



City of Tacoma
**Preliminary Determination of
Environmental Nonsignificance**

**Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Regulations
Proposed Amendment to the Tacoma Municipal Code**

SEPA File Number: LU18-0252

TO: All Departments and Agencies with Jurisdiction
SUBJECT: Preliminary Determination of Environmental Nonsignificance

In accordance with WAC 197-11-340, a copy of the Preliminary Determination of Environmental Nonsignificance for the project described below is transmitted:

Applicant: City of Tacoma
Planning and Development Services Department
747 Market Street, Room 345
Tacoma, WA 98402

Proposal:

In response to the acute housing need and concerns of displacement in the City, as well as the level of community interest, City Council passed Resolution No. 39886 in December 2017 requesting the Planning Commission to modify Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) 13.05.115 to increase the number of Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (DADUs).

Subsequent conversations with the Infrastructure, Planning, and Sustainability Committee, as well the Planning Commission, have redirected efforts toward increasing capacity by allowing DADUs outright in single family zoning districts. This will end DADUs as a part of the pilot program and move DADUs into a comprehensive Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) code that covers detached and attached types. The ADU code amendment process involves changes to 13.06.100.C – Land use requirements (for Residential Districts), 13.06.100.F – Accessory building standards, 13.06.150 – Accessory dwelling units, and 13.05.115 – Residential Infill Pilot Program. The resultant code will allow ADUs, both attached and detached, in all single family zoning designations and will also include the following changes:

- Allows Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (DADUs) in single-family and mixed-residential zoning districts (R-1, R-2, R-2SRD and HMR-SRD Districts), where they were previously only allowed through the Residential Infill Pilot Program
- Streamlines measurement of ADU size
- Provides a Conditional Use Permit process for lots that do not meet minimum Standard Lot Size and Lot Width to still request an ADU
- Clarifications on height limitation in VSD and design review in historic districts
- Adds a requirement to ensure ADU projects do not eliminate required open space
- Modifies the walkway requirement to provide additional flexibility
- Eliminates the majority of the existing design standards for DADUs while maintaining a provision for administrative design review based on performance and quality
- Update to intent language that better addresses housing choice and sustainability
- Updates timeline and requirements for legalizing pre-existing, unpermitted ADUs (amnesty program)
- Allows larger accessory buildings on lots greater than 10,000 square feet (this allowance previously applied only to lots greater than ½-acre)

The complete text of the proposed amendment is available from the Planning and Development Services Department at the address below and posted online at www.cityoftacoma.org/DADU.

Location: City of Tacoma

Lead Agency: City of Tacoma

City Contact: Lauren Flemister
Planning and Development Services Department
747 Market Street, Room 345
Tacoma, WA 98402
(253) 591-5660 or lflemister@cityoftacoma.org

The lead agency for this proposal has made a preliminary determination that this project does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030 (2) (c). This decision was made after review of an environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public upon request. This Preliminary Determination of Nonsignificance (DNS) is issued under WAC 197-11-340(2). **Comments must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on October 5th, 2018.** The Responsible Official will reconsider the DNS based on timely comments and may retain, modify, or, if significant adverse impacts are likely, withdraw the DNS. **Unless modified by the City, this determination will become final on October 12th, 2018.** There is no administrative appeal for this determination. Appeals must be filed in conjunction with appeals of the adopted amendments to the Growth Management Hearings Board; appeals shall be taken in accordance with procedures and limitations set forth in RCW 43.21C.075 and WAC 242-02. In addition to Growth Management Hearings Board requirements, a copy of the appeal shall be filed with the Planning and Development Services Department, 747 Market Street, Room 345, Tacoma, Washington 98402.

The Puyallup Tribe is notified that this initiates the consultation process.

Responsible Official: Peter Huffman
Position/Title: Director, Planning and Development Services Department

Signature: _____

SEPA Officer Signature: _____

Issue Date: September 12, 2018
Comment Deadline: October 5, 2018, 5:00 p.m.

NOTE: The issuance of this Preliminary Determination of Nonsignificance does not constitute project approval. Future project applicants must comply with all other applicable requirements of the City of Tacoma and other agencies with jurisdiction prior to receiving development permits.

