

# Item #4

# Accessory Dwelling Units

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REVIEW OF PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE UNIFIED  
DEVELOPMENT CODE (UDC) RELATED TO ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

PLANNING COMMISSION STUDY SESSION

JUNE 30, 2021



# UDC Amendment to allow ADUs

## **Proposal:**

Amend the Unified Development Code to allow Accessory Dwelling Units in the City of Tucson. The proposal would:

- Allow one ADU per residential lot
- Limit maximum size to 1000 SF
- Requires 1 parking space w/ waivers for proximity to transit and bike routes
- Require a cool roof

### Extensive public process to inform proposal

- 7 stakeholder meetings
- 7 public meetings with 200+ attendees
- 78 online comments
- 157 survey responses

### Mostly positive response from our community

- 72% either strongly or somewhat agree that the proposal will benefit the community

### Some concerns related to the following:

- ADU size
- Owner-occupancy
- Historic preservation
- Short-term rentals
- Affordability
- Parking

# Mayor and Council Direction

- On November 17, 2020, the City of Tucson Mayor and Council held a study session to begin the process to revise the Unified Development Code (UDC) to allow for Accessory Dwelling Units
- At that meeting they provided the following direction for staff:
  - “initiate an amendment to the Unified Development Code which would define and permit Accessory Dwelling Units, identify the zones where they appropriate and create development standards regulating unit size, height, minimum lot size, maximum lot coverage, setbacks, parking requirements and other relevant aspects in order to promote this accessible and attainable housing option in a manner that is compatible with existing neighborhoods,
  - begin public outreach on this amendment; inclusive outreach to hear from a variety of constituents, which includes often overlooked communities such as communities of color, low income communities, renters, homeowners, and other stakeholders, and
  - return to Mayor and Council with a proposed amendment by June 2021.”

# Accessory Dwelling Units

## What is an Accessory Dwelling Unit?

- An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is an independent housing unit with its own **KITCHEN**, bathroom, living and sleeping space.
- These units are typically under 1,000 square feet and are accessory to a primary residence.

## Also known as a:

- Casita
- Mother-in-law unit
- Granny Flat
- Backyard Cottage
- Carriage House

# Accessory Dwelling Units

## Types of Accessory Dwelling Units

ADUs can be detached, attached, or a separate space within the primary house

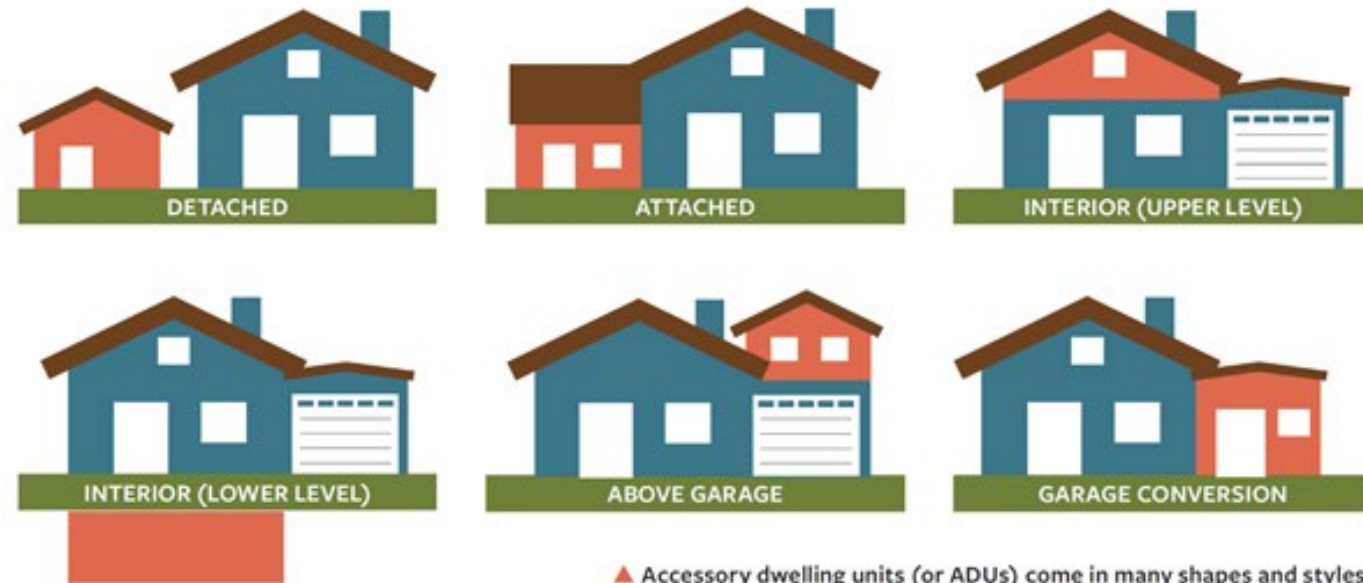


Image Source: The ABCs of ADUs: A guide to Accessory Dwelling Units and how they expand housing options for people of all ages (AARP)

# Existing Casitas in Tucson



**Casita accessed from the alley or through an interior courtyard**

# Existing Casitas in Tucson



**Attached guest house**



**Affordable Housing**



**Housing Options for Seniors**



**Climate Action and Resiliency**

What are some of the reasons for this code amendment?





