



Accessory Dwelling Units 2020 Study

City Council
October 6, 2020

ADU 101

- Secondary living unit with its own kitchen, bathroom and bedroom
- ADUs can be rented to provide income (and provide a more affordable housing option) or be used by family members/caretakers
- Can be located within an existing house or as a detached structure
- Zoning for Housing initiative – joint collaboration between PZ and Housing
- ADU policy is prevalent across the country, including neighboring jurisdictions (Arlington, Montgomery, DC)
- The City's Housing Master Plan and many SAPs encourage the creation of ADUs/policy

Benefits of ADU policy

- ADUs provide housing flexibility.
Examples include:
 - Rental income for new and long-term residents
 - Private, independent living spaces for multi-generational families and their caretakers
- ADU policy allows for additional, low-impact housing units
 - Research shows that ADUs add “gentle” density over time and have low neighborhood impact

Outreach

- Project website on P&Z page
 - <https://www.alexandriava.gov/planning/info/default.aspx?id=113872>
- Staff created two video presentations to provide information to the public and requested feedback
 - 300+ comments
 - 1,604 total views
- Multiple eNews messages, notifications to civic associations and other interested parties

Feedback

- Excellent response, mixed feedback
 - 111 positive or neutral comments
 - 75 negative
- Questions converged around:
 - Environmental impacts
 - Density
 - Traffic/parking
 - Short term rentals

Policy Recommendations

- Allow ADUs City-wide
- Require owner occupancy
- Require detached ADUs to remain accessory in appearance to principal dwellings by:
 - Establishing size and height limits relative to principal dwellings
 - Establishing setbacks less than those required for principal dwellings

Further Evaluation

- Short-term rentals
- Off-street parking
- Environmental impacts

Next Steps

- Publish draft policy recommendations for public comment – **October 8**
- Create questionnaire to gather feedback on specifics
- Continued collaboration with T&ES and Code Administration
- Virtual open house – **October 22**
- Consideration by Planning Commission and City Council tentatively scheduled for December 2020