proposed standards for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) and Duplexes within single family neighborhoods and discussed the extensive public outreach effort that took place August through early October 2023. Subsequently, the complete results of the outreach effort were presented to the City Council on October 10, 2023. Public input was divided with no one opinion about the use or standards having an overwhelming majority. Attachment “C” is a brief summary of the original public outreach efforts. Complete background information about ADUs, including all public input from October 10th, can be found on the City’s website at www.cityofames.org/addhousing.

Upon consideration of the public input and staff review of the standards on October 10, 2023, City Council directed that staff proceed with preparing draft ordinances consistent with the original draft standards. Related changes to facilitate ADU construction within the Single-Family Conservation Overlay (O-SFC) and the Historic District were supported by City Council as changes needed to implement the draft regulations. In addition to the zoning changes, Chapter 13 Rental Code will be updated as well. **A draft of the proposed changes to Chapter 29, Zoning Ordinance are included as Attachment “A”.**

Proposed Zoning Standards Summary

One ADU will be allowed on a single-family residential lot that is the primary residence of the property owner. ADUs will only be permitted in the in the following zoning districts: R-L (Residential Low Density Zone), R-M (Residential Medium Density Zone), UCRM (Urban Core Residential Medium Density Zone), FS-RL (Suburban Residential Low Density Zone), FS-RM (Suburban Residential Medium Density Zone), and F-PRD (Planned Residence District). Notably, F-VR (i.e., Somerset) does not include an allowance for ADUs because of the design requirements related uniquely to that zoning district and the covenants in

Somerset prohibit the use.

Key elements of the ADU requirements include patterning the standards after our existing accessory building requirements. The City's existing accessory building requirements found in Section 29.408 for maximum size, setbacks, height coverage, and location in the rear yard will apply to ADUs. An exception of allowing for habitable space within an accessory building is not part of the code.

Standards unique to ADUs are proposed in Section 29.409. Unique elements of an ADU are the allowance for it to be a dwelling, accessory to a single-family dwelling, where previously the City prohibited creating habitable space within accessory buildings. As a dwelling, it is limited to a maximum of one bedroom, must have cooking, sanitation, and sleeping areas and be independently functional from the primary house with its own utility services. Bedrooms are a defined term within the Zoning Ordinance. One additional parking space is also required for the ADU and a paved sidewalk connecting to the home or paved parking area is also required.

The draft regulations allow ADUs through the construction of a new detached building or through the conversion of an existing detached garage. Conversion of space within an existing home or the addition of space to an existing home for an ADU is not permitted. The ADU must be a building, cannot be a RV or trailer, and must be set upon a permanent foundation. All new buildings and conversions are subject to residential building code requirements.

Although an owner must reside on the site, they can live in either dwelling, and the other dwelling is permitted to be rented. Only one of the two dwelling units on the lot may be a rental. Properties owned by an L.L.C. or other non-natural person entity will not qualify as owner-occupied. To receive a permit for an ADU, a recorded affidavit from the property owner as a "Notice of Limitations" will be required confirming their understanding of rental and occupancy requirements.

Currently within Chapter 29, no additional building for human habitation may be located anywhere on the same lot as a principal residential building, except within the Agricultural (A) Zone, or for specifically permitted uses such as multifamily residential. The amended text will clarify what is meant by *human habitation* (defined for this purpose as sleeping, cooking, and bathroom facilities), while still allowing for pool houses to include a bathroom. One of the questions related to this change is whether other accessory buildings that are not ADUs could have a bathroom, other than pool houses. As currently written, it does not allow such an improvement. **An accessory building with plumbing must either fully meet the ADU requirements or be a pool house.**

Additionally, the section on "size and appearance of detached dwellings" (formerly Section 29.412, now proposed as Section 29.410) has been expanded to include ADUs, and clarifying language has been added in Section 29.1101 Single-Family Conservation Overlay District, exempting ADUs from the dwelling unit count and compatibility standards.

Proposed Historic District Standards

One of the powers and duties of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is to review proposed amendments that affect historic resources and districts as defined within Ames Municipal Code Section 31.6 (6) & (7). Additionally, the Zoning Ordinance directs in Section 29.1102(2) that amendments that affect proposed or designated landmarks and historic districts, be considered by the Historic Preservation Commission prior to consideration by the Planning and Zoning Commission. **A draft of the proposed changes to Chapter 31, Historic Preservation are included as Attachment “B”.**

Staff met with the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) on September 11, 2023, to review requirements for New Construction of an ADU in the Old Town Historic District (Chapter 31). The HPC requested that several clarifications to the Old Town Design Criteria be added, to assist with the review process for New Construction of ADUs.