# Overview of Stakeholder Meetings

## December

- Background and goals for code amendment
- Case studies from other communities
- Project timeline

## January

- Current Zoning Regulations
- Goal and Issue Prioritization

## February

- ADU site tests – example scenarios
- Maintain lot coverage and height regulations
- Setbacks – explore more flexible options
- Consider appropriate ADU size restriction

## March

- Owner-Occupancy
- Group dwellings
- Short-term Rentals

## April

- Affordable Housing
- Parking

## May

- Review of Draft Proposal

## June

- Review of Draft Code Amendment

# Goals

## Goals for code amendment as prioritized by stakeholder group:

1. Increase the supply of affordable housing
2. Encourage flexible housing options for seniors who wish to age in place
3. Support multi-generational households
4. Support climate-resilient and sustainable infill development that supports multi-modal transportation
5. Provide supplemental income to landowners and support local economic stability
6. Allow diverse and flexible housing options within a neighborhood and promote mixed-income communities
7. Permit a housing style that already exists in our community and provide a legal avenue for upgrades
8. Retain neighborhood character

# Issues to be Addressed

## Issues to be Addressed

- Appropriate districts and size and site standards for ADUs – building area, height, setbacks
- Occupancy – rentals, group dwellings, short-term rentals
- Parking and vehicular access
- Affordability and cost to develop an ADU
- Speculation and impact on property values/taxes
- Privacy mitigation
- Enforcement and monitoring
- Sustainability and heat island effect
- Building standards
- Historic Standards and compatibility

# ADUs - What We've Heard



7 meetings of the 40-member stakeholder group



400+ people attended 3 public meetings in February & 4 public meetings in May



76 online comments received



152 survey responses received

Mostly positive feedback to date with concerns about:

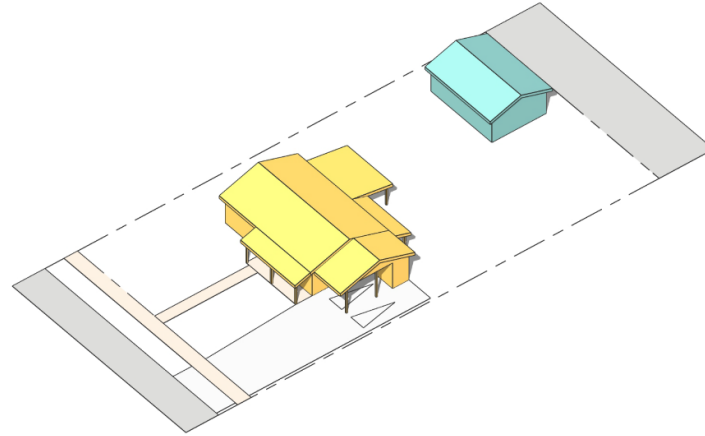
- ADU Size
- Impact on Historic
- Affordability
- Sustainability and Urban Heat Island effect
- Owner occupancy requirement

Draft ADU Code  
Amendment  
Proposal



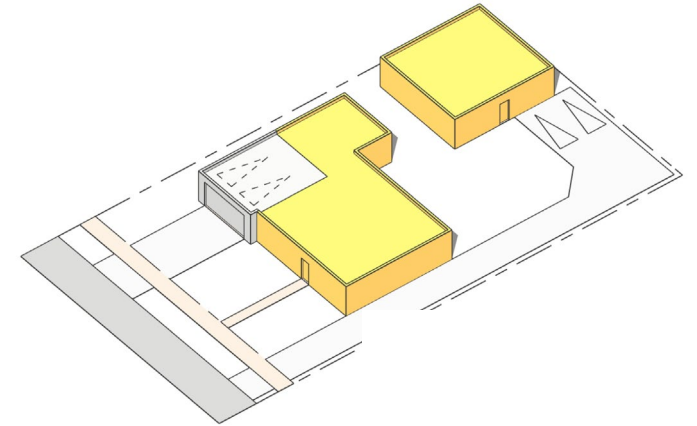
# What is Allowed today

## Sleeping Quarters



- Allowed on any residentially zoned parcel with residential use
- Size limited to 50% of size of principal structure
- Kitchenette allowed
- No additional parking required
- Max building height of 12' unless attached to principal structure

