



Housing
Transportation
Community Spaces

To: Knoxville Knox County Planning

From: Drew Harper

Date: 08.09.2023

Subject: 8-C-23-0A

I am writing to support this proposed amendment on behalf of Yes! Knoxville. The reforms proposed in this amendment will simplify the process for constructing Accessory Dwelling Units and will make any new construction more effective in meeting the goals of providing housing and developing a vibrant urban landscape. Specifically:

Eliminating off-street parking requirements for ADUs - The current code incentivizes a never-ending cycle of construction in which lawns are replaced with slabs of concrete for storing automobiles. This design practice harms the environment both by permanently eliminating permeable land for rainwater mitigation, but also by encouraging private automobile use.

Easing limits on the allowable square footage of ADUs - Increasing allowable square footage will give homeowners more flexibility in design, will put ADU-dwellers on more equal standing with those who live in a "primary" dwelling, and will allow for families to remain in traditionally-designed neighborhoods if they want to raise children and expand their families. Many existing properties that are amenable to ADU development contain primary structures with relatively low square footage (600-900 sq. feet). Under current codes, any ADU building would be laughably tiny and financially unfeasible. This change would put the ability to own or to live in an ADU within reach of more middle-class people.

Removing the owner-occupant requirement - Though at first glance, the owner occupant requirement may seem like a pro-housing affordability policy, it has the practical effect of strangling actual construction of ADUs therefore restricting housing supply and weakening the stated purpose of the codes regarding ADUs. Removing the requirement would place ADUs in the same category as other building types such as detached single family homes, apartment homes, townhomes, cottage courts, et al.

Again, these proposed changes would not prevent anyone from complying with the code exactly as it is today, without these proposed reforms. These simply allow more flexibility and freedom.

Saying Yes,

Drew Harper

Yes! Knoxville - Advocate

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