Staff returned to the HPC on November 13, 2023, and presented draft ordinance language for New Construction as well as draft language regarding the review process for Alterations of contributing garages, which had not previously been discussed. Staff also included some changes to the wording of Section 31.10, Certificate of Appropriateness. This section has been under discussion by the HPC at various times over the past 18 months. The changes to Section 31.10 Certificate of Appropriateness are intended to clarify the text without making any substantive changes. Section 31.11(1) grants staff administrative authority to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for Alterations; however, changing a contributing garage to an ADU will require approval by the HPC. Additionally, character defining features of a contributing garage must not be significantly altered. New Construction of an ADU is included under Section 31.13 (10) Garages and Accessory Buildings. Clarification on requirements for porches, two-stories, raised foundation, and meeting footprint design criteria have been addressed, as they relate to garages and accessory buildings (including ADUs).

Historic Preservation Commission Recommendation

On November 13, 2023, the Historic Preservation Commission discussed at length the proposed amendments to Chapter 31. The Commission voted 5-0 to recommend City Council approval of modifications to the proposed text amendments in Chapter 31, clarifying the application of design criteria and guidelines to accessory structures and ADUs. These modifications are included in Attachment ‘B,’ with the exception of the following insertion:

(new) Alteration of non-contributing garage to an ADU, when it is located on a property with a contributing structure would require HPC approval of Certificate of Appropriateness (COA).

The Commission requested that staff return with the final wording and placement of this section, prior to the City Council meeting of December 12. Although staff understands that it was the intent of HPC to add clarifying language, this language broadens the role of the HPC. Currently, Alterations of non-contributing structures do not require HPC approval because Alterations to a non-contributing structure do not require conformance to Chapter 31. This is a narrow issue in that it applies only to Alterations. If there is any New Construction associated with the conversion of a non-contributing structure, it would be subject to HPC review of a COA.

Staff does not recommend that a new requirement be added to the Old Town Historic District for Alterations to non-contributing structures, if that was in fact the intent of the HPC. For that reason, it is not included in the proposed text included in Attachment 'B.' Kelly Diekmann, Planning & Housing Director sent an email to the HPC summarizing their action and indicating that the review of language options will be brought back to the HPC for discussion at their upcoming meeting on December 11, 2023. This will allow a final recommendation of proposed amendments implementing ADUS, to be available for the December 12, 2023, City Council meeting.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Recommend that the City Council approve the draft text amendments to Chapter 29 and Chapter 31, included as Attachment 'A' & Attachment 'B,' implementing accessory dwelling units (ADUs).
2. Recommend that the City Council approve the draft text amendments with the Planning & Zoning Commission's recommended changes to Chapter 29 and Chapter 31, implementing accessory dwelling units (ADUs).
3. Recommend that the City Council not proceed with the text amendments implementing ADUs.
4. Defer action on this request and refer it back to City staff and/or the applicant for additional information.

PLANNING AND HOUSING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION:

ADUs are not currently allowed in Ames, so this would introduce a new type of housing option. Standards have been included that define such things as number, location and size limitations, occupancy, and parking requirements. The proposed standards are a balance between trying to address multiple issues with encouraging the use while respecting compatibility with the surroundings. Staff has indicated on a number of occasions that the proposed standards are "middle of the road" compared to our review of other cities. In staff's opinion the proposed language is not overly restrictive in that ADUs could only be built in limited conditions, but they are also not highly permissive in a manner that allows for them to be built on every site.

Generally, most single-family properties that are not restricted by private covenants should be able to take advantage of the new standards. Properties with one-car garages and small rear yards are the sites most likely to have difficulty in meeting the requirements.

The attached standards are in draft form. Final language is subject to review by the City Attorney's office, as they prepare a final ordinance for City Council approval.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the Department of Planning and Housing that the Planning & Zoning Commission approve Alternative #1, which is recommending to the City Council approval of the draft text amendments to Chapter 29 and Chapter 31, implementing accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

Attachment A
Chapter 29, Zoning Ordinance Amendments

CHAPTER 29, ZONING ORDINANCE

* * *

Sec. 29.201. DEFINITIONS.

* * *

(3b) Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) means a detached “dwelling unit” on the same property with a single-family dwelling that includes the principal residence of the owner.

* * *

(5) Accessory Structure means a subordinate structure detached from but located on the same lot as a principal building. The use of an accessory structure must be incidental and accessory to the use of the principal building. Accessory Structures include, but are not limited to, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), garages, sheds, and fences.

* * *

Sec. 29.304. USE REGULATIONS.

* * *

(3) Prohibited Uses.

(a) Uses Prohibited in All Zones...

* * *

(iv) Any building for human habitation located to the rear of another building on the same lot. Any building for any purpose whatever located in front of any building for human habitation on the same lot. ~~This subsection (d)~~ does not apply to uses located in the Agricultural (A) Zone or to any use of a lot expressly permitted by provisions of this Ordinance, including multifamily residential use and accessory dwelling units.

* * *

Sec. 29.406. OFF-STREET PARKING.