## Second Residential Units

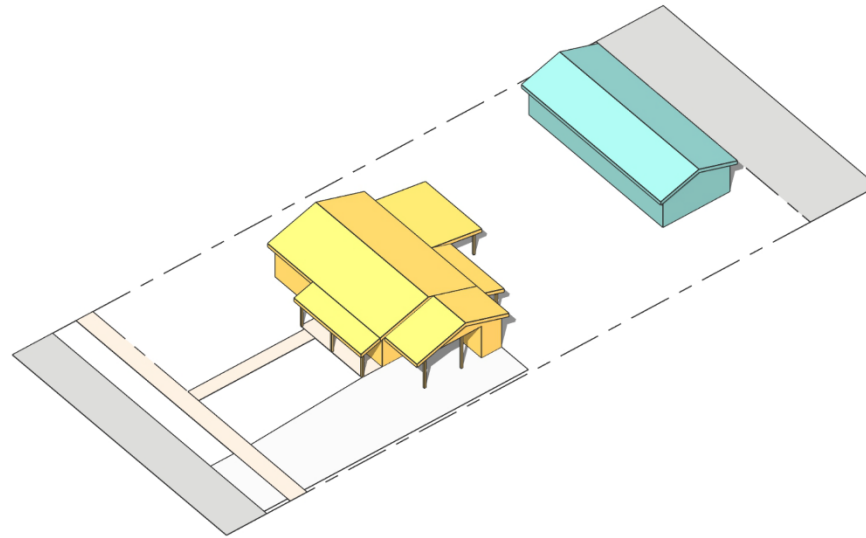


- Allowed in R-1, R-2, & R-3 zones based on lot size
- No size limit (25% difference from primary structure in R-1)
- Full kitchen allowed
- Parking required
- Max building height same as primary dwelling (25')

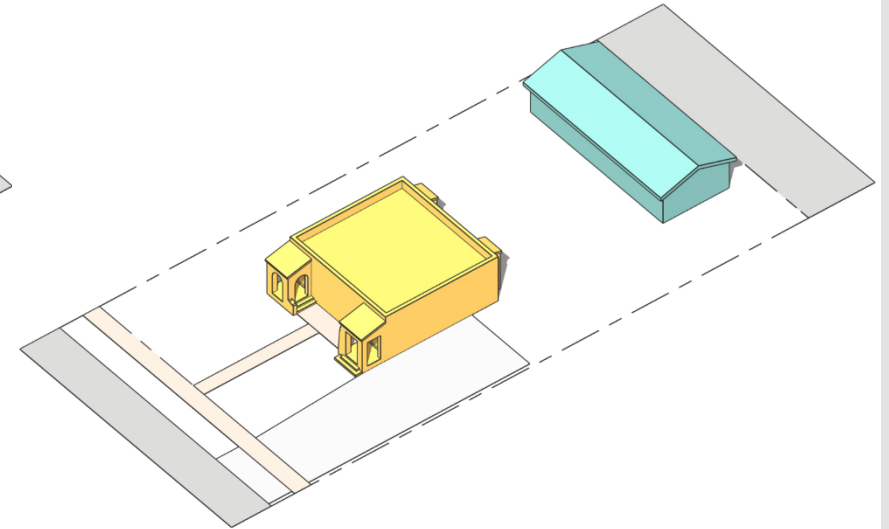
# Draft Proposal: Where can you build an ADU?

## Proposed regulation:

- All lots with single-family or two-family residences may add one ADU
- For existing homes in newer subdivisions, single-family residences may have one ADU, so long as it meets lot coverage requirements of zone
- For new subdivision, ADUs count as .5 units for density calculations.



