

## ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT STUDY

 County Planning

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## OUR VISION

Inspiring all of our communities to thrive

## OUR MISSION

To advance Cuyahoga County's social, economic, and environmental health through equitable community planning



County Planning

FOR OUR COMMUNITY  
FOR OUR REGION  
FOR OUR FUTURE

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## STUDY OVERVIEW

In partnership with the City of Cleveland Heights, the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission (County Planning) conducted research related to Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs); their benefits, best practices, zoning and policy considerations, and potential concerns, which include:

- An in-depth analysis of current local and national trends driving the shift towards ADUs in Cleveland Heights
- A review of best practices from leaders in the ADU and housing fields, such as AARP, the American Planning Association (APA), the National Association of Home Builders, and the National Association of Realtors
- Interviews with two residents (interested in ADUs, architect) and a local Realtor/Board of Directors of the National Association of Realtors
- Interviews with communities that have successfully passed ADU legislation and their lessons learned—Cincinnati, OH; Anchorage, AK; and Bloomington, IN
- A detailed review of relevant community plans and the City's current Zoning Code to identify key limitations and potential changes to zoning regulations
- Identifying issues and key limitations with current Zoning Code that could be hindrances for the construction of ADUs

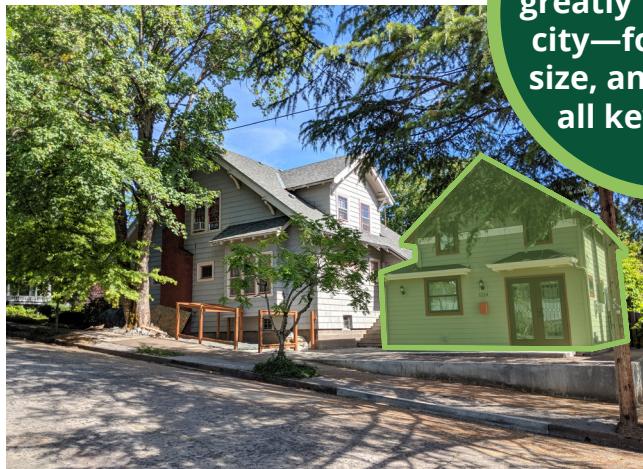
This Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Study, its analyses, and findings should be used to compose effective ADU policies. It is a tool tailored to the City of Cleveland Heights, but is designed as a best practices guide for other municipalities considering ADUs.

# SECTION 1

# INTRODUCTION TO ADUs

## ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS OVERVIEW

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are secondary or auxiliary structures/spaces that provide an additional dwelling unit on a lot where an existing home is already constructed. ADUs are generally grouped into two main categories: attached or detached. Attached ADUs are when an existing space within the primary dwelling is converted into a separate dwelling—such as an attached garage, basement, or attic—or an addition is added to the current structure. Detached units are generally new construction within the side or rear yards of the primary residence. This could also include the conversion of detached garages or other similar structures into new dwelling units. In general, ADUs are ancillary living quarters to the principal unit on the same lot, but contain many of the same features to those of a traditional house—such as a bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, and utility hookups.



**FACT:**  
**ADUs can vary greatly from city to city—format, use, size, and costs are all key factors.**

In addition to taking on a variety of physical forms, ADUs can also be adapted to many different users and stages of life. For example, ADUs can become a comfortable home for aging residents, care givers, or young professionals saving to purchase their own home. ADUs, assuming they meet the residency requirements set by an individual city, can also double as a live-work space—which can be beneficial due to the shift towards working from home as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, ADUs and their various formats are currently not permitted across the majority of Cuyahoga County's 59 individual municipalities—potentially limiting affordable housing opportunities for residents.

## ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS THEN & NOW

ADUs can be traced back to early settlements in England—even as far back as the 1700's when zoning regulations were uncommon or non-existent. A historic precedent to ADUs is the "carriage house," which housed both horse-drawn carriages and workers on large estates. Presently, "carriage houses" are simply one of the many alternative terms for ADUs—others typically include *granny flats, in-law suites, basement apartments, or a FROG (finished room over garage)*.

Following World War II, individual lots for single-family use were prioritized, which led to legal ADUs becoming increasingly scarce in the

United States. The increased dependency on motor vehicles coupled with the single-family housing boom during this time led to more garages being constructed—which ultimately occupied usable space on existing lots that could have otherwise been dedicated to an accessory unit. Today, ADUs are seeing a resurgence in demand. With the average cost of living increasing, ADUs are an attractive and affordable housing alternative for different generations, lifestyles, and locations.

### COMMON ADU REGULATIONS & GUIDANCE

While each community may approach ADU regulations differently, many have similar guidance for construction and general locations. Regulations can typically include:

- Minimum and maximum square footage;
- Occupancy limits (number, composition);
- Site placement (rear, side, or front yards);
- Connections to sewage and water lines;
- Additional parking spaces;
- Height of the structure;
- Type (attached, detached); and
- The zoning district in which an ADU can be constructed.

Additionally, communities may choose to regulate the overall design of an ADU to reflect the primary dwelling and neighborhood character—this typically includes partnering with qualified design professionals to assure regulations are not a hindrance to the construction, permitting, or review processes. However, more regulations and fees attached to the ADU process can make their

construction challenging and deter residents from developing an affordable unit on their property.

### AVERAGE SIZE & COST OF AN ADU

Much like their physical forms and uses, ADUs can vary greatly in sizes and costs. In the United States, an average-sized ADU is traditionally between 400 square feet and 1,200 square feet—ranging from approximately \$150 to \$300 per square foot. However, in highly competitive real estate markets, such as Oregon and California, construction costs can exceed upwards of \$600 per square foot—making the construction of potentially income-producing affordable units unattainable for some property owners.

### AVERAGE ADU COSTS\*

ADU TYPE	AVERAGE MIN PRICE	AVERAGE MAX PRICE
Basement Conversion	\$60,000	\$150,000
Garage Conversion	\$60,000	\$150,000
Attached New Construction	\$100,000	\$216,000
Above-Garage New Construction	\$128,000	\$225,000
Detached New Construction	\$110,000	\$285,000

\*Prices are approximated. Actual prices will be dependent on individual markets, labor and supply costs, construction and permitting fees, utility hookups, and other related costs.

# ADU BENEFITS & CONCERNS

Housing shortages, affordability concerns, and a desire for revitalization have all led communities to permit and regulate ADUs. However, as with ADUs themselves, each community requires careful consideration of local circumstances when regulating ADU construction.

There are many elements to consider when implementing ADU guidelines—their form, function, and regulation. Regardless of how communities choose to manage ADUs, potential benefits can include shared utility costs, additional income, and increased property values. Shared utility costs and the potential for additional income through renting an ADU can make owning a home a reality for some residents. Additionally, increasing the amount of inhabitable space by constructing an ADU will often increase a home's overall market and resale value—building long-term equity into a property.

## RESIDENT SUPPORT & BUY-IN

Zoning Code amendments and updates to other city ordinances need community buy-in and support if they are to be successful. Residents should be engaged early in the process in order to educate and solicit comment surrounding ADUs. ADUs come with both pros and cons, and residents' thoughts are important to integrate

into the conversation. Cities that have more recently adopted ADU regulations, such as Cincinnati, OH and Louisville, KY, each have integrated community engagement to build support around their efforts for ADUs. This included public and focus group meetings, resident surveys, and other community education and outreach materials. It is important to highlight the benefits of ADUs, while still listening and modifying a city's approach towards the adoption of ADUs within their own community.

## LEGALIZING ADUs CITY OF CINCINNATI, OHIO



Unanimously passed on October 2, 2023, the City of Cincinnati has officially authorized the construction and use of ADUs in all areas where single-family homes are currently allowed. The process included public meetings to engage residents and understand what their concerns were surrounding ADUs.

According to Cincinnati's City Manager Sheryl Long, "ADUs are a simple and unique way of providing housing. Young renters who don't need much space can move into converted garages or attic apartments. Seniors who are interested in downsizing can move into an ADU and still own the primary residence. Legalizing ADUs makes flexibility like this possible."

Learn More: [www.cincinnati-oh.gov/planning/adus/](http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/planning/adus/)

## COMMON BENEFITS OF ADUs

### ON-SITE CAREGIVING & INDEPENDENCE

ADUs provide an alternative to traditional care of an aging, sick, or disabled family-member by giving them their own independent space on the same property, or by providing space for an on-site caregiver.

### ADDITIONAL INCOME & WEALTH BUILDING

ADUs can often be rented to family, friends, and in some cases unrelated tenants—creating a secondary income for property owners.

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPTIONS

ADUs provide more housing options at more affordable price points—allowing lifelong and/or lower-income residents to remain within their community.

### REDUCED CARBON FOOTPRINT

ADUs require far less material to construct than a traditional home and can improve energy efficiency by having a smaller space to insulate, heat, and cool throughout the year.

### LAND CONSERVATION

Constructing ADUs on existing lots reduces the impacts of sprawl because ADUs are smaller than regular single-family dwellings and can maintain or increase populations within a smaller footprint.

### SHARED COSTS

Services that are provided for the primary unit—including sanitary sewer, septic, or water—can often be shared with an ADU, which can help offset utility and development costs.

## COMMON CONCERNs OF ADUs

### CHANGE NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Concerns that ADUs will change the character and visual appeal of a neighborhood are common.

### DIFFICULT TO MEET ZONING STANDARDS

Some cities that have implemented ADUs into their Zoning Code require one or more off-street parking spaces be added, in addition to the spaces already required for the principal dwelling—which can be difficult to incorporate onto an existing property and deter people from constructing ADUs as a result.