* * *

Table 29.406(2) Minimum Off-Street Parking Requirements

RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS

<u>Accessory Dwelling Units</u>	<u>1 space/RU</u>	<u>Not Applicable</u>
---------------------------------	-------------------	-----------------------

* * *

Sec. 29.408. OTHER GENERAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS.

* * *

(7) Requirements for Private Garages and Other Accessory Buildings

(a) The following requirements apply to private garages and accessory buildings in Agricultural, Residential and Hospital/Medical districts:

(i) Location Within Setbacks

* * *

(b) Side Yards.

* * *

(ii) Corner Lot. A one-story garage or accessory building may be placed within 3 feet of the side lot lines, ~~provided the garage is set back a minimum of 25 feet from the abutting streets.~~

(c) Rear Yards.

(i) ... For purposes of this section, the rear yard is located between the rear lot line and the ~~primary structure~~ principal building, extending from side lot line to side lot line. ...

* * *

(iv) General Requirements.

* * *

(c) No detached garage or accessory building shall contain habitable space, defined for this purpose as sleeping, cooking, and bathroom facilities, unless approved as an Accessory Dwelling Unit or for a bathroom related to a pool house and/or a bathroom, except for recreational uses requiring plumbing such as a pool house.

* * *

(d) The following requirements apply to shared common lot line garages ...

* * *

(iv) General Requirements.

* * *

(c) No detached garage or accessory building shall contain habitable space, defined for this purpose as sleeping, cooking, and bathroom facilities, unless approved as an Accessory Dwelling Unit or for a bathroom related to a pool house and/or a bathroom, except for recreational uses requiring plumbing such as a pool house.

* * *

Sec. 29.409. ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (ADU) STANDARDS.

An ADU is a specific type of accessory building with addition requirements to those of other garage and accessory buildings of 29.408.

(1) Where Permitted.

(a) Zoning districts. ADUs are permitted in the following zoning districts: R-L, R-M, UCRM, FS-RL, FS-RM, F-PRD.

(i) One ADU is allowed on any lot having one existing single-family dwelling that is the primary residence of the property owner, and no other dwellings on the lot.

(b) Overlay zoning districts. If the property is in an overlay zone, such as the Single-Family Conservation (O-SFC) or the Historic (O-H), it may be subject to additional design standards and permitting requirements. In the event of conflict between overlay regulations and the regulations included herein, the more restrictive regulations shall

control.

(2) Independent Dwelling Unit.

(a) Detached from the principal building. The detached ADU may be created through the conversion of an existing detached structure or may be new construction creating a new standalone building. No ADU may be established as an addition to or within an existing single-family dwelling.

(b) Foundation. Whether constructed on site or premanufactured, an ADU must be placed upon a permanent foundation.

(c) Utilities. The ADU must function independently from the principal building for water, sewer, and energy services.

(3) Lot Size, Setbacks and Separation.

(a) Lot size. There is no minimum lot size for an ADU.

(b) Setbacks. ADUs have the same setbacks as other accessory buildings, as defined within Sec. 29.408(7)(a)(i). Note that ADUs with reduced setbacks and building-to-building separation are subject to Building Code requirements for fire-rated construction.

(4) Size Limitations.

(a) Bedrooms. The ADU may have only one bedroom. Any additional area or room that meets the definition of a bedroom as defined within the Zoning Ordinance is prohibited.

(b) Floor area. ADUs have the same Gross Floor Area restrictions as other accessory buildings, as defined within Sec. 29.408(7).

(c) Height/Stories. ADUs have the same height requirements as other accessory buildings, based upon the height of the principal building, as defined within Sec. 29.408(7).

(5) Rear Yard Coverage.

ADUs have the same rear yard coverage restriction as other accessory buildings, as defined within Sec. 29.408(7).

(6) Parking & Driveways.

(a) One paved off-street parking space is required for the ADU in addition to the two spaces required for the principal building. Although spaces for the principal building can include two cars parked in tandem, an ADU parking space cannot be in front of or behind another required parking space. All parking spaces must be paved and located in accordance with the requirements of 29.406.

(b) Sidewalk. A sidewalk is required to connect the primary exterior entrance of the ADU with the paved parking area or to the principal building.

(7) Occupancy.

(a) Owner-occupancy. No building permit or rental letter of compliance will be issued by the city for an ADU unless the property owner resides on the property as their primary residence. The property owner's primary residence may be either the principal building or the ADU. Prior to issuance of a permit, on a form prepared by the city, a "Notice of Limitation on Rental" shall include a recorded affidavit from the property owner confirming their understanding of rental and occupancy requirements. Properties owned by an L.L.C. or other non-natural person entity do not qualify as owner-occupied.

(b) The maximum occupancy of an ADU is limited to three adults. Additional occupancy

limitations may apply to Near Campus Neighborhoods, as defined within Chapter 13, Rental Code.

(c) Rentals. Only one of the two dwelling units on the lot may be a rental. Any ADU or principal building that is intended for use as a rental must be registered with the city and have a valid rental permit. All requirements of Chapter 13, Rental Code apply.

