

Outreach Meeting Highlights

Key themes from those who attended community outreach meetings identified what change they would like to see in ADU ordinance and offered ideas and solutions. The major themes raised during the meetings were consistent with the survey findings. Some participants expressed concern that the current ordinance is very restrictive for building an ADU. Minimum lot size and deed restriction were mentioned as the most significant constraints. Participant suggested that feasibility and the size of the ADU should be based on FAR and lot coverage, however, they agreed that ADUs should be smaller than the main house. Most participants favored ADUs on smaller lots near transit.

Public input at the outreach meetings and in the survey responses reflected significant support for making the code more flexible to allow more ADUs to be built. However, slightly less than 30% of the survey respondents expressed concerns about allowing more ADUs Impact on privacy and single-family neighborhoods and would result in increasing density and population, renting ADUs as short-term rentals, adding to traffic noise, and air pollution, and lowering the quality of life.

Citywide Online Survey

The online survey results reveal two distinct points of view on ADU regulations. One viewpoint is that the current ordinance is too restrictive and does not allow many interested property owners to build ADUs on their properties. The other viewpoint reflects serious concerns about any additional density and possible negative impacts to existing single-family neighborhoods.

A large majority (80%) of the survey respondents are Sunnyvale single-family home owners residing in their home in Sunnyvale, and of those, 65% would consider developing an ADU on their property. 53% of all the respondents are in favor of allowing ADUs on lots smaller than the current minimum lot size for single-family lots in R-0 and R-1 zoning district, and 25% are against lowering minimum lot size requirement. More than 65% think ADU regulations should be more flexible so more single-family homeowners could potentially add one to their properties and ADUs should be encouraged (through more flexible development standards) in areas near transit.

The survey also included a question about types of incentives the City should offer to encourage more ADUs. 69% responded that the City should help people navigating the permit and design processes. Slightly less than half of the respondents would like to reduce the parking requirement, allow ADUs closer to property line, and/or allow ADUs larger than 700 square feet with more than 1 bedroom.

Currently, the City requires a deed restriction to be recorded that requires either the main home or the ADU on the property to be owner-occupied for 20 years from the date of recordation. The owner can rent out one of the units, but must live in the other. More than 43% of the respondents do not think the owner should have to live on the property if they decide to rent out both units. However, 31% think that City should keep the deed restriction requirement. In fact, more than 20% of those prefer the restriction to be permanent.

1. Which of the following statements best describes you?

		%	Count
Sunnyvale single family home owner residing at my home in Sunnyvale		79.7%	153
Sunnyvale single family home owner renting out my home in Sunnyvale		1.0%	2
City of Sunnyvale Renter		7.3%	14
I do not own property/live in Sunnyvale		2.1%	4
Mobile home/condominium owner		7.3%	14
Other		2.6%	5

2. If you own a single-family residential property (not including mobile homes, condos or townhomes) in Sunnyvale, would you consider developing an ADU on your property?

		%	Count
Yes		55.0%	105
No		28.8%	55
N/A (I don't own a single-family property)		16.2%	31

3. Would you be in favor of allowing ADUs on lots smaller than the current minimum lot size for single-family lots in R0 and R1 zoning districts (8,500 square feet or greater)?

		%	Count
Yes		52.6%	101
No		24.5%	47
Depends on what the new minimum lot size would be		12.0%	23
Depends on how big the ADU would be		6.8%	13
No strong opinion on the topic		2.1%	4
Other		2.1%	4

4. Do you feel ADU regulations should be more flexible so more single-family homeowners could potentially add one to their property?

		%	Count
Yes		65.1%	125
No		22.4%	43
Maybe		11.5%	22
Other please comment below		1.0%	2

5. Do you think ADUs should be encouraged (through more flexible development standards) in areas near transit?

		%	Count
Yes		61.5%	118
No		22.9%	44
No Strong Opinion		15.6%	30

6. Do you think the City should offer the following types of incentives to encourage more ADUs?(check all that apply?)

		%	Count
Allow them closer to the property line		47.4%	91
Allow ADUs larger than 700 square feet and/or more than 1 bedroom		43.8%	84
Provide assistance to help people navigate the permitting and design process		68.8%	132
Reduced parking requirements		45.8%	88
Other		7.3%	14
I do not think the City should offer any incentives to encourage more ADUs		25.5%	49

7. Currently, the City requires a deed restriction to be recorded that requires either the main home or the ADU on the property to be owner-occupied for 20 years after the ADU is built. The owner can rent out one of the units, but must live in the other. Do you agree with this requirement?

		%	Count
Yes, 20 years is a good time frame		11.5%	22
Yes, but this requirement should be permanent		19.9%	38
No, I do not think the owner should have to live on the property if they decide to rent out both units		42.9%	82
No strong opinion		10.5%	20
Other		15.2%	29