### INCREASE IN NOISE, TRAFFIC, & DENSITY

Concerns that ADUs can create a transient population in neighborhoods as well as potential unwanted increases in noise, traffic, and density—which would also require property owners to act as landlords or a business; a new experience for most.

### COSTS OUTWEIGH BENEFITS

If ADUs can only be rented out to immediate family members who are expected to only live there for a short period of time, the costs might outweigh the benefits.

### POTENTIAL FOR REDUCED YARD SIZES

While detached ADUs themselves have a smaller footprint than their primary dwelling counterparts, they must work within the space allotted on existing lots—potentially reducing the amount of greenspace in yards.

# SECTION 2

# TRENDS DRIVING THE SHIFT TOWARDS ADUs

This Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Study was derived from the culmination of localized interest and need for addressing population loss, housing affordability, and restrictive zoning regulations—potentially a major hindrance to the development of ADUs—within the City of Cleveland Heights.

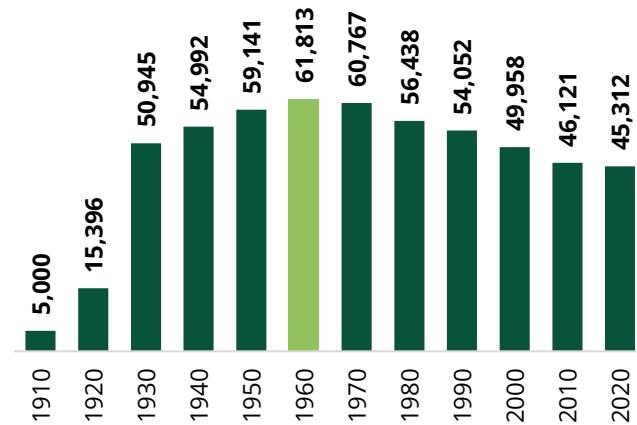
The City of Cleveland Heights is a robust, inner-ring suburb that has seen these issues arise locally. ADUs—and the regulations surrounding their development—offer a unique opportunity to address these and other concerns surrounding housing affordability and accessibility by creating new dwelling options on existing properties.

## THE CITY HAS EXPERIENCED POPULATION LOSS AND OUT-MIGRATION OF RESIDENTS

Quickly earning the status of a city in 1921, Cleveland Heights saw rapid population growth in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, primarily due to streetcar lines making the area easily accessible and desirable for residential development. Cleveland Heights continued to see bursts of population growth through 1960 when the City saw its highest population total at 61,813 residents.

However, since that time the community has experienced population loss. Between 1970 and 2020, Cleveland Heights' population has declined over 25.4%—a loss of 15,455 residents. However, the rate of population loss is slowing, with only a 2% loss between 2010 and 2020 (-809 residents).

## TOTAL POPULATION, 1910 - 2020



## THE CITY HAS SEEN A DECREASE IN HOUSEHOLD SIZES, BUT AN INCREASE IN NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS

Between 2016 and 2021, Cleveland Heights experienced a slight decrease in its average household size from an estimated 2.32 persons per household to 2.26—a significant shift from a high of 3.29 in 1950. However, even with fewer people living together and continued population decline, the City has seen an increase in its overall number of total households.

In 2021, the City had an estimated 19,650 households, compared to 19,057 in 2016—an increase of 593 households or 3.1%. This could be partially attributed to a greater number of single-person dwellings, which also saw an increase from 6,880 units in 2016 to 7,323 in 2021—an increase of 6.4%. Additionally, the City also saw a decrease in households that have children under the age of 18 present—a

loss of 11.6% or 560 fewer households that have children in 2021 (4,261 households) compared to 2016 (4,821 households).

#### THE CITY HAS SEEN AN INCREASE IN MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOMES

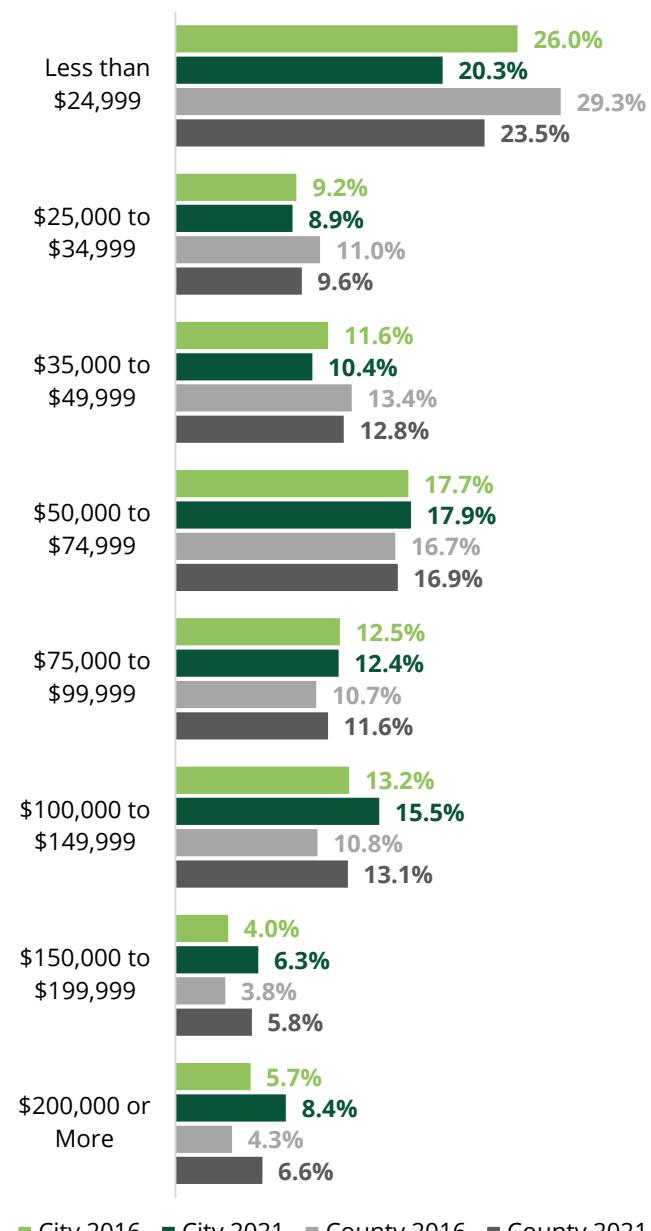
Between the years 2016 and 2021, Cleveland Heights saw an increase in its median household income from \$53,901 to \$62,823—an increase of over 16.6%. During that time period there was growth in the highest earning income percentiles, and losses in the lowest. In 2021, households earning at least \$100,000 accounted for 30.2% of the community; compared to 23% in 2016.

Comparatively, those earning between \$25,000 and \$99,999 stayed relatively consistent between that same time frame at around 50% of households. However, households earning less than \$25,000 annually decreased from 26.0% in 2016 to 20.3% in 2021—including a decrease from 11.6% to 7.9% of households earning less than \$10,000 over that same time period.

#### THE CITY HAS SEEN A DECREASE IN POVERTY, BUT AN INCREASE IN RENTAL PRICES

Since a recent spike in poverty status in 2013—when 20% or 9,003 residents were reported to be living below the poverty line—Cleveland Heights has seen a consistent decrease in the number of residents living below the poverty line. In 2016 the number of residents living below the poverty line stayed relatively consistent at around 20%

#### % OF HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME CATEGORIES, 2016 & 2021



■ City 2016 ■ City 2021 ■ County 2016 ■ County 2021

(8,995), but by 2021 that number decreased to 16.4% (7,287)—the same level as the County. However, this is still higher than the State of Ohio's poverty level in 2021 of 13.4%.

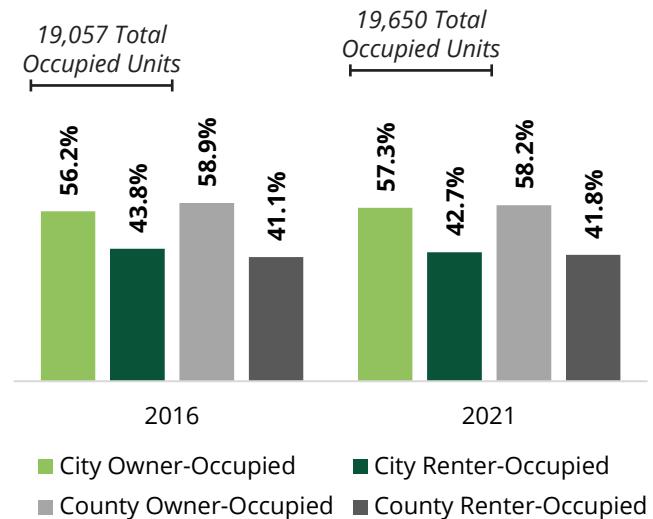
Additionally, between the years 2011 and 2021, median rental prices in Cleveland Heights have continued to increase. From 2011 to 2016, prices rose from \$818 per month to \$871—a 6.5% increase. However, from 2016 to 2021 prices rose again to \$1,005 per month—a 15.4% increase. This indicates that not only are rental prices increasing, they are increasing at a faster rate over time. It is also important to note that this is a similar trend seen across Cuyahoga County as a whole. Between 2011 and 2016 the County saw a small increase in median rental prices—3.6% from \$716 to \$742. Similarly, from 2016 to 2021, the County saw another increase to \$875 per month, or 17.9%. While these trends are following similar patterns, median rental prices in Cleveland Heights continue to be higher than those seen across Cuyahoga County as a whole.