Sec. 29.412410. SIZE AND APPEARANCE DETACHED DWELLINGS.

All non-attached dwelling structures of any kind located outside the RLP Zone, shall meet the following minimum standards:

(1) The principal portion or main body of the principal structure shall have a width and length of not less than 20 feet.

(2) The siding of any dwelling unit the structure shall consist of wood, simulated wood siding (to include horizontal lapped steel, vinyl, or aluminum siding), brick, stone, stucco or concrete and, furthermore, shall not have an appearance or condition incompatible with conserving the market value and beneficial use and enjoyment of adjacent buildings, as determined by the person responsible for zoning administration. Any person aggrieved by that determination may appeal to the Zoning Board of Adjustment as by law provided.

Sec. 29.410411. SINGLE FAMILY ATTACHED DWELLINGS - PARTY WALL AGREEMENT.

* * *

Sec. 29.409412. BILLBOARDS.

* * *

Sec. 29.414413. OUTDOOR LIGHTING CODE.

* * *

Sec. 29.413 29.414. STORMWATER MANAGEMENT DESIGN STANDARDS.

* * *

Sec. 29.501. CLASSIFICATIONS OF USES.

* * *

(3) Accessory Uses. Unless otherwise stated in this Ordinance or otherwise indicated in the Use Tables for each zone:

* * *

(e) Accessory Uses;

(i) i. Are clearly incidental and customary to and commonly associated with the operation of the Principal Use;

(ii) ii. Are operated and maintained under the same ownership or by lessees or concessionaires of the owner, and on the same zone lot as the Principal Use;

(iii) iii. Do not include structures or structural features inconsistent with the

Principal Use;

~~(iv)~~ May include the use a portion of a dwelling unit that is the primary residence of the property owner as limited Short-Term Rental (Home Share or Hosted Home Share);

(v) May include one accessory dwelling unit (ADU) on any single-family residential zoned lot having one existing single-family dwelling.

* * *

**Table 29.501 (4)-1
RESIDENTIAL USE CATEGORIES**

* * *

Household Living

* * *

Accessory Uses

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) subject to the limitations found in the Zone Use Tables and the Use Development Standards

* * *

Sec. 29.701. "RL" RESIDENTIAL LOW DENSITY.

* * *

**Table 29.701(2)
Residential Low Density (RL) Zone Uses**

USE CATEGORIES	STATUS	APPROVAL REQUIRED	APPROVAL AUTHORITY
RESIDENTIAL USES			

Household Living Accessory Uses			
<u>Accessory Dwelling Unit</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>ZP</u>	<u>Staff</u>

* * *

Sec. 29.702. "RM" RESIDENTIAL MEDIUM DENSITY.

* * *

**Table 29.702(2)
Residential Medium Density (RM) Zone Uses**

USE CATEGORIES	STATUS	APPROVAL REQUIRED	APPROVAL AUTHORITY
RESIDENTIAL USES			

Household Living Accessory Uses			

<u>Accessory Dwelling Unit</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>ZP</u>	<u>Staff</u>
--------------------------------	----------	-----------	--------------

* * *

Sec. 29.703. "UCRM" URBAN CORE RESIDENTIAL MEDIUM DENSITY ZONE.

* * *

**Table 29.703(2)
Urban Core Residential Medium Density (UCRM) Zone Uses**

USE CATEGORIES	STATUS	APPROVAL REQUIRED	APPROVAL AUTHORITY
RESIDENTIAL USES			

Household Living Accessory Uses			
<u>Accessory Dwelling Unit</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>ZP</u>	<u>Staff</u>

* * *

Sec. 29.1101. "O-SFC" SINGLE FAMILY CONSERVATION OVERLAY DISTRICT.

* * *

(6) **Intensification Limited.** In the O-SFC the maximum number of dwelling units, of any kind defined in Section 29.201, shall not at any time be permitted to exceed 648. Approved accessory dwelling units (ADUs) after January 1, 2024, are exempt from this limitation. Additionally, in the O-SFC, apartment dwellings shall not be permitted unless the plans for the project meet the following standards:

* * *

(9) **Compatibility Standards.** New construction of any principal building or other structure or any change in the use of land shall comply with the following compatibility standards: Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are not subject to the compatibility standards.

* * *

Sec. 29.1202. "F-S" SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL ZONE.

* * *

**Table 29.1202(4)-1
Suburban Residential Floating Zoning
Residential Low Density (FS-RL) Uses**

USE CATEGORIES	STATUS	APPROVAL REQUIRED	APPROVAL AUTHORITY
RESIDENTIAL USES			

Household Living Accessory Uses			

<u>Accessory Dwelling Unit</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>ZP</u>	<u>Staff</u>
--------------------------------	----------	-----------	--------------

* * *

**Table 29.1202(4)-2
Suburban Residential Floating Zoning
Residential Medium Density (FS-RM) Uses**

USE CATEGORIES	STATUS	APPROVAL REQUIRED	APPROVAL AUTHORITY
RESIDENTIAL USES			

Household Living Accessory Uses			
<u>Accessory Dwelling Unit</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>ZP</u>	<u>Staff</u>

* * *

Attachment B
Chapter 31, Historic Preservation Amendments

CHAPTER 31, HISTORIC PRESERVATION

* * *

SECTION 31.10. CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS.