Single-Family + ADU



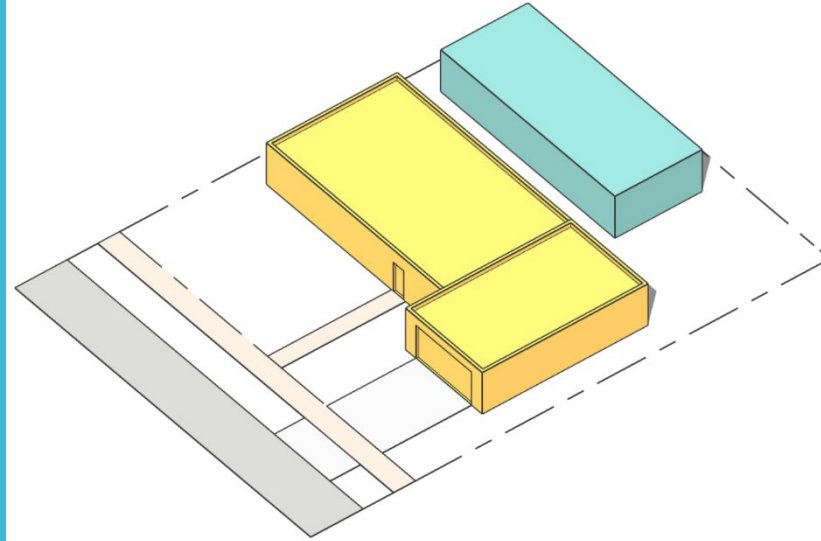
Two-Family + ADU



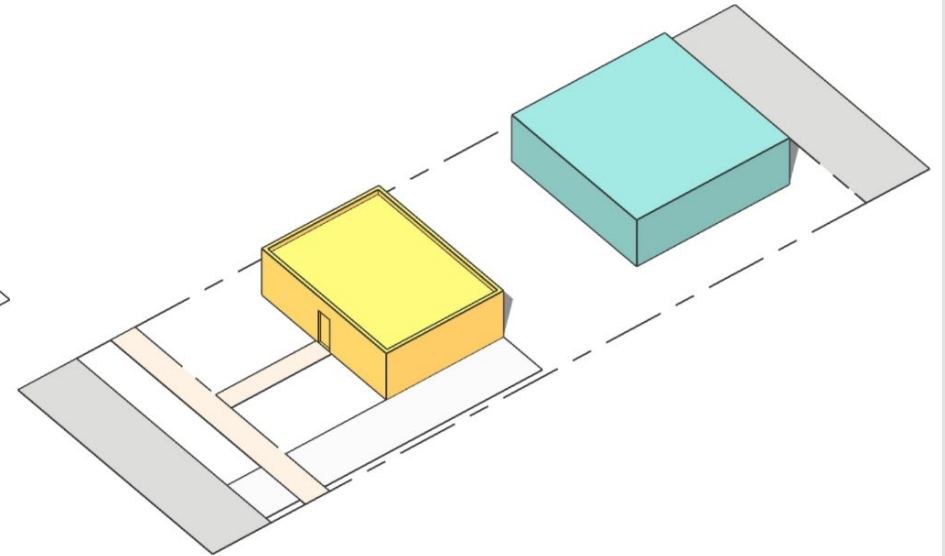
# Draft Proposal: Building Size

## Proposed regulation:

- 1,000 SF maximum size of ADU



R1: 1000 sq ft ADU

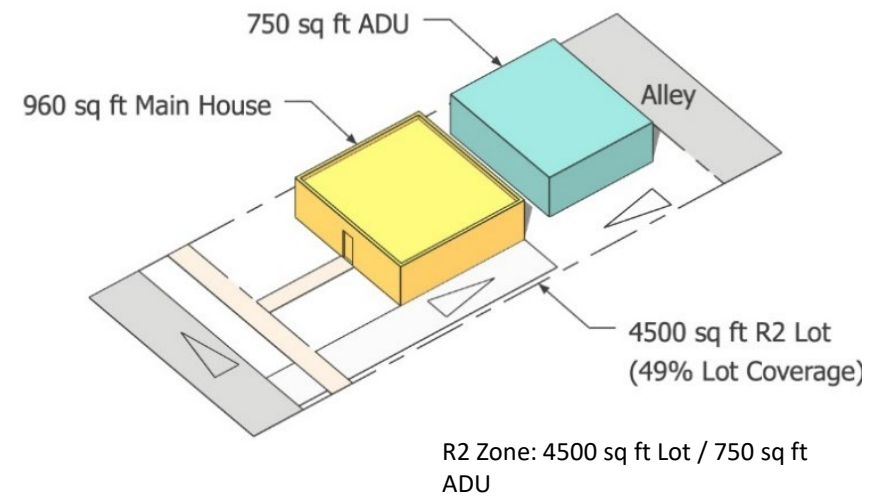
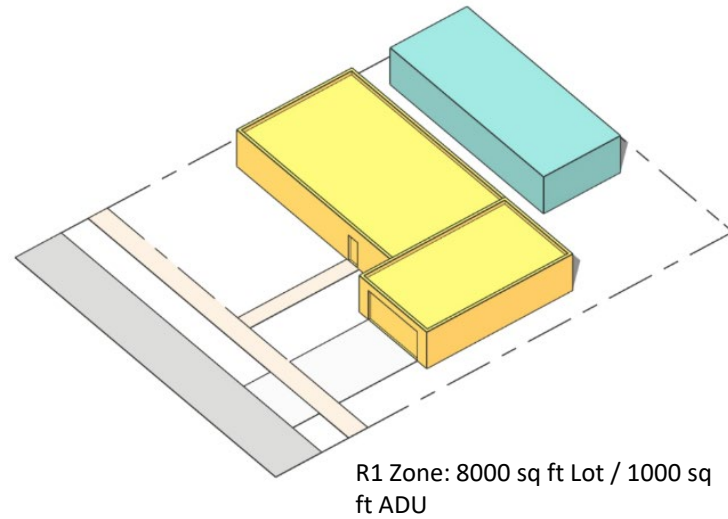