### MEDIAN SALES PRICES AND HOME OWNERSHIP RATES CONTINUE TO INCREASE, WHILE RENTER OCCUPANCY DECREASES

Between the years 2016 and 2021, Cleveland Heights saw continued growth in home ownership from 10,710 owner occupied units to 11,259—an increase of 5%. During that same time frame the number of occupied rental units decreased from 8,391 to 8,346—a negligible loss of 0.5%. However, the overall number of total housing units remained relatively consistent with an increase of 3%, or 593 occupied dwellings from 2016 to 2021. Additionally, the median sales price for residential dwellings continued to increase throughout the City. Between the years 2007

and 2022, the median sales price for a single-family home increased 61% from \$112,000 to \$179,900—which is nearly identical to the County's 60.6% increase (+\$65,500). The cost

### OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS, 2016 & 2021



### MEDIAN SALES PRICE, 2007 - 2022

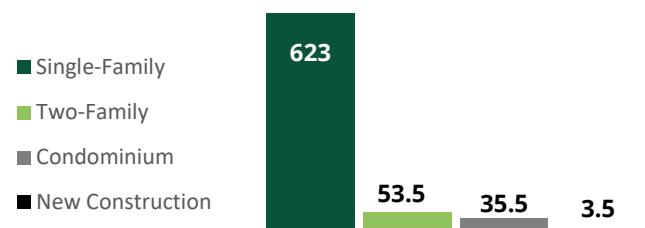


to purchase a two-family home in Cleveland Heights doubled (+100%) in price from \$106,000 to \$212,750—proportionately less than the County's 120% increase (+\$60,000).

Additionally, there were marginal increases in prices for condominium units (+6%) and new construction homes (+3%). These increases were significantly less than Cuyahoga County's 31% increase in condominium prices (+\$33,000) and a 53% increase in new construction homes (+\$131,445). These findings indicate that sales prices for single-family and two-family homes in Cleveland Heights are increasing at a similar pace to that of Cuyahoga County as a whole; however, prices for condominium units and new construction homes are increasing at a much faster rate in the County as a whole.

Lastly, the overwhelming majority of housing sales in Cleveland Heights are predominantly single-family and two-family homes—generally accounting for 95% of sales annually. The remaining 5% of sales are a combination of condominiums and new construction homes. New construction homes account for less than 0.5% annually, or approximately 3.5 homes per year. These numbers can fluctuate, but in general the City sees less than ten new construction homes annually.

### MEDIAN NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS SOLD PER YEAR BY TYPE, 2007 - 2022



### OVERALL FINDINGS

Cleveland Heights is faced with changing demographics, population loss, and shifting housing demands. The City desires to find a balance between affordability and revitalization within its housing market in order to stem population loss and attain its goal of pre-1970 population levels. Several key takeaways to note include:

- Population loss has slowed
- Household sizes are shrinking
- The number of households are increasing
- Household incomes are increasing
- Poverty is decreasing
- Median sale prices and homeownership rates are increasing
- Median rental prices are increasing
- Renter occupancy is decreasing

ADUs are an increasingly important housing option across the United States, especially in older neighborhoods or built-out communities. ADUs can increase residential density without the visual impacts of larger structures, and can be easily adapted for different household types, income levels, employment situations, and stages of life. They serve to meet the demands of the housing market, and fill a void for high-quality affordable housing within well-established residential neighborhoods. Additionally, ADUs are an incremental and attainable step towards housing affordability and lasting population growth. ADUs provide more housing options for families of all types—which can also help remove barriers to homeownership. Overall, ADUs can be a sensible solution for the City to address population loss, as well as balance housing affordability and shortages.

# SECTION 3

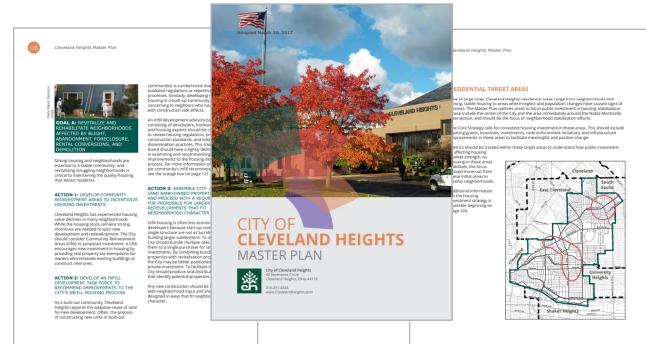
# POLICY CONFORMANCE

The City of Cleveland Heights is a leader in the region for contemporary best practices and planning studies—including the Sustainable Zoning Code Amendments, and the City's Master Plan. Additionally, while Cleveland Heights does not have definitive language for ADUs within its current regulations, a number of planning initiatives have goals, recommendations, or similar aspirations to support their implementation, as described below.

## CLEVELAND HEIGHTS MASTER PLAN, 2017

Officially adopted in March 2017, the City's Master Plan outlines numerous housing-related visions for the future, recommendations, and residential target areas for housing investment. While ADUs are not specifically identified within the document, the Plan does suggest that the City should consider allowing different types of units in order to diversify its housing stock. Additionally, the Master Plan calls for numerous Zoning Code amendments to address the need for smaller, more accessible homes—especially in areas where current minimum requirements cannot be met due to lot sizes being too small.

The Master Plan also discusses the importance of infill housing and that the City should be proactive in marketing these unique opportunities to builders and private investors. This could indicate the importance of allowing residents—private citizens—the flexibility to create new units with their own resources to not only diversify housing options available, but also increase the overall number of residential dwellings in Cleveland Heights. Other housing-specific strategies outlined in the Master Plan include consistent investment in housing through grants, investment, incentives, improved infrastructure, and Zoning Code enforcement. ADUs are a flexible housing alternative that would be supportive of the Plan's vision and create new housing opportunities.



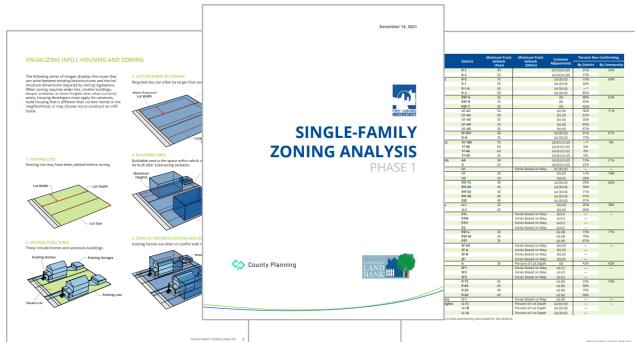
## FIRST SUBURBS SINGLE-FAMILY ZONING ANALYSIS PROJECT, 2023

This multi-phased project looked at residential infill development opportunities within first suburban communities surrounding Cleveland. The analysis consisted of two phases: 1) a zoning analysis aimed at identifying issues within zoning regulations that could make constructing desired infill housing difficult or cost-ineffective; and 2) infill resources aimed to directly address the concerns and needs identified in Phase One, and outline best practices for improving zoning regulations to make infill more practicable. Cleveland Heights was an active participant and stakeholder throughout this process, and provided critical information to the project team regarding existing City regulations and their experiences with infill development.

While this particular study was focused on new construction homes on existing vacant lots, the core goal remains the same with

ADUs: increase, strengthen, and diversify the residential housing stock by giving builders and residents the flexibility to be successful, and incentivize private investment in local markets. One of the most significant outcomes related to ADUs derived from this study occurred during the first phase. The analysis looked at 19 first suburban communities, including Cleveland Heights, and their respective zoning districts where single-family homes were the principal use designated by current zoning. For the City of Cleveland Heights, the *A* and *AA Single-Family Districts* were included as part of this analysis.

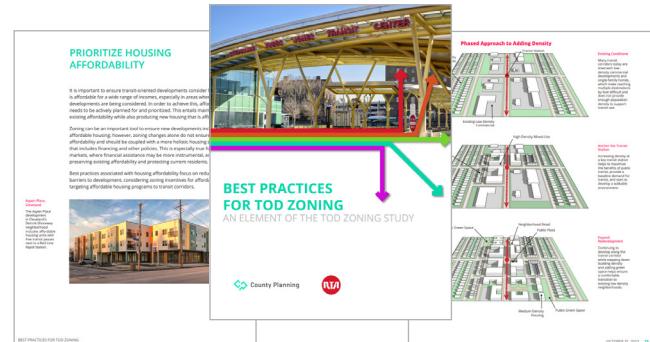
The study found that many of the existing lots within the *A* and *AA Single-Family Districts* are non-conforming—meaning they do not meet the minimum requirements outlined within the City's Zoning Code. Across the entire community, nearly half (47%) of these lots do not meet minimum lot size requirements and 39% do not meet minimum lot width requirements—the majority being located within the *A Single-Family District*. These findings indicate that the construction of not only new homes, but also ADUs, would be challenging under existing lot requirements within the *A* and *AA Single-Family Districts*—where ADUs would be most appropriate within the City.



## TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD) ZONING STUDY, 2023

The TOD Zoning Study is an ongoing initiative that includes four components: 1) a State of TOD in Cuyahoga County; 2) an Analysis of TOD Zoning; 3) Best Practices for TOD Zoning; and 4) TOD Financing Strategies. The goal of this project is to understand and offer improvements to local zoning and land use strategies in a way that supports additional transit-oriented development. The most recent publication, Best Practices for TOD Zoning, covers seven principles that can make TOD easier to build and more successful—including density and affordable housing recommendations that are relevant to ADUs.

- **Increased Density:** relax zoning regulations that limit the amount of density permitted along major transit corridors and provide allowances for increased residential density in neighborhoods within walking distance of transit—including ADUs.
- **Housing Affordability:** reduce zoning barriers to lower development costs, increase the housing supply, and therefore indirectly increase affordability—ADUs are an opportunity to balance residential density and housing affordability.