(1) Any act of alteration, demolition, new construction, or relocation, as defined herein, shall require a Certificate of Appropriateness as further described below.

~~Furthermore, e~~Every application for a building permit or a demolition permit affecting the exterior architectural appearance of a designated landmark or of any contributing structure within a designated historic district shall be accompanied by a complete City of Ames an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness. ~~Applicants shall be required to submit plans, drawings, elevations, specifications, and other information as may be necessary to make decisions.~~ The Building Official shall not issue the building or demolition permit until a Certificate of Appropriateness has been approved.

(2) Alteration. ~~of an exterior part of a building or a structure.~~ An alteration is any act or process that changes one or more of the exterior features of a structure, such as windows, porches, siding, and other features identified under the Design Guidelines that do not increase without increasing the amount of gross floor area. ~~Alterations to existing structures that are contributing structures or to structures designated as historic landmarks shall require a~~ Certificate of Appropriateness for an alteration and shall be permitted in the following instances.

- (a) An architectural feature has deteriorated to the point that it must be replaced.
- (b) Architectural features were added which modified the original qualities of the architectural style and the current property owner wishes to restore the structure to the original architectural style.
- (c) An architectural feature ~~may~~ can be added ~~if as long as~~ the feature is appropriate to the architectural style of the structure.

(3) New Construction. A Certificate of Appropriateness shall be required for construction of:

- (a) ~~A~~ a new principal structure, or
- (b) ~~An~~ a addition to an existing contributing structure or to a designated landmark, or
- (c) ~~A~~ a new accessory building or addition to an accessory building on any property with a contributing principal structure or designated landmark.

(4) Consideration of an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness shall apply the Design Guidelines, which shall pertain to all historic preservation districts and historic landmarks; and the Design Criteria, which shall apply only to the particular historic district or historic landmark for which they are enacted.

A new principal structure shall be representative of one of the architectural styles approved in the district. The design for the new principal structure must meet all the design criteria listed for the architectural style selected. Architectural features not specifically listed in the design criteria may be proposed by the applicant. Those features should be incorporated in a manner appropriate with the architectural style.

In each instance, the Commission may grant exemptions to the requirements for an alteration if it determines that the cost of replication is prohibitive.

* * *

SECTION 31.11. APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS.

(1) Administrative Approval Process.

(a) A Certificate of Appropriateness for alterations to the principal structure, garages, and other accessory buildings, and the new construction of fences and retaining walls ~~may~~ can be approved by the Planning and Housing Director, provided the alterations or new construction meet the adopted Design Guidelines and Design Criteria, and substitute materials are not proposed, other than those specifically listed in the Design Guidelines. The Planning and Housing Director may refer an application for an alteration to the Historic Preservation Commission for approval. Changing a contributing garage to an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) requires approval by the Historic Preservation Commission.

* * *

Sec. 31.13. DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR ALTERATIONS.

* * *

(8) Garages and Accessory Buildings

* * *

(k) Changing an existing contributing garage to an ADU is allowed as long as the character defining features of the garage are not significantly altered.

* * *

SECTION 31.15. DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION.

* * *

(10) Garages and Accessory Buildings (including Accessory Dwelling Units [ADUs]).

* * *

(k) Garages and accessory buildings do not typically require a porch; however, a standalone ADU adjacent to street frontage, may require a porch as determined by the HPC.

(l) Garages and accessory buildings are exempt from the two-story requirement.

(m) Garages and accessory buildings are not required to have a raised foundation and may be constructed slab-on-grade.

(n) Garages and accessory buildings are not typically required to conform to footprint design criteria; however, a standalone ADU adjacent to street frontage, may be subject to the footprint design criteria as determined by the HPC.

ADU Public Outreach Summary



Recent Timeline Activities – to date


- ❖ CC Workshop - March 21, 2023
 - ❖ Background on infill design, including ADUs and Duplexes
- ❖ CC Follow-Up - April 25, 2023
 - ❖ Focus on ADU issues, design features, limitations, existing covenants
- ❖ CC Public Outreach Direction & Acceptance of Draft Standards - June 27, 2023
- ❖ P&Z Infill Review – May 3, 2023
- ❖ P&Z Presentation – Oct. 4, 2023
- ❖ HPC Discussion – Sept. 11, 2023
- ❖ Staff Outreach Efforts – August – early October

Public Outreach Activities- Webpage

Government » Departments/Divisions 1 - Z » Planning »

ADUS & DUPLEXES


Font Size: [A](#) [A](#) [A](#) [Share & Bookmark](#) [Feedback](#) [Print](#)



ADUs & Duplexes

In an effort to expand housing opportunities and diversify housing choices, the Ames City Council is exploring policies around allowing accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and duplexes within single-family neighborhoods. City Council is seeking feedback on these new options. **Please see Survey and other links below.**

ADUs are also called second units, granny flats, or mother-in-law units. They are accessory living areas smaller than and detached from the primary single-family home, but still have a bedroom, kitchen, and bathroom. Duplexes are attached two-family dwellings, sometimes called twin homes, that are two independent living spaces and are not linked with a single-family home. Currently, City Code limits options for duplexes and second units in single-family neighborhoods. Some private covenants within subdivisions also limit these uses.



There is a national interest in having more housing choices as costs increase. The City is exploring more housing choices within existing neighborhoods that complement the surroundings. This was a goal outlined in Ames Plan 2040 that improves choice, sustainability, and vitality.

The proposed standards for ADUs include a size limit of 900 square feet, one bedroom, one parking space, and that the property owner reside in either the primary home or the ADU, which allows for one unit on the property to be rented if desired. Duplexes are proposed with design standards to address design compatibility related to the existing neighborhood.

This topic will return to City Council in the fall and will include all the collected public input.

[ADUs - Proposed Regulations](#)
[Duplexes - Proposed Regulations](#)

Open House Schedule

Learn more about new housing options, potential policy changes, and ask questions. Open Houses will be held:

- Monday, Aug. 21: 5:30-7:30 pm; Ames Public Library – Brown Auditorium, 515 Douglas Avenue
- Thursday, Sept. 14: 5:30-7:30 pm; Hira Park – Shelter, 3622 Woodland Street
- Monday, Sept. 18: 5:30-7:30 pm; James Herman Banning Ames Municipal Airport – Lobby & Multi-purpose Room, 2520 Airport Drive
- Monday, Sept. 25: 5:30-7:30 pm; Inis Grove – Walnut Shelter, 2500 Duff Avenue
 - Alternative Rain Location: Homewood Golf Course Clubhouse, Community Room, 401 E. 20th Street

[ADU Brochure](#)

[ADU Survey](#)

The City Council has been discussing infill housing opportunities and would like your feedback on allowing accessory dwelling (ADUs) within single-family zoning districts city-wide as an opportunity to create additional housing options within Ames. **Please take the [ADU Survey](#)! We need your feedback!**

[Duplexes Survey](#)

The City Council has been discussing infill housing opportunities and would like your feedback on allowing Duplexes within single-family zoning districts city-wide as an opportunity to create additional housing options within Ames. **Please give us your opinion on the proposed [Duplex Regulations](#). We need your feedback!**

Prior Meetings & Workshops, Timeline

- City Council Infill Housing Workshop - March 21, 2023
 - Staff Report
 - Presentation
 - Video with Council's Discussion
- Staff Report Follow-Up to City Council - April 25, 2023
 - Staff Report
 - Video with Council's Discussion
- Staff Report Follow-Up to City Council - June 27, 2023
 - Staff Report
 - Presentation
 - Video with Council's Discussion
- Community Outreach - July-September 2023(See Open House Schedule above)
- Report on Community Comments to City Council - October 2023
- City Council to Determine Next Steps - October-November 2023

[FAQs - ADUs & Duplexes](#)

Additional Questions?

Contact Eloise Sahlstrom at Eloise.Sahlstrom@cityofames.org or 515-239-5400.

Stay in touch!

To stay informed about future ADU and Duplex developments, [please sign up here](#).

www.cityofames.org/addhousing

Public Outreach Activities

Direct or indirect contact with approximately 325 people...

- ❖ Webpage
- ❖ Online Survey
- ❖ Brochure
- ❖ CitySide Article
- ❖ Neighborhood Groups
- ❖ Press Releases (2)
- ❖ Social Media Pushes
- ❖ Open Houses (4)
- ❖ EcoFair 2023
- ❖ KOHI Radio Talks (2)

Public Outreach Activities - Brochure

- DUPLEXES - NEW CONSTRUCTION ONLY WITH DESIGN STANDARDS

- A Duplex is a building located on one lot that includes two independent residences attached to each other.
- Proposed in single-family neighborhoods as "new construction" only (no conversion or additions).
- Design standards focus on roof type, building orientation and garages. Garage and driveway pattern of the block is to be considered.
- The standards do not change the Historic District or the Single-Family Conservation Overlay District requirements.

GARAGE & DRIVEWAY PATTERN EXAMPLES



-PROPOSED STANDARDS-

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUs) & DUPLEXES IN SINGLE-FAMILY NEIGHBORHOODS



In an effort to expand housing opportunities and diversify housing choices, the Ames City Council is exploring policies around allowing accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and duplexes within single-family neighborhoods.

This brochure illustrates these concepts and is part of the City's 2023 outreach effort. We seek your input.



Phone: 515.239.5400
E-mail: planning@cityofames.org

PLEASE TAKE OUR SURVEY

SEE OUR WEBPAGE AT:
www.CityOfAmes.org/AddHousing



For additional helpful information on what is proposed, go to:
www.CityOfAmes.org/AddHousing

WHAT IS AN ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT?

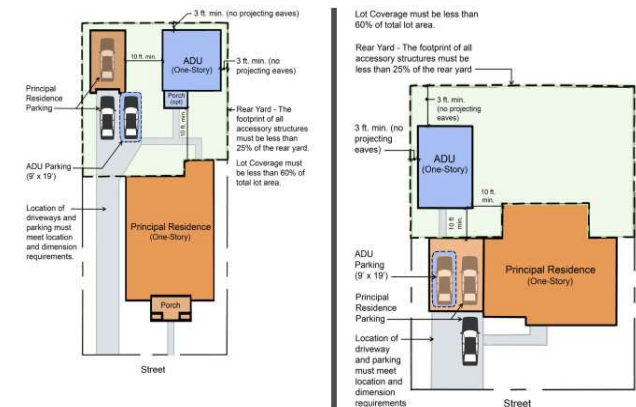
- Smaller, detached dwelling unit on the same property. Also known as a granny flat or guest house.
- Functions independently with its own bathroom and kitchen.
- Required to be on a foundation and have utility connections.



CONSIDERATIONS

- Subdivision private covenants may prohibit ADUs and Duplexes.
- One additional parking space is required for a total of three parking spaces on a paved surface.
- The addition of an ADU plus existing accessory buildings cannot exceed 25% of the rear yard.
- The size of the ADU cannot exceed 900 sq. ft. and one bedroom.
- Total coverage of all impervious area must be less than 60% of the total lot area.
- The standards do not change Historic District or Single-Family Conservation Overlay District requirements.
- The owner of the property must reside on-site.

WILL AN ADU FIT ON MY PROPERTY?



WHAT ABOUT GARAGE CONVERSIONS AND TWO-STORY ADUs?



- **GARAGE CONVERSIONS:** Fire walls may be required.
- **PARKING:** Must still provide required number of parking spaces.
- **ABOVE GARAGE RESTRICTION:** Principal Residence must be two-story. Height cannot exceed 80% of house height.