- c: Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Planning and Land Use Department, 3009 E. Portland Ave., Tacoma, WA 98404 (U.S. mail only)
- Puyallup Tribe of Indians, David Duenas, Building Official - David.Duenas@PuyallupTribe-nsn.gov
- Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Brandon Reynon, Tribal Archeologist - Brandon.Reynon@PuyallupTribe-nsn.gov
- Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Jeffrey Thomas, TFW Program Director - Jeffrey.Thomas@puyalluptribe-nsn.gov
- Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Russ Ladley, Fisheries Program Director - Russ.Ladley@PuyallupTribe-nsn.gov
- Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Andrew Strobel, Planning and Land Use Director - Andrew.Strobel@PuyallupTribe-nsn.gov

Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Jennifer Keating, Land Use Planner – Jennifer.M.Keating@PuyallupTribe-nsn.gov
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Robert Barandon, Land Use Planner – Robert.B.Barandon@PuyallupTribe-nsn.gov
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Carol Ann Hawks, Historic Preservation Director - CarolAnn.Hawks@PuyallupTribe-nsn.gov
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Charlene Matheson, Special Project Planner - Charlene.Matheson@PuyallupTribe-nsn.gov
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Char Naylor, Assistant Director Fisheries/Water Quality - Char.Naylor@puyallupTribe-nsn.gov
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Lisa A. Anderson, Environmental Attorney - Lisa.Anderson@PuyallupTribe-nsn.gov
Tacoma Public School District 10, Robert Sawatzky, Planning & Construction Director, planning@tacoma.k12.wa.us
Tacoma Planning and Development Services Department, Shirley Schultz, Shirley.schultz@cityoftacoma.org
Tacoma Planning and Development Services Department, Reuben McKnight, reuben.mcknight@cityoftacoma.org
Tacoma Pierce County Health Department, SEPA Review Team, sepa@tpchd.org
Port of Tacoma, Jason Jordan, jjordan@portoftacoma.com
Metro Parks Tacoma, Matthew F. Keough, matthewke@tacomaparks.com
Metro Parks Tacoma, Joe Brady, joeb@tacomaparks.com
Pierce Transit, Bus Stop Program, Tina Vaslet, tvaset@piercetransit.org
Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, Steve Van Slyke, stevev@psc Clean Air Agency
Department of Ecology, separegister@ecy.wa.gov
Department of Natural Resources, SEPA Center, sepacenter@dnr.wa.gov
Department of Transportation, Olympia Region Development Services Team, OR-SEPA-REVIEW@wsdot.wa.gov

File: Planning and Development Services

City of Tacoma

SEPA ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Regulations Proposed Amendment to the Tacoma Municipal Code

SEPA File Number:

LU18-0252

September 12, 2018

City of Tacoma
Planning and Development Services Department
747 Market Street, Room 345
Tacoma, WA 98402-3701
253-591-5030



A. BACKGROUND

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Regulations

2. Proponent/applicant:

City of Tacoma – Planning and Development Services Department

3. Contact:

Lauren Flemister
Planning and Development Services Department
747 Market Street, Room 345
Tacoma, WA 98402-3701
Phone: (253) 591-5660
E-mail: lflemister@cityoftacoma.org

4. Date checklist prepared:

September 12, 2018

5. Agency requesting checklist:

City of Tacoma – Planning and Development Services Department

6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):

July 11 – IPS Committee
July 18 – Planning Commission – Introduction, Approach, Scope of Work, Schedule
August 1 – Planning Commission – Issue Discussion
August 15 – Planning Commission – Continued Discussion
September 5 – Present Draft Code, Set Planning Commission Public Hearing
October 3 – Planning Commission Public Hearing
October 17 – Recommendation to City Council
October 24 – Council Resolution to Set Public Hearing
November 13 – City Council Study Session
November 13 – City Council Public Hearing
November 27 – City Council 1st Reading of Ordinance
December 4 – City Council Final Reading of Ordinance

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.

Currently, there is no specific plan to further amend the ADU regulations after the scheduled adoption by the City Council in December 2018.

8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.

N/A.

9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain.

N/A.

10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.

The proposal is a code amendment, which requires the City Council's adoption by ordinance.

11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site.

The Infill Pilot Program is intended to promote innovative residential infill development types, while ensuring that such development demonstrates high quality building and site design that is responsive to and harmonious with neighborhood patterns and character.