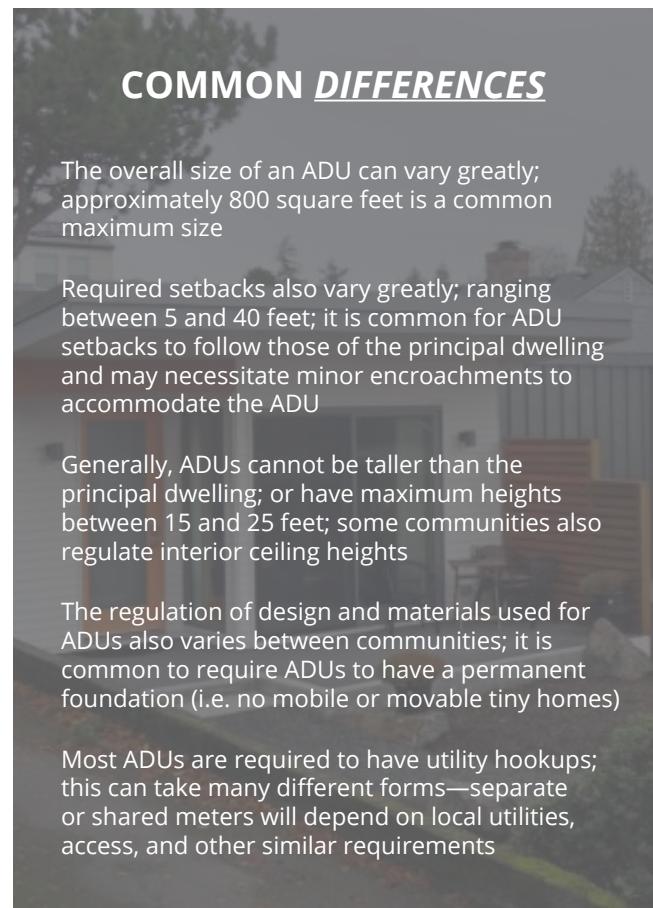
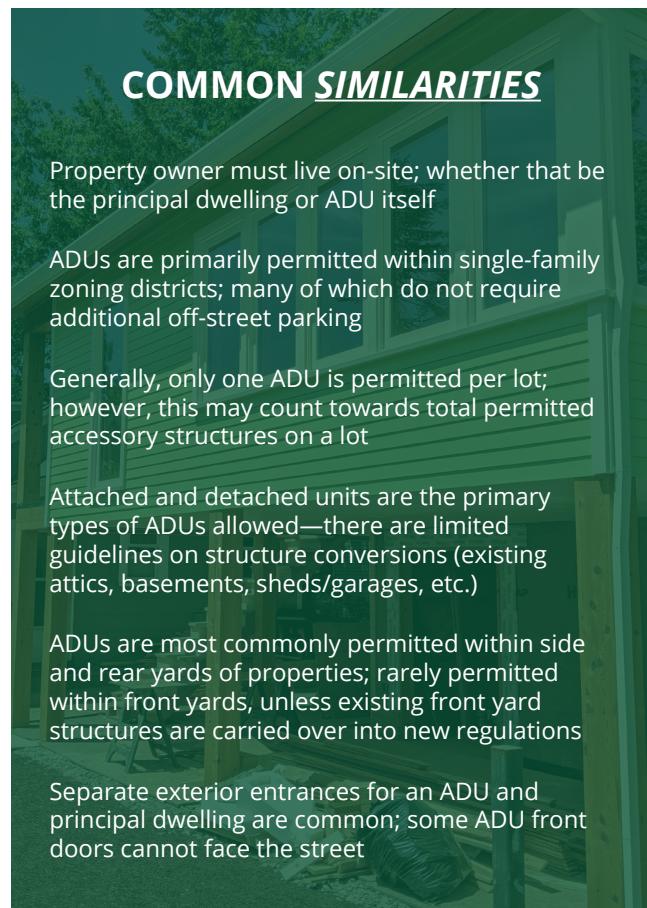


# SECTION 4

# ADU REGULATIONS & POLICIES

The way in which a community may choose to regulate ADUs will vary depending on factors including geographic location, residential preferences and needs, demographic shifts, and demand. Outlined in the table on the next page are common regulatory measures that are currently being used across five U.S. cities to actively manage ADUs—St. Louis Park, MN; Bloomington, IN; Anchorage, AK; Cincinnati, OH; and Minneapolis, MN.

While there are a number of notable similarities and differences for how each of these municipalities have chosen to regulate ADUs, there was a clear trend for how these communities adopted ADU regulations. Many began with more stringent guidelines as a way to ease their community into this new housing type, and over time many have modified or lifted stricter policies in favor of ones that are more flexible and supportive of ADUs. This has helped make ADUs a realistic, obtainable, and potentially income-producing housing option. A summary of the most common similarities and differences between these communities can be seen below.



Source: Sightline Institute Missing Middle Homes Photo Library, Flickr; U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census; St. Louis Park, MN; Bloomington, IN; Anchorage, AK; Cincinnati, OH; Minneapolis, MN

City, State Population 2020	St. Louis Park, Minnesota 50,010	Bloomington, Indiana 79,168	Anchorage, Alaska 291,247	Cincinnati, Ohio 309,317	Minneapolis, Minnesota 429,954
ADU/Occupancy Requirements	Must own and live on property if constructing an ADU; Must obtain business license for short-term rentals/inspect property; If owner sells the property, new owner is not required to reside on site	The principal unit or the ADU must be occupied by the property owner; Short-term rentals must be registered/inspected; Owner must sign affidavit stating which unit they will reside in	Owner occupancy is not required; Must obtain business license for short-term rentals/inspect property; ADU approval expires when unit is altered beyond regulations or if written notification of abandonment	The lot owner must reside in principal unit or ADU, or designate a responsible party to maintain both units; Short-term rentals must be registered/inspected	The property owner must reside in either the main house or ADU and restriction must be recorded on the deed; Short-term rentals must be registered/inspected
Permitted ADU Districts	Single-family	Single-family and duplex	<i>Anchorage Bowl: Single-family; Chugach: All residential except multi-family; Girdwood: Residential, commercial, and resort districts</i>	Single-family	Single-family and two-family
# Of ADUs Permitted	1 per lot	1 per lot; Not more than 2 bedrooms	1 per lot	No more than 2 accessory buildings of any type, including detached ADUs, are allowed on a lot; 1 ADU allowed per lot	1 per lot
ADU Types Permitted	Attached, detached, garage conversions (only if required parking for main dwelling can be accommodated elsewhere)	Attached, detached	Attached, detached, internal (conversions)	Attached, detached	Attached, detached, internal (conversions)
Permitted ADU Locations	Side and rear	Side and rear	Side, front, and rear	Side and rear	Side and rear
ADU Off-Street Parking	Additional off-street parking is not required	No specifications	Additional off-street parking is not required	Additional off-street parking is not required	No minimum or maximum parking requirement for the principal unit or ADU
ADU Maximum Square Footage	Attached ADUs cannot exceed 40% of gross floor area of principal unit; Detached ADUs max 576 SF provided there are no other accessory buildings on the same lot; Minimum 200 SF	Max 840 SF for attached and detached ADUs; Calculation of size depends on location/zoning and property size	Max 900 SF or 40% of total gross floor area of the principal unit, (whichever is greater); An ADU shall not exceed 1,200 SF	Detached ADUs on 4,000+ SF lots: 15% of lot area or max 800 SF; Main unit + ADU cannot exceed 60% of lot area	Attached/internal max 800 SF, can be larger if built prior to January 1, 2015; Detached max 1,300 SF; ADU must always be smaller than principal unit; Minimum 300 SF
Required ADU Setbacks	15 feet from rear lot lines; 5 feet from side interior lots; Detached ADUs 6+ feet from principal unit need 5 feet from any side lots	Attached and detached ADUs must be behind the principal unit; Detached ADUs must be 5 feet from side and rear properties	Follow setback rules of principal unit and may encroach into side or rear setback abutting an alley; Detached ADUs taller than 15 feet must be 10 feet from sides abutting any adjacent lot in single-house residential districts	No requirement for altering existing structures; New structures must be 3 feet from rear and side lot lines	Detached ADUs must be 10 feet from principal unit, setbacks range 3-6 feet depending on lot location/ characteristics; Attached/internal follow underlying zoning district
Lot Coverage	Cumulative coverage of all accessory buildings on single-family lots may not exceed the smaller of 800 SF or 25% of the rear yard	No specifications	Determined by the zoning district in which the ADU is located; Ranges from 5-75% with most between 30-40% (smaller lots generally have larger coverage allotments)	Lots larger than 4,000 SF can't have structures occupy more than 15% of total area; Lots under 4,000 SF can't exceed 60% structure coverage	Combined footprint of detached ADU and any parking areas on-site cannot exceed 800 SF or 10% of the lot area, whichever is greater
Required ADU Access	Separate entrances for principal unit and ADU required	No specifications	ADU front doors can face the street	Separate entrances for principal unit and ADU required	Attached/internal: no new entrances can face street; Detached: entrance facing street or alley encouraged
ADU Maximum Height	15 feet; May be increased to 24 feet if materials and roof pitch match those of the main unit	Attached ADUs cannot be taller than the principal unit; Detached is 25 feet	ADUs above detached garages can be 30 feet in height, while all others are limited to 25 feet	Detached ADUs cannot exceed 25 feet	Attached ADUs cannot be taller than the principal unit; Detached is 21 feet
Required ADU Design	Compatible in design and materials to the main unit	If in an historic district, must adhere to historic district's guidelines and any required certificate of appropriateness shall be obtained pursuant to Title 8	No specifications	Must be of durable construction (no mobile homes)	Primary materials should match the principal structure
Building Requirements	Permanent foundation on footings required; Requires a kitchen with appliances and full bathroom; Fire separation for attached units	Must connect to public water and sanitary sewer/septic	Connect to water, sewer, gas, and electric utilities of the main unit; Lots with on-site water/septic systems can have separate water and/or septic system for ADU	Detached ADUs require utility hookups	Plumber must confirm ADU can be served by current services

# CLEVELAND HEIGHTS ACCESSORY USE REGULATIONS

While ADUs are not currently regulated as part of the City's Zoning Code, accessory structures and uses of different kinds are permitted—which could provide a starting point for how ADU guidelines might be structured. Within the City of Cleveland Heights, there are three primary zoning districts that are potential candidates for supporting ADUs: the *A and AA Single-Family Districts*, and the *B Two-Family District*. These districts in particular support the building typologies and residential uses indicative of older, higher-density, suburban neighborhoods where ADUs may be appropriate.