R2: 1000 sq ft ADU

# Area for Potential Refinement:

# ADU Building Size

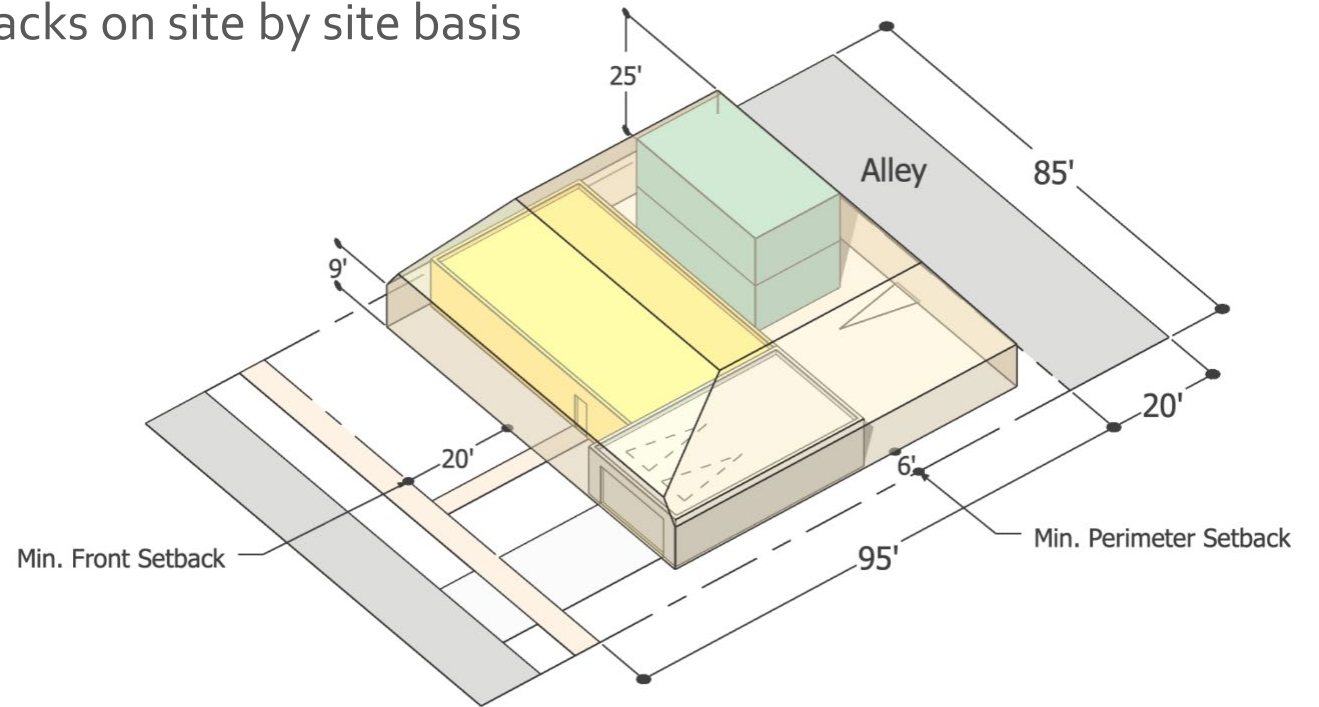
- Of the survey responses and feedback from the public meeting, the most varied responses were regarding ADU building size
- For discussion, the following is an option for refinement:
  - Two-tiered approach
    - **Option 1:** 950 sf maximum for all conforming lot size / 750 sf for non-conforming lots
    - **Option 2:** 750 sf maximum for any lots smaller than 5000 s



# Draft Proposal: Setbacks and development standards

## Proposed Setbacks and Dimensional Standards:

- No proposed changes to setbacks, maximum building height or maximum lot coverage
- Existing Design Development Option (DDO) provides an avenue to reduce setbacks on site by site basis