The ADU Regulations are a code amendment project that addresses one of the infill housing types under the Pilot Program, i.e., DADUs, and intends the permitting of detached ADUs, in addition to the already allowed attached ADUs, as of right, in single-family zoning districts (R-1, R-2, R-2SRD and HMR-SRD Districts). The current ADU regulations allow for an attached ADU and the overall number of accessory dwelling units allowed per parcel remains at one. The proposed changes are as follows:

- Allows Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (DADUs) in single-family and mixed-residential zoning districts (R-1, R-2, R-2SRD and HMR-SRD Districts), where they were previously only allowed through the Residential Infill Pilot Program
- Streamlines measurement of ADU size
- Provides a Conditional Use Permit process for lots that do not meet minimum Standard Lot Size and Lot Width to still request an ADU
- Clarifications on height limitation in VSD and design review in historic districts
- Adds a requirement to ensure ADU projects do not eliminate required open space
- Modifies the walkway requirement to provide additional flexibility
- Eliminates the majority of the existing design standards for DADUs while maintaining a provision for administrative design review based on performance and quality
- Update to intent language that better addresses housing choice and sustainability
- Updates timeline and requirements for legalizing pre-existing, unpermitted ADUs (amnesty program)
- Allows larger accessory buildings on lots greater than 10,000 square feet (this allowance previously applied only to lots greater than ½-acre)

The complete text of the proposed amendment is available from the Planning and Development Services Department at the address below and posted online at www.cityoftacoma.org/DADU.

12. Location of the Proposal: (Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any. If a proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range or boundaries of the site(s).)

The proposal applies citywide.

13. Assessor Parcel Number:

Affected parcels are not yet known. They will be based upon applicant locations, which will be throughout the city.

C. SIGNATURE

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.



Signature:

Name of signee:

Lauren Flemister

Position and Agency/Organization:

Senior Planner, City of Tacoma

Date Submitted:

September 12, 2018

D. SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS

Because these questions are very general, it may be helpful to read them in conjunction with the list of the elements of the environment. When answering these questions, be aware of the extent the proposal or the types of activities likely to result from the proposal that would affect the item at a greater intensity or at a faster rate than if the proposal were not implemented. Respond briefly and in general terms.

1. How would the proposal be likely to increase discharge to water; emissions to air; production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise?

Impacts will include increased water discharge and noise production to the extent that the new units are occupied. The anticipated full time occupancy is comparatively low, in comparison to the addition of other types of housing, particularly multifamily typologies. The current zoning allows for an additional unit (an attached ADU) in single family and mixed use zoning districts; the proposed change to zoning allows for a detached ADU, but does not increase the number of allowable units and general types permitted. In the last three years, less than 20 applications for ADUs were submitted and fewer were completed.

Therefore, ADUs will likely produce limited environmental impacts, particularly when considering the previous zoning that allowed for attached ADUs.

2. How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish, or marine life?

No discernible impacts are expected that are not already associated with small-scale development. Additionally, the promotion of sustainable

3. How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources?

Any depletion of natural resources is expected to be negligible.

4. How would the proposal be likely to use or affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated (or eligible or under study) for governmental protection; such as parks, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, threatened or endangered species habitat, historic or cultural sites, wetlands, floodplains, or prime farmlands?

The proposal does not affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated for governmental protection.

5. How would the proposal be likely to affect land and shoreline use, including whether it would allow or encourage land or shoreline uses incompatible with existing plans?

All ADUs will be tied to single-family zones and subject to the development standards in the amended code and in the underlying zone.

6. How would the proposal be likely to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities?

The proposal is likely to create a minor increase in the use of public transportation and support services currently put in place. This increase in utilization is tied to Tacoma's growth targets and has been, and is currently being, planned for. ADUs are a way to accommodate "gentle" growth in some of the single family zoning districts in Tacoma. The change in regulations does not allow for more units per lot, but it does allow for the additional accessory dwelling unit to be detached.

Assuming that there is additional uptake based on interest in the unit being separate from the main house, staff predicts that the high-end estimate would be quadruple the existing intake, which is less than 25 ADUs. We estimate that there are approximately 57,000 single-family parcels in the City, which is a yearly utilization of 0.04%. Public transportation does not run at capacity and can absorb additional users, who would likely have utilized the system at another location. The additional load of a small number of additional units can be easily absorbed by stormwater, wastewater, and water

systems, in regular conditions. If a specific site needs utility improvements, capacity and utilization are evaluated and assessed during permit review.

Other public services are unlikely to be significantly impacted. Tacoma expects growth and while the overall number of people utilizing services may increase, this proposal only presents an alternative for how those individuals are housed.

7. Identify, if possible, whether the proposal may conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.

The proposal does not change any regulatory requirements concerning the protection of the environment and should not conflict with any relevant local, state, or federal laws.