As seen in the chart on the next page, the City of Cleveland Heights does currently regulate a number of aspects for accessory uses, and subsequently accessory structures. This includes guidelines relating to permitted uses, setbacks, yard coverage, height, and the total number of structures on a lot. ADUs are not currently an option within the city and new regulations would need to be considered.

## PERMITTED USES

Within the current Zoning Code there are 15 groups of accessory uses and structures that are permitted within the *A and AA Single-Family Districts*, and the *B Two-Family District*. These generally range from more passive uses such as gardens, rain barrels, and clotheslines, to

more physical uses and structures such as fences, decks, and parking garages.

## SETBACKS & LOT SIZE

Setback requirements vary depending on the type of accessory use or structure and its placement on a lot. Currently, Cleveland Heights allows most accessory uses to be within 3 feet of a lot line or principal dwelling. However, this is limited to structures or uses under 3 feet in height, as well as detached private parking garages for residents of the principal dwelling.

Notably, rear setbacks for a principal dwelling located within an *A or AA Single-Family District*, or a *B Two-Family District* are identical—each being 30 feet. Even though rear setbacks may be the same across these three residential districts, the required minimum lot size to construct a single-family home within the *AA Single-Family District* (15,000 SF) is double that needed in an *A Single-Family District* or *B Two-Family District* (7,500SF). This could potentially make constructing an attached ADU more challenging on smaller or non-conforming lots in *A Single-Family* or *B Two-Family Districts*.

Additionally, the Zoning Administrator may approve reduced rear and side yard setbacks for a detached private parking garages—this reduction cannot be more than those of an existing or previously existing detached private parking garage. The Zoning Administrator may also approve a 10 foot encroachment into rear yards for principal dwelling additions in the *A Single-Family District* or *B Two-Family District*. Similar to home additions, ADUs may require reduced setbacks or encroachments into yards to accommodate points of entry, utility connections, or similar considerations.

## YARD COVERAGE

Yard coverage requirements for accessory uses and structures varies depending on where they are located on a lot. Generally, any accessory structure that is taller than 3 feet in height and placed in the rear yard of a lot cannot exceed a total size of 2,000 square feet or 15% of the total lot area—this includes the total coverage of all accessory structures on the lot. However, the total maximum rear yard

coverage cannot exceed 60% total from all accessory uses, structures, and pavement.

Cleveland Heights also limits the side yard coverage of interior lots to 60% and corner lots to 30%—which includes the summation of both side yards on a property combined. Additionally, there are also conditions placed upon existing, non-conforming lots. Non-conforming lots within the *A* and *AA Single-Family Districts*, and the *B Two-Family District* are permitted to have up to 40% rear yard

ZONING CODE REFERENCE	CURRENT CODIFIED LANGUAGE
<b>1121.12 Accessory Use Regulations within the <i>A</i> and <i>AA Single-Family Districts</i>, and the <i>B Two-Family District</i></b>	
1121.12 (a) Minimum Yard Requirements for Accessory Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Varies depending on the use</li> <li>Smallest minimum distance an accessory use can be from lot lines or the principal dwelling is 3 feet—this currently includes compost bins, laundry clotheslines, open parking areas, sidewalks/driveway, structures not exceeding 3 feet in height, and detached private garages (rear lot line only)</li> </ul>
1121.12 (b) Permitted Structures in Front Yard and Corner Side Yard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited to unenclosed porches, decks, and patios and cannot extend more than 12 feet in front of the principal dwelling, provided that it also does not extend more than 6 feet into required front yards</li> <li>Any access points (steps, stairs, lifts, etc.) of these accessory structures must be approved by the Architectural Review Board</li> </ul>
1121.12 (c) Maximum Front and Side Yard Coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximum front yard coverage for accessory structures is 30%, provided that sidewalks and driveways do not exceed 2,000 SF for a lot with &lt;75% of street frontage or 3,000 SF for a lot with &gt;75% of street frontage</li> <li>Maximum side yard coverage on interior lots is 60% (includes both side yards)</li> <li>Maximum corner side yard coverage is 30%</li> </ul>
1121.12 (d) Maximum Area and Rear Yard Coverage of Accessory Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Varies depending on the use</li> <li>Total maximum rear lot coverage for accessory structures above 3 feet in height cannot exceed 15% or 2,000 SF of a lot</li> <li>Non-conforming lots may be permitted to have up to 40% rear yard coverage by accessory buildings subject to Zoning Administrator approval</li> <li>Total maximum rear yard coverage cannot exceed 60% total from all accessory uses, structures, and pavement (70% for non-conforming lots)</li> </ul>
1121.12 (e) Supplemental Regulations for Enclosed Parking Spaces, Private Parking Garages, and Accessory Parking Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lots are permitted to have 1 detached and 1 attached garage; for single-family dwellings, parking garage(s) can be 600 SF with an additional 1 square foot permitted for every 15 SF of lot area greater than 6,000 SF</li> <li>Under no circumstance are parking garages permitted to be larger than 1,300 SF in total (two-family dwellings can have a maximum garage size of 1,300 SF regardless of lot size)</li> <li>Attached garages are required to be located at least 5 feet behind the front (or side for a corner lot) facade of the principal dwelling and should be designed with compatible materials and architectural features to those of the principal dwelling</li> </ul>
1121.12 (f) Maximum Number of Accessory Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are two (2) detached accessory buildings permitted on a single lot</li> </ul>
1121.12 (g) Maximum Height of Accessory Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accessory structures are limited to 15 feet in height</li> </ul>
1121.12 (j) Residential Use of Existing Carriage House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lots with an existing carriage house may continue as a non-conforming dwelling unit</li> <li>Occupants of the carriage house are considered as part of the family of the principal dwelling and must comply with the definition of family—including Zoning Administrator Approval for the Determination of Household Status</li> </ul>

coverage by accessory buildings, which also cannot exceed 70% total rear yard coverage by all accessory uses, structures, and pavement.

## HEIGHT & DESIGN

Height requirements are consistent for accessory structures in Cleveland Heights—all accessory structures are limited to a maximum of 15 feet. However, ADUs built upon an existing structure—such as a garage—could potentially double the overall accessory structure's height to 30 feet depending on how height regulations are interpreted. This would make the structure nearly as tall as the principal dwelling in some cases—which have a maximum height of 35 feet or two and a half stories. Additionally, there are design requirements for attached private parking garages. The design should generally be consistent and compatible with that of the principal dwelling—including materials, colors, roof design, and massing. Attached garages are also required to be setback 5 feet behind the front facade of the principal dwelling, or 5 feet behind the side of the primary structure that has driveway access on corner lots.

## NUMBER OF STRUCTURES

An individual residential lot in Cleveland Heights can have up to two detached

accessory buildings—including garages. Residential lots in Cleveland Heights are permitted to have one attached and one detached garage on their property. Lots with a single-family home can have garages up to 600 square feet—which may be increased at a rate of 1 square foot per every 15 square feet the residential lot area is greater than 6,000 square feet; with a maximum of 1,300 square feet combined between the two permitted garages. Lots that have a two-family principal dwelling are permitted to have a garage up to 1,300 square feet regardless of the lot size; however, yard and setback requirements could be limiting factors. In general, larger properties and higher-density residential lots are permitted to have larger garages.

## ADU APPLICATION & LIMITING FACTORS

ADUs offer immense flexibility in terms of their individual site design and placement. Detached ADUs allow for the most flexibility in how the unit will be presented in terms of its placement on the lot, its design, height, and overall size. On the other hand, attached ADUs can expand the existing footprint of the principal dwelling or become an extension of existing structures already located on the property—such as a shed or garage.

Regardless if the unit is attached or detached, ADUs are most commonly found in the rear or side of the principal dwelling, often require separate entrances, and typically adhere to setback requirements of the principal dwelling. It is also important to note that detached and attached units are likely to

Source: Google Earth



reduce the overall rear and/or side yards on the property—limiting opportunities for outdoor spaces. Retrofitting an ADU into an existing structure is a way to preserve exterior yard space and reduce new impervious surfaces by re-purposing existing interior spaces on a property. Converting an existing garage, attic, basement or similar space can be a less expensive option as they are already constructed. However, it is important to note that separate entrances and firewalls between

the ADU and principal dwelling are still critical considerations when choosing which space to convert. New exterior staircases, emergency egress points, and windows are important safety measures that should be carefully planned. These are just a few potentially limiting factors for constructing an ADU under current zoning and building codes.

## KEY LIMITING FACTORS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF ADUs BASED ON CURRENT ZONING

Height	Permitted Uses
If an ADU is built on top of an existing accessory structure (i.e. a detached garage) the overall combined height exceeds zoning limitations unless each accessory use/structure was considered separately under current regulations—the combined height would potentially be close to that of the principal dwelling (~35 feet).	ADUs are not permitted under current regulations. If someone wanted to construct an ADU in Cleveland Heights today, a variance or conditional use process would have to occur—potentially coming at a cost to the applicant with no guarantee of approval.
Setbacks	Yard Coverage
Reduced setbacks can be approved by the Zoning Administrator, however, this is only permitted for detached private parking garages. All other accessory uses and structures must follow the setback requirements set for the principal dwelling—which may severely limit the area where an ADU can be constructed.  The Zoning Administrator can approve a rear yard encroachment for principal dwelling additions. However, this is limited to 10 feet. Additionally, constructing an attached ADU would be more challenging on smaller or non-conforming lots in the <i>A Single-Family or B Two-Family District</i> because rear setbacks for the principal dwelling are the same for lots twice their size found within the <i>AA Single-Family District</i> (30 feet)—limiting options for property owners interested in constructing an ADU on their property.	A detached or attached ADU will expand the overall livable square footage and building footprints of a property. However, with a significant proportion of existing lots in the <i>A and AA Single-Family Districts</i> being dimensionally non-conforming, it is unlikely ADUs could be constructed without pursuing a variance request for covering more yard than is permitted under current regulations (non-conforming lots can have up to 40% rear yard coverage by accessory buildings subject to Zoning Administrator approval).
Lot Size & Width	
	There are a significant number of non-conforming and irregular lots that exist throughout the City. Due to their smaller overall size and/or legal frontage, constructing an ADU based on these limitations would limit many residents from having one on their lot.

# CONSTRUCTING ADUs USING CURRENT ZONING REGULATIONS

The City of Cleveland Heights is predominantly a community whose single-family lots follow traditional, urban forms. However, many of the existing lots within the *A and AA Single-Family Districts* are non-conforming—meaning they do not meet one or both of these minimum requirements. Across the entire community, nearly half (47%) of these lots do not meet minimum lot size requirements and 39% do not meet minimum lot width requirements—the majority being located within the *A Single-Family District*. This has created regulations that have needed to integrate non-conforming lot considerations throughout the City's Zoning Code. While this has helped with the development of irregular lots, this has also created numerous "if-then" scenarios—creating some overlap in terms of dimensional requirements, especially for accessory buildings.

For example, a single-family home with a detached garage located within the *A Single-Family District* is situated on corner lot measuring 7,400 square feet with 40 feet of legal frontage. This lot would be considered non-conforming due to it being under the minimum requirements of 7,500 square feet in area and 50 feet of legal frontage. Within this residential district accessory buildings cannot occupy more than 20% of the rear yard space. However, non-conforming lots can be granted up to 40% coverage for accessory buildings, subject to Zoning

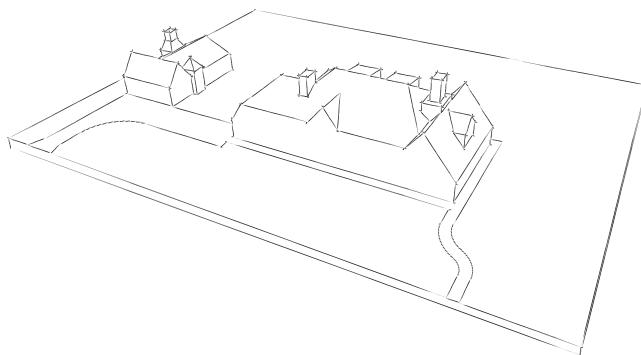
Administrator approval. Additionally, there are also design requirements that dictate compatibility with the principal dwelling for detached garages. However, all buildings go before the City's Architecture Board of Review (ABR) for a full compatibility review.

For the example corner lot in question, an accessory building can occupy up to 40% of the rear yard, unless it's a detached garage—in which case it can occupy up to 60% of the rear yard on a corner lot. Assuming a rear yard of 3,000 square feet, this would equate to 1,200 square feet for all accessory buildings on this lot or 1,800 square feet for a detached garage—but not both because detached garages are considered an accessory building. Additionally, this lot is larger than 6,000 square feet in overall size, meaning a detached garage can be expanded by one foot for every 15 square feet the lot is larger than 6,000 square feet—bringing the new garage allotment to 1,893 square feet. However, parking garages are limited to a maximum size of 1,300 square feet (reduction of 593 square feet from the original calculation).

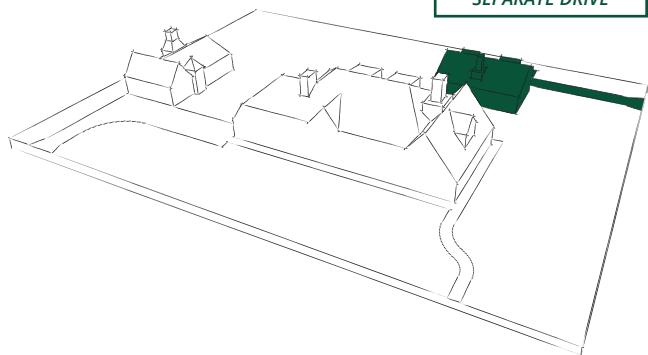
The amount of square footage lost as part of this capping requirement could equate to a fully constructed Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) on this example property. Although there are a number of constraints throughout the City's current Zoning Code, there is also an opportunity to refine existing regulatory language to accommodate ADUs in a number of ways. The following analysis showcases some of these key limiting factors.



## AA SINGLE-FAMILY ZONING LOT



**ADU OPTION:  
DETACHED UNIT WITH  
SEPARATE DRIVE**



The above images show an example of an existing *AA Single-Family* lot with a legal carriage house and garage—totaling approximately 1,500 square feet. The lot has a frontage of 176 feet and an overall lot size of 47,236 square feet. Based on its current dimensions and zoning district, the lot conforms to the width and size requirements of the Zoning Code. To test the capacity of this lot to have an ADU, the current size of the lot was analyzed against Zoning Code regulations and typical ADU configurations.

The current Zoning Code allows accessory buildings within this district to occupy up to 20% of rear yards for conforming lots and up to 40% of rear yards for non-conforming lots, and carriage houses are considered part of this accessory calculation. The above example meets all requirements for a conforming lot and has a rear yard size of approximately 15,000 square feet. At 20% of 15,000 square feet, accessory structures can cover up to 3,000 square feet of the rear yard—leaving 1,500 square feet for an ADU after accounting for the existing garage and carriage house.

Other elements of the Zoning Code could provide some challenges for an ADU. If a homeowner would like to construct a new detached ADU within the *AA Single-Family District*, the creation of a new driveway and separate access point from an adjacent side street could be a challenging endeavor. Current regulations permit only one driveway and curb cut per lot, with the exception of

lots greater than 100 feet wide—which are permitted to have one additional drive and curb cut. While this particular lot is wide enough to permit a second access point, other lots may not be wide enough to permit a second access point without a variance.

In general, lots in the *AA Single-Family District* have very few limiting factors restricting the construction of an ADU of any type. Because of the size of the lot, interior conversions, carriage house or garage conversions, attached unit additions, and detached ADUs with a separate drive are all potential ADU options for this example.

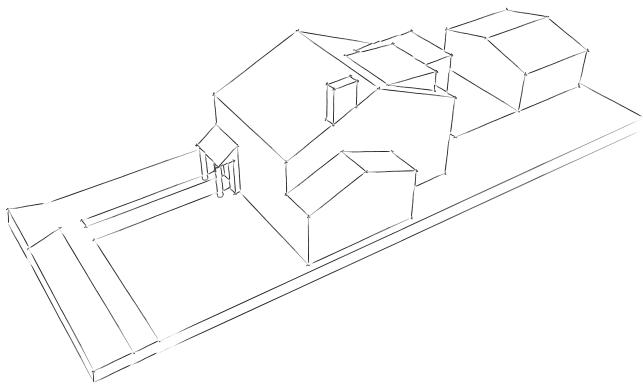
### POTENTIAL ADU TYPES SUPPORTED UNDER CURRENT REGULATIONS

- Interior Conversions (attic, basement, etc.)
- Carriage House/Garage Conversions
- Attached Unit (building addition)
- Detached Unit (potentially with new drive)

### KEY LIMITING FACTORS

- **Lot Width (at building line):** larger lots found within the *AA Single-Family District* have very few limiting factors restricting the construction of an ADU of any type; however, lots within this residential district less than 100 feet wide would not be permitted to have a secondary access point on the property.

## A SINGLE-FAMILY ZONING LOT

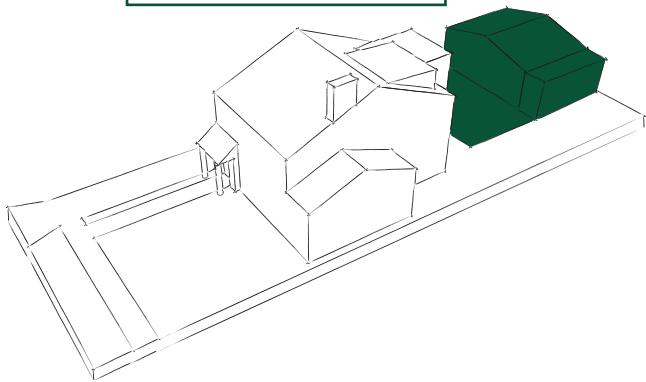


The above images show an example of an existing lot in the *A Single-Family District*. The lot has a 600 square foot detached garage, frontage of 50 feet, and an overall lot size of 7,800 square feet—conforming lots within the *A Single-Family District* have a minimum width of 50 feet and a minimum lot area of 7,500 square feet. Based on its current dimensions and zoning district, the lot conforms to the width and size requirements of the Zoning Code. To test the capacity of this lot to have an ADU, the current size of the lot was analyzed against Zoning Code regulations and typical ADU configurations.

The current Zoning Code allows two (2) garages (1 attached, 1 detached) for a single-family dwelling within the *A Single-Family District*. Garages are not permitted to be larger than 600 square feet plus an additional square foot for every 15 square feet the lot is larger than 6,000 square feet. However, both parking garages combined cannot be larger than 1,300 square feet. The lot pictured above is a conforming lot size of 7,800 square feet, with one detached garage of 600 square feet, and a rear yard that measures approximately 3,000 square feet.

- **Size Above 6,000 SF**
  - $7,800 \text{ SF} - 6,000 \text{ SF} = 1,800 \text{ SF}$
- **Additional Square Footage**
  - $1,800 \text{ SF} / 15 = 120 \text{ SF}$
- **New Structure Size**
  - $600 \text{ SF} + 120 \text{ SF} = 720 \text{ SF}$

### ADU OPTION: CONVERSION & ATTACHED/GARAGE



A structural addition with full garage conversion could create an ADU that is 720 square feet in size on this particular property—so long as the overall parking garage, or structure in this instance, is less than 1,300 square feet total.

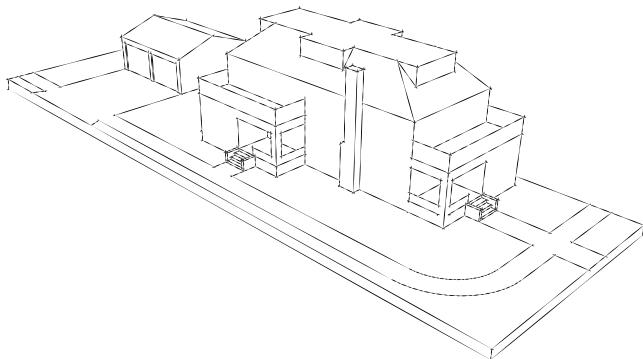
### POTENTIAL ADU TYPES SUPPORTED UNDER CURRENT REGULATIONS

- Interior Conversions (attic, basement, etc.)
- Garage Conversions

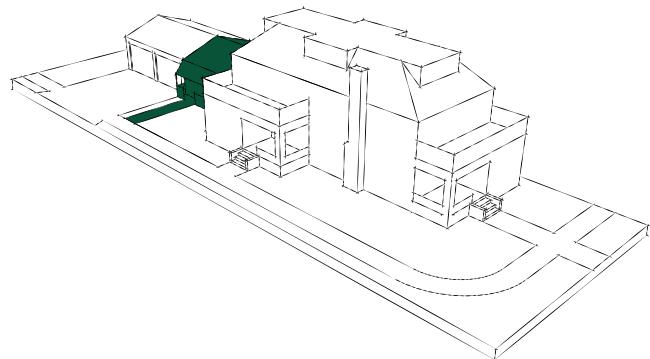
### KEY LIMITING FACTORS

- **Lot Coverage:** 20% rear lot coverage for accessory buildings will typically equate to an accessory structure of approximately 600 square feet—which is often already occupied by a detached garage—a significant hindrance to constructing ADUs.
- **Height:** an addition to a detached garage would have to be to the side of a garage and not above. The maximum height of 15 feet for accessory structures would be an obstacle for expanding an existing garage while maintaining rear yard space.
- **Setbacks:** interior conversions within the Principal Dwelling may necessitate encroachments into required yards/ setbacks to accommodate new points of entry, emergency exits, utilities, etc.
- **Parking:** with the conversion of the detached garage, new considerations for parking will need to be determined.

## B TWO-FAMILY ZONING LOT (DUPLEX)



ADU OPTION:  
ATTACHED/GARAGE



The above images show an example of an existing lot in the *B Two-Family District*. The lot has a duplex, 770 square foot detached garage, frontage of 52 feet, and an overall size of 9,570 square feet—conforming duplex lots within the *B Two-Family District* have a minimum width of 60 feet and a minimum lot area of 10,000 square feet. Based on its current dimensions and zoning district, the lot does not conform to the width and size requirements of the Zoning Code. To test the capacity of this lot to have an ADU, the current size of the lot was analyzed against Zoning Code regulations and typical ADU configurations.

Similar to single-family dwellings, the current Zoning Code allows two-family dwellings to also have two (2) garages (1 attached, 1 detached); however, two-family dwellings may have a parking garage of 1,300 square feet regardless of lot size. The lot pictured above is a non-conforming corner lot of 9,570 square feet, with one detached garage of 770 square feet, and a rear yard that measures approximately 2,700 square feet. Due to this lot being undersized, rear yard coverage is raised from 30% to 40%. However, a private parking garage on a corner lot, like the one pictured above, can occupy up to 60% of the rear yard area.

### **Rear Lot Coverage Square Footage**

- $2,700 \text{ SF} \times 0.60 = 1,620 \text{ SF} (\text{max of } 1,300)$
- $1,300 \text{ SF} - 770 \text{ SF} = 530 \text{ SF}$

Although the above lot could support a 1,620 square foot detached garage structure based on lot coverage alone, it is limited to one (1) 1,300 square foot garage—leaving an opportunity for a 530 square foot attached ADU, while still maintaining the existing parking garage spaces.

### **POTENTIAL ADU TYPES SUPPORTED UNDER CURRENT REGULATIONS**

- Garage Conversions
- Attached/Garage (ground level)

### **KEY LIMITING FACTORS**

- **Lot Coverage, Height, & Setbacks:** similar to the *A Single-Family District*, these dimensional requirements may limit if an ADU can be constructed and what form it could take.
- **On-Street Parking:** overnight on-street parking is currently prohibited throughout the City of Cleveland Heights as a whole. Properties that have the opportunity to accommodate more than two units might struggle to meet the demand for overnight parking on their property.
- **Legal Threes:** while some duplexes have been converted into legal three unit buildings prior to the City adopting its Zoning Code, many two unit buildings might not be warranted the same opportunity for an addition or interior conversion to create a new three unit building—two full-sized units with a smaller ADU within the same principal structure—due to current regulations.

# SECTION 5

# NEXT STEPS

ADUs are growing in popularity across the country, and communities are staying ahead of this transformative housing type by putting in place the right policies and procedures. Nationally, there are few developers that specialize in the construction of ADUs. Therefore, individual homeowners are having to navigate the permitting, design, and construction processes on their own, and often for the first time. It is important that zoning language is clear and resources are available to give homeowners the tools and knowledge necessary to traverse an unfamiliar process.

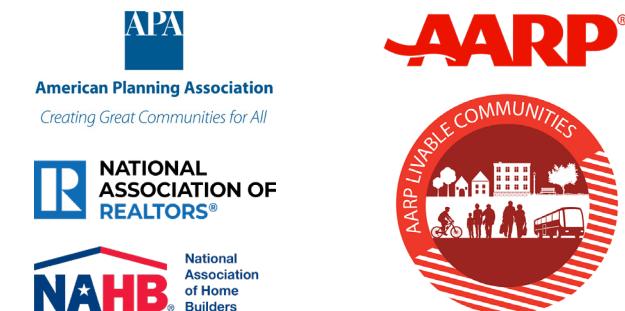
In order for the City to accommodate ADUs in a manner similar to other communities across the U.S., a number of steps would need to be taken—including zoning reform. Having appropriate zoning in place is an integral component for supporting the construction of ADUs. Streamlined permitting and review processes are equally as important for making ADUs an accessible option for the residents of Cleveland Heights. There are a number of agencies and organizations the City can partner with to create equitable housing policies and accessible resources—making ADUs a sustainable housing option.

As seen on the next page, this Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Study has outlined potential next steps in the City's creation of policies to support ADUs. This could include a community education campaign and feedback opportunities, reviewing ADUs with relevant boards and commissions, and creating accessible resources for residents.

Additionally, this ADU Study has also provided a detailed overview of zoning considerations for the City to consider updating its language to accommodate ADU-friendly regulations (page 26). In total, there are three main sections within the Zoning Code that are areas of focus for improvements—Chapters 1103 Definitions, 1121 AA and A Single-Family and B Two-Family Residential Districts, and 1161 Off-Street Parking and Loading Regulations. Relevant subsections have also been identified with potential ordinance changes and other considerations for determining the best ADU guidelines for the City of Cleveland Heights. A major ADU policy consideration is for allowing on-street overnight parking—the table on page 26 outlines a variety of options for addressing this issue.

This ADU Study, its analyses, and findings should be used for building support and composing effective ADU policies. It is a tool tailored to Cleveland Heights, but is designed as a best practices guide for other municipalities considering ADUs within their communities.

## IMPORTANT RESOURCES & PARTNERS



Source: American Planning Association (APA); National Association of Realtors; National Association of Home Builders; AARP, Livable Communities

# POTENTIAL NEXT STEPS FOR ADUs IN THE CITY OF CLEVELAND HEIGHTS



## COMMUNITY EDUCATION, AWARENESS, & OUTREACH

Begin integrating community campaigns surrounding ADUs to increase awareness about them as a functional and attainable housing option. Outline their many benefits and opportunities around Cleveland Heights for residents to consider creating a new housing unit on their property.



