



**TO:** Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager  
**FROM:** Elliott Barnett, Senior Planner, Planning and Development Services  
Peter Huffman, Director, Planning and Development Services  
**COPY:** City Council and City Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** Ordinance – Accessory Dwelling Unit Regulations – March 5, 2019  
**DATE:** February 15, 2019

BEB for

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**SUMMARY:**

An ordinance amending Title 13 of the Municipal Code, relating to the Land Use Regulatory Code, to modify regulations related to accessory dwelling units by allowing detached accessory dwelling units in single-family zoning districts, simplifying regulatory requirements, reducing regulatory barriers and generally increasing flexibility regarding building design, size and location.

**STRATEGIC POLICY PRIORITY:**

The proposed modifications to Tacoma’s Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) regulations support the following strategic policy priorities:

- Ensure all Tacoma residents are valued and have access to resources to meet their needs.
- Assure outstanding stewardship of the natural and built environment.
- Encourage and promote an efficient and effective government, which is fiscally sustainable and guided by engaged residents.

ADUs are an infill housing option intended to provide flexibility to homeowners and increase the range of housing options and price points, while fitting in harmoniously within residential neighborhoods.

**BACKGROUND:**

On December 12, 2017, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 39886 requesting the Planning Commission consider modifications to amend Tacoma Municipal Code Chapter 13.05 Land Use Permit Procedures to modify the Residential Infill Pilot Program to allow for an increase in the number of allowed Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (DADUs). ADUs are an infill housing option intended to provide flexibility to homeowners and increase the range of housing options and price points, while fitting in harmoniously within residential neighborhoods.

Following the Resolution, staff initiated discussions with the Planning Commission and the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability (IPS) Committee to review the proposed scope of work and timeline for the review of the Residential Infill Pilot Program. The Planning Commission recommended, and IPS concurred, with a scope of work that would remove DADUs from the Pilot Program and to permit DADUs more broadly in single-family zoning districts.

The Planning Commission conducted deliberations and community outreach throughout 2018, and finalized recommendations to the City Council on October 17, 2018. On December 12, 2018, the IPS Committee reviewed the recommendation, and on January 23, 2019, the IPS Committee finalized recommended modifications to the Planning Commission’s proposal. The full record, including the *Planning Commission’s Findings and Recommendations Report (October 17, 2018)* and recommended code changes, is available at [www.cityoftacoma.org/DADU](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/DADU).



The proposed amendments, as recommended by the IPS Committee, would modify the City's current ADU regulations in the following ways:

- Allow DADUs in single-family zoning districts;
- Remove a requirement that the property owner occupy one of the dwellings;
- Reduce regulatory barriers and increase flexibility regarding lot size, building design, size and location;
- Include design, location and building controls intended to ensure that ADUs fit the scale and character of the residential lot and surrounding neighborhood.

**ISSUE:**

City Council consideration of amendments to Title 13 of the Municipal Code, relating to the Land Use Regulatory Code, to modify regulations related to accessory dwelling units by allowing detached accessory dwelling units is required.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

The City Council could adopt the proposed regulations as proposed, make modifications to the proposal, or take no action and leave the current ADU regulations in place.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

An ordinance amending Title 13 of the Municipal Code, relating to the Land Use Regulatory Code, to modify regulations related to accessory dwelling units by allowing detached accessory dwelling units in single-family zoning districts, simplifying regulatory requirements, reducing regulatory barriers and generally increasing flexibility regarding building design, size and location.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact.