

An aerial, grayscale photograph of a city skyline. A wide river flows through the center, with several bridges crossing it. The city is densely packed with buildings of various heights and styles. In the foreground, there are large green spaces and trees. The overall scene is a panoramic view of an urban environment.

Staff Briefing re: "Site Plan Lite" & Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)

Planning Commission | April 25, 2023

Site Plan Lite – Part 1

- Resolution No. 20221201-048 directed staff to develop a proposal for:
 - Part 1: Making up to four dwelling units approvable through the building plan process, without full site plan; and
 - Part 2: A modified site plan process, aka “site plan lite,” for missing middle projects of 5-16 units, which would be subject to a more streamlined set of regulations than full site plan.
- Staff proposal for Part 1 will:
 - Expand residential site plan exemption, currently limited to one & two-family structures, to include up to “four residential dwelling units.”
 - Limit use of exemption to sites containing no more than four units.
 - Be scheduled for Codes & Ordinances ASAP
- Staff proposal for Part 2 will:
 - Balance goals of streamlined, cost-effective review with regulations sufficient to address the impacts of larger scale missing middle projects.

Background on ADU Amendments

Resolution No. 20211209-064

- Permit ADU in SF-1 & SF-2 with Preservation Incentive
- Streamlined definition of ADU
- Remove prohibition of garage conversions
- Amendment options for SF-3 properties

Resolution No. 20220609-062

- Regulate ADUs as an accessory use
- Eliminate parking for ADUs within ¼ mile of Transit Priority Network and Imagine Austin Centers
- Allow “administrative modifications” to facilitate ADU construction based on difficult site conditions



Proposed Amendments

- Staff proposal remains under review, and aspects of it are likely to change. The main components include:
 - Revisions to code structure & how ADUs are regulated
 - New ADU regulations, including preservation incentive
 - Revisions to regulations for accessory apartments
 - Revisions to parking requirements for ADUs.



Highlights of Draft Proposal

- Eliminate “guest house” and housing for onsite employees as ADU types
- Revise regulations for “accessory apartments” to:
 - Facilitate what are often called “internal ADUs” (i.e., living space contained entirely within principal structure)
 - Remove limitation on garage conversion
 - Remove age restriction
- Codify ADU regulations in a single location
- Adopt new ADU regulations, improving on current rules for “two-family use” and providing incentives for preservation of existing structures

Highlights (cont'd)

- Proposed ADU regs would:
 - Remove zoning-required separation between units and rely on the Fire Code for separation requirements.
 - Remove locational restrictions on placement of ADU relative to principal structure.
 - Allow designating smaller existing structures as ADU and new structure as primary.
 - Eliminate parking ADU requirement within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of TPN, Activity Corridors served by transit, or Imagine Austin Center.
 - Allow relaxed setbacks and Subchapter F tent requirements where trees, utility easements or erosion hazard zones prohibit building reasonably sized ADU.

Highlights (cont'd)

- Preservation incentive:
 - Two-tiers:
 - Tier 1: Streamlined preservation requirements, focusing primarily on maintaining mass of existing structure, and smaller bonus for ADU construction
 - Tier 2: Greater preservation requirements, substantially similar to Historic Preservation Guidelines, and greater bonus for ADU construction
 - Bonus may include additional and/or larger units, as well as relaxed site development standards.

An aerial, grayscale photograph of a city skyline. In the foreground, a wide river flows from the bottom left towards the center. A multi-arched bridge spans across the river. The city is densely packed with various skyscrapers and buildings, some with distinctive architectural features like curved facades or tiered tops. The background shows a hazy horizon with more distant buildings and greenery. The overall scene is a panoramic view of a major urban center.

Questions and Comments