## PUBLIC MEETINGS & FEEDBACK

Host an open forum to continue community outreach and begin soliciting more detailed feedback regarding ADUs. The City could consider a community-wide survey to gauge residents' understanding of ADUs, while also collecting data on preferred types, design, etc.



## REVIEW & DISCUSSION

Once outreach and data gathering has concluded, share results publicly and continue the conversation surrounding the development of ADU policies with key boards and commissions—such as City Council, Planning Commission, Architectural Board of Review, Commission on Aging, and the Racial Justice Task Force. Update draft ADU policies and prepare for final adoption.



## DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

Consider a small-scale, hands-on opportunity to test the effectiveness of ADU regulations through a real project to publicly demonstrate the practical application of updated City policies and processes. This could be a compelling argument to help build more support surrounding ADUs as a feasible housing option.



## ADU POLICY ADOPTION & RESOURCES

Once approved, update relevant Zoning Ordinances and continue community campaigns to raise awareness about these changes, and how residents can pursue their own ADU. Consider a dedicated ADU page on the City's website that outlines ADU processes, regulations, relevant Zoning Code sections, and common questions to make the choice of pursuing an ADU an easy one.

# ADU CONSIDERATIONS IN CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

ZONING CODE REFERENCE	POTENTIAL ORDINANCE CHANGES	CONSIDERATIONS
<b>1103 DEFINITIONS</b>		
1103.03 (b) (2) Accessory Building		
1103.03 (b) (2.5) Accessory Parking Space	Ensure existing definitions align with any newly adopted language surrounding ADUs.	Clearly differentiate ADUs separately from other accessory uses or structures—such as gazebos, garages, or sheds.
1103.03 (b) (3) Accessory Use or Structure		
1103.03 (b) (40) Family	Consider removal of Zoning Administrator determination.	Many communities are shifting towards more inclusive definitions of family within zoning and ordinances.
New Term: Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), Attached, Detached, and Interior Conversion	Provide a new definition for ADUs that is reflective of the community's goal for this new housing type, including a differentiation between ADUs and other accessory uses or structures.	Clearly define the types of ADUs desired by the city: attached, detached, interior conversions.
New Term: Principal Dwelling	Provide a new definition for Principal Dwelling that reflects this as the primary structure on a given lot.	Principal Dwelling should indicate the primary residence on a lot—including both single-family and two-family structures in the <i>A</i> or <i>AA Single-Family Districts</i> , and the <i>B Two-Family District</i> .
New Term: Principal Use	Provide a new definition for Principal Use that reflects this as the primary use on a given lot.	The primary use for which a lot is used; residential in the <i>A</i> or <i>AA Single-Family Districts</i> , and the <i>B Two-Family District</i> .
1103.04 Determination of Household Status	Consider removal of this section from the City of Cleveland Heights Zoning Code.	The administrative review of occupant/familial status is uncommon.
<b>1121 AA AND A SINGLE-FAMILY AND B TWO-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS</b>		
1121.02 Permitted Uses	Allow ADUs as a permitted use in all <i>A</i> and <i>AA Single-Family Districts</i> , and <i>B Two-Family Districts</i> ; or	Non-conforming lots or other specific circumstances may warrant a case-by-case review of ADUs—making them a conditionally permitted use. However, allowing ADUs as a use by right could incentivize their construction while still requiring a moderate review process.
1121.04 Conditionally Permitted Uses	Allow ADUs as a conditionally permitted use in all <i>A</i> and <i>AA Single-Family Districts</i> , and <i>B Two-Family Districts</i> as a case-by-case basis to allow for the flexibility to adapt to any nonconformities; or	
1121.05 Accessory Uses	Allow ADUs as an approved accessory use in all <i>A</i> and <i>AA Single-Family Districts</i> , and <i>B Two-Family Districts</i> .	
1121.09 Dwelling Unit Requirements		Permitted buildings on a Zoning Lot in the <i>A</i> or <i>AA Single-Family Districts</i> , and the <i>B Two-Family District</i> should include: one (1) Principal Dwelling (or a single two-family structure) and two (2) accessory structures—including one (1) ADU.
1121.10 Height Regulations	Refine this language to clarify these regulations are for the Principal Dwelling.	
1121.11 Buildings Permitted on a Zoning Lot		
1121.12 Accessory Use Regulations	Include language outlining desired ADU regulations. It is recommended that ADUs are differentiated from other accessory uses and structures with independent guidelines.	ADUs should have their own references and requirements.
1121.12 (a) Minimum Yard Requirements for Accessory Uses	It is recommended that ADUs are accommodated with reduced rear setbacks, especially on smaller lots in the <i>A Single-Family District</i> . If the ADU is attached to the Principal Dwelling, it is recommended that the structural addition uses the yard and setback requirements set forth by the Principal Dwelling and respective zoning regulations.	To accommodate ADUs reduced setbacks and encroachments should be similar to those of detached garages.
1121.12 (b) Permitted Structures in Front Yard and Corner Side Yard	Limit ADUs to rear and side yards, with the exception of projections into setbacks, when necessary; such as staircases for basement and attic access.	It is uncommon to allow ADUs, or most detached accessory structures over 3 feet tall, to fully occupy front yards; however existing carriage houses are an exception.
1121.12 (c) Maximum Front and Side Yard Coverage	Limit ADUs to rear and side yards.	It is uncommon to allow ADUs, or most detached accessory structures over 3 feet tall, to fully occupy front yards; however existing carriage houses are an exception.

ZONING CODE REFERENCE	POTENTIAL ORDINANCE CHANGES	CONSIDERATIONS
1121.12 (d) Maximum Area and Rear Yard Coverage of Accessory Uses	Remove accessory building rear yard coverage maximums; it is recommended to regulate total lot coverage rather than yard-by-yard.	In communities that allow ADUs, rear lot coverages are typically not regulated. It is more common to see total lot coverage requirements, rather than yard-by-yard.
1121.12 (e) Supplemental Regulations for Enclosed Parking Spaces, Private Parking Garages, and Accessory Parking Spaces	Consider regulations for garages associated with ADUs on properties that are large enough to accommodate a detached ADU with a private drive separate from the Principal Dwelling; it is likely that all of these instances would occur within the AA <i>Single Family District</i> . Where applicable, limit ADU garages to 600 SF, whether detached or attached.	Separate garages for ADUs are uncommon, however Cleveland Heights does have a number of lots that could potentially support a large enough ADU with a garage—mostly confined to the large lots in the AA <i>Single Family District</i> .
1121.12 (f) Maximum Number of Accessory Buildings	Allow one (1) Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) per eligible lot; which could count towards the total allotment of two (2) accessory buildings on a single lot.	Permitting two (2) accessory structures per lot is common; including one (1) as an ADU.
1121.12 (g) Maximum Height of Accessory Structures	Allow ADUs be a maximum height of the Principal Dwelling, or 25 feet, whichever is smaller; while holding all other accessory structures to a 15 foot maximum height.	Detached ADUs are commonly found to be between 15 and 25 feet in height.
New Subsection: Maximum ADU Square Footage	Allow ADUs to be constructed up to a maximum size of 800 SF in the A and AA <i>Single-Family Districts</i> , and B <i>Two Family District</i> ; or 1,000 SF for lots over 15,000 SF (AA <i>Single-Family District</i> )—with an exception for existing carriage houses.	ADUs are commonly found to have a maximum square footage of approximately 800SF; however, larger lots have seen ADUs in excess of 1,400 SF or cannot exceed the Principal Dwelling square footage. Carriage house conversions should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis as maximum sizes could be different.
New Subsection: Projections into Yards	Projections into yard setbacks could be necessary to accommodate ADU access points separate from the Principal Dwelling—including front doors and fire escapes.	Projections into yard setbacks are common and typically range between 1 and 5 feet.
1121.12 (j) Residential Use of Existing Carriage House	Allow all existing carriage houses to continue in perpetuity as permitted accessory uses, including structure conversions to ADUs.	Carriage houses are a benefit not found everywhere, and should be permitted as ADUs.
1121.12 (k) Single Family and Two-Family Residential Parking Pad	Ensure these regulations align with any newly adopted language surrounding ADUs, total lot coverages, setbacks, and yard dimensions.	It is more common to regulate total lot coverage rather than by front, side, and rear yards individually.
1121.12 (p) Driveways		
1161 OFF-STREET PARKING AND LOADING REGULATIONS		
1161.03 Required Off-Street Parking Spaces	Although these guidelines are for the principal dwelling, it is recommended to not require ADUs to supply additional off-street parking spaces.	It is common to not require additional parking for an ADU. However, this is typically supplemented with nearby on-street parking options.
1161.105 Single-Family and Two-Family Residential Driveways	Allow driveways for detached garages be the full width of the structure; in alignment with attached garage regulations to support an additional off-street parking space if needed.	Visual implications would be minimal.
ON-STREET PARKING REGULATIONS		
New On-Street Parking	<p>Allow on-street parking throughout the city to accommodate increased residential density. However, parking enforcement and roadway maintenance would also need to be considered as well. On-street parking could take on a variety or combination of different formats. Some solutions could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow on-street parking on roadways that are within or adjacent to predetermined zoning districts—such as the A and AA <i>Single-Family Districts</i> and B <i>Two-Family District</i>;</li> <li>Allow on-street parking during predetermined hours—such as overnight only or other restricted hours (i.e. 5:00pm - 7:00am); and/or</li> <li>Allow on-street parking based on a paid pass program—people that purchase a parking pass for their vehicle(s) can park on designated streets within the city; which could include a visitor pass to residents for transient guests.</li> </ul>	On-street parking is commonly found in higher-density residential areas.



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