

welcome

Accessory Dwelling Units Environmental Impact Statement

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS
October 2017

**Thanks for helping shape
our environmental review of
backyard cottages and in-law units
in Seattle's single-family zones.**

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

We're proposing to change regulations in the Land Use Code to make it easier to build accessory dwelling units and backyard cottages in single-family zones. We want your input on what to consider and analyze in our environmental review.

The proposal we're studying includes:

- 1 allowing an attached ADU and a detached ADU on the same lot
- 2 removing the current off-street parking and owner-occupancy requirements
- 3 changing some of the development standards that regulate the size and location of DADUs

Based on a decision from the City's Hearing Examiner in December 2016, we are preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will analyze two alternatives and identify the impacts of each alternative.

We want your feedback on what to consider and analyze as we explore options for small-scale housing options in Seattle's neighborhoods.



What is an ADU?

ADUs are small secondary dwelling units inside, attached to, or in the rear yard of a single-family house. An attached ADU (AADU), often called an **in-law unit** or a **granny flat**, is contained within or attached to a single-family house. A detached ADU (DADU), often called a **backyard cottage**, is a separate structure allowed in the rear yard of certain single-family-zoned lots. DADUs can be new structures or created through conversion of an existing structure, like a garage.

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS EIS PROCESS

Before we begin the technical analysis, we want your input on what we should study, potential impacts to consider, and strategies for avoiding or mitigating those impacts.

The 30-day scoping phase is from October 2, 2017, until 5:00 p.m. on November 1, 2017. We welcome all comments during this time.

What is an EIS?

An EIS is a tool to inform decision makers about the positive and negative effects of a proposal. Decision makers can then approve, modify, or deny the proposal as appropriate.

What is scoping?

At the start of the EIS process, we invite the public to comment on what we should study during a specific scoping period.

ISSUE DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE & SCOPING NOTICE

Determination of Significance and Scoping Notice for the ADU EIS was issued on **October 2, 2017**

CONDUCT SEPA SCOPING

The scoping comment period will close at **5:00 p.m. on November 1, 2017**

PREPARE DRAFT EIS

Scoping comments will be reviewed and the Draft EIS will be prepared

ISSUE DRAFT EIS

Tentative issuance **Spring 2018**

DRAFT EIS PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

A 30-day comment period will follow the issuance of the Draft EIS and will include a public hearing

PREPARE FINAL EIS

The Final EIS will address comments received during the comment period

ISSUE FINAL EIS

Tentative issuance **Summer 2018**

CITY ACTION

The City Council will vote on proposed legislation to amend the Land Use Code

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS EIS ALTERNATIVES

An EIS studies options for achieving an objective called alternatives. Alternatives are a critical part of the EIS process, as they present different ways of achieving the proposal's goals. In the ADU EIS, we propose to study two alternatives that differ in whether the proposed Land Use Code changes are implemented.

	Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2
Number of ADUs allowed on a single-family lot	A single-family lot can have one AADU or one DADU, but not both.	A single-family lot can have an AADU and a DADU.
Parking	One off-street parking space required for an AADU or DADU unless the lot is in an urban village.	No off-street parking required.
Owner-occupancy	An owner must occupy either the main house or the AADU/DADU 6 months a year.	No requirement for an owner to occupy the house, AADU, or DADU.
Minimum lot size for a DADU	4,000 square feet	3,200 square feet
Maximum square footage	AADU 1,000 square feet, including garage and storage areas DADU 800 square feet including garage and storage areas	AADU 1,000 square feet, excluding garage and storage areas DADU 1,000 square feet, excluding garage and storage areas
Maximum height	No change from existing height limits, which vary by lot width and range from 15-23 feet.	Height limits are 1-3 feet higher than existing limits, depending on lot width.
Lot coverage limit	35 percent of lot area for lots 5,000 square feet and larger and 15 percent of lot area plus 1,000 square feet for lots under 5,000 square feet.	
Rear yard coverage limit	40 percent of a rear yard can be covered by a DADU and other accessory structures (like a garage). This limit applies in addition to the overall lot coverage limit.	60 percent of a rear yard can be covered by a DADU and other accessory structures, if the DADU is only one story and if rear yard coverage from other accessory structures is less than 40 percent.
Location of entries	DADU entrances cannot face the nearest side or rear lot line unless that lot line abuts an alley or other public right-of-way.	DADU entrances can be on any façade, provided it is 10 feet from the lot line if located on the façades facing nearest side or rear lot line (unless abutting right-of-way).
Roof features	No exceptions from the height limit are allowed for roof features on accessory structures.	Exceptions from the height limit are allowed for projections like dormers that add interior space, subject to the provisions applicable to single-family houses.
Household size	Any number of related people, or up to 8 unrelated people, can live on a single-family lot, including in an AADU or DADU.	Any number of related people, or up to 8 unrelated people, can live on a single-family lot with an AADU or DADU. If the lot has an AADU and DADU, the limit is 12.
MHA requirements	Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) does not apply to creation of ADUs in Single Family zones.	
Rental Registration & Inspection Ordinance (RRIO)	Property owners renting one or more units, including in Single Family zones, must register for inspections to ensure housing is safe and meets basic maintenance requirements.	

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS EIS

PROPOSED SCOPE

The EIS will incorporate information and analyses from the Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) EIS (2017), the Seattle 2035 Comprehensive Plan EIS (2016), the Growth and Equity Analysis (2016), and other recent City studies and plans.

In December 2016, the Seattle Hearing Examiner determined that a thorough review of the proposal's potential environmental impacts through an EIS was necessary. Based on this decision, we have preliminarily identified the following elements of the environment for analysis in the EIS:

LAND USE

Compatibility of alternatives with single-family zoning

Potential elimination of existing housing

Potential impacts on vegetation, tree canopy, and environmentally critical areas (ECAs)

HOUSING & SOCIOECONOMICS

Feasibility of development scenarios

Housing affordability

Assessment of socioeconomic characteristics, demographic change, and potential displacement

All comments are welcome during the scoping phase, but comments on the following topics are particularly valuable:

- Reasonable range of alternatives
- Potentially affected resources and extent of analysis for those resources
- Measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate effects of the proposal

AESTHETICS

Potential impacts to visual character

Qualitative review of shadowing, privacy, scale, and compatibility with single-family development

TRANSPORTATION

Potential impacts to availability of on-street parking

Assessment of car ownership rates, transit, and circulation patterns

PUBLIC SERVICES & UTILITIES

Police, fire and emergency services, public schools, water, sewer, stormwater

Potential impacts on demand for services in each alternative

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS EIS STUDY AREA

ADUs are currently allowed in all single-family zones. We are studying proposed code changes that would affect development in these areas.

Separately, the City has studied implementing Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) in Seattle's urban villages and other multifamily and commercial zones. MHA would require new development to contribute to affordable housing and rezone these areas to allow more development. MHA implementation would also expand some urban villages with very good transit service.

Because some existing and expanded urban villages have land with single-family zoning, the MHA Environmental Impact Statement has already analyzed the potential effects of allowing more development in these areas. They're shown in **brown** in this map.

The areas in **green are single-family zones located outside urban villages. This is the study area for the ADU Environmental Impact Statement.**