Survey Highlights



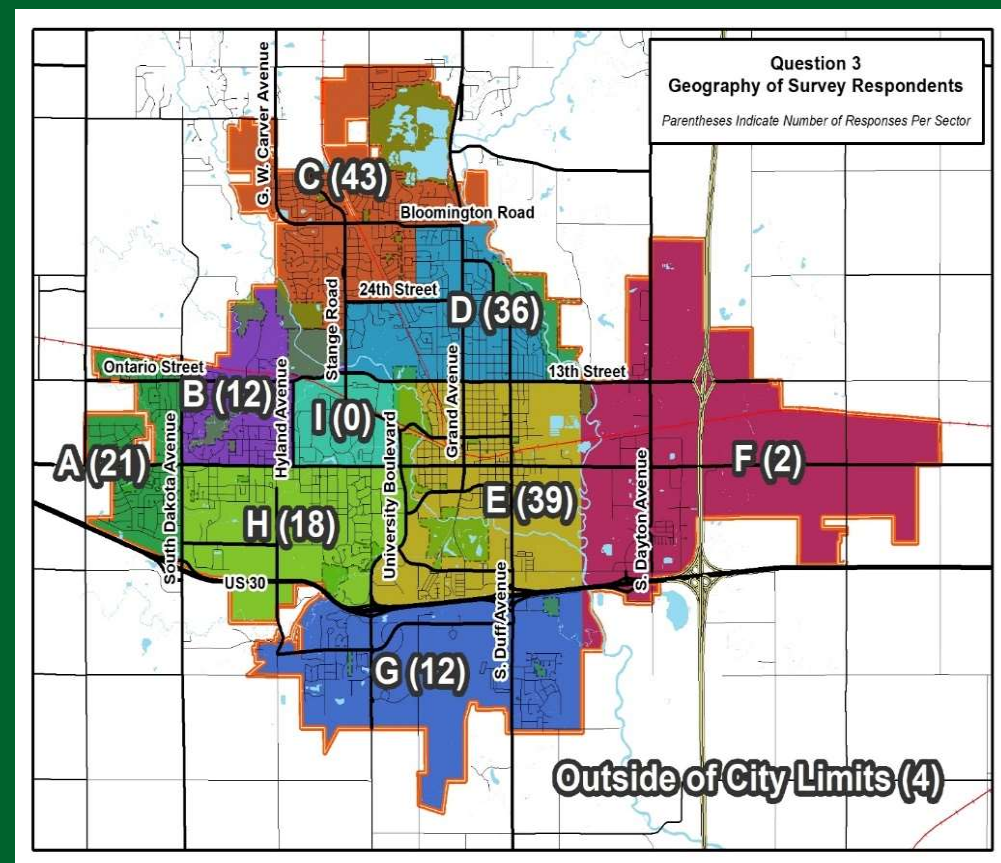
187 Respondents

thru Oct. 5, 2023

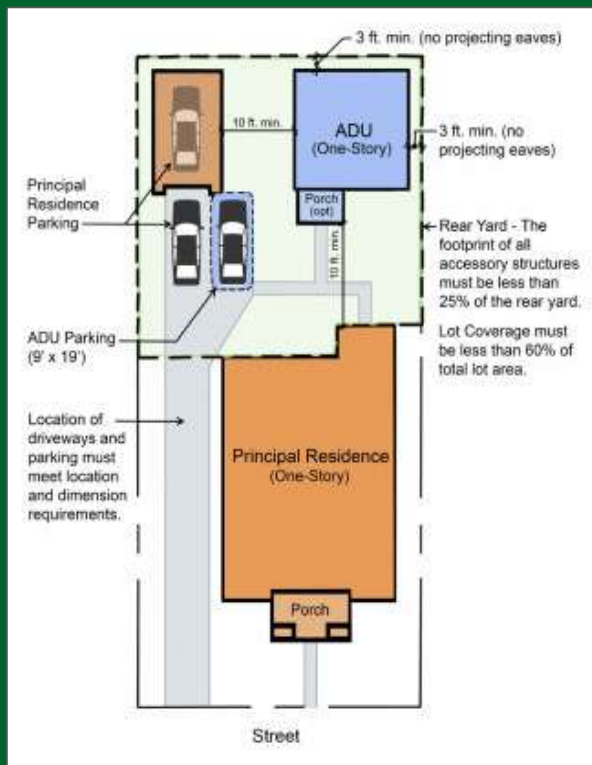
- ❖ 78.6% Single-family homeowners within Ames
- ❖ 75.94% of survey respondents were familiar with ADUs
- ❖ 42.24% (79 survey respondents) indicated an interest in building within the next 3 years- either “yes” or “maybe”

Survey Highlights

- ❖ Highest Survey Participation – Areas C, D, & E
- ❖ 62.34% (96) of all respondents did not believe that the draft standards were an impediment
- ❖ 71.69 % (119) draft standards are not incompatible with neighboring properties.



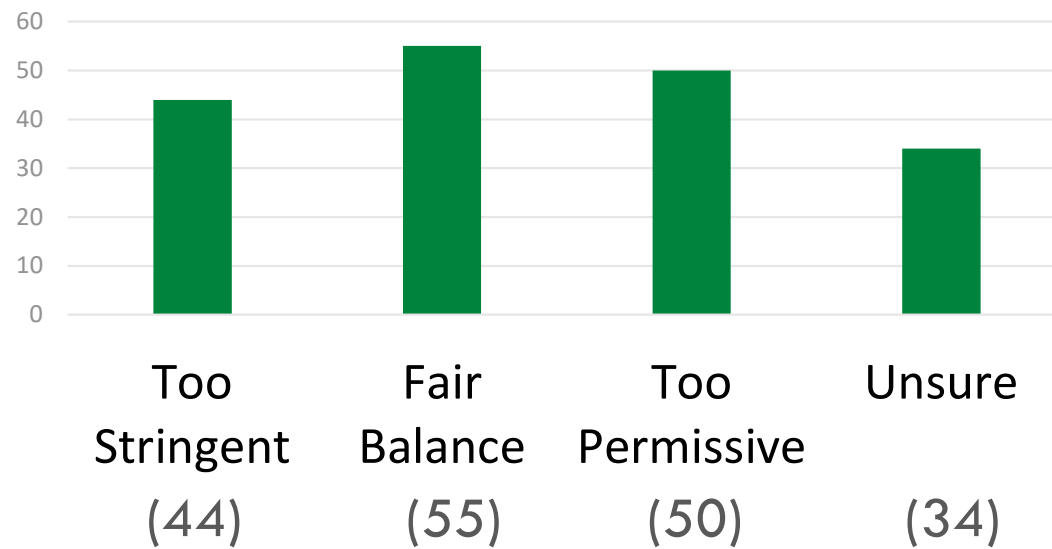
Survey Highlights



- ❖ Most frequently stated *impediment* - Adding Parking
- ❖ Most frequent *incompatibility concern* - Space/Lot Size & Privacy

Public Feedback

Proposed Regulations



Chapter 13, Rental Code

Near Campus Neighborhoods

- ❖ One registered rental, subject to occupancy standards

Chapter 13 Amendments

- ❖ Property Registration
- ❖ Letter of Compliance process
- ❖ Annual verification of residency likely needed
- ❖ Transition of ownership, if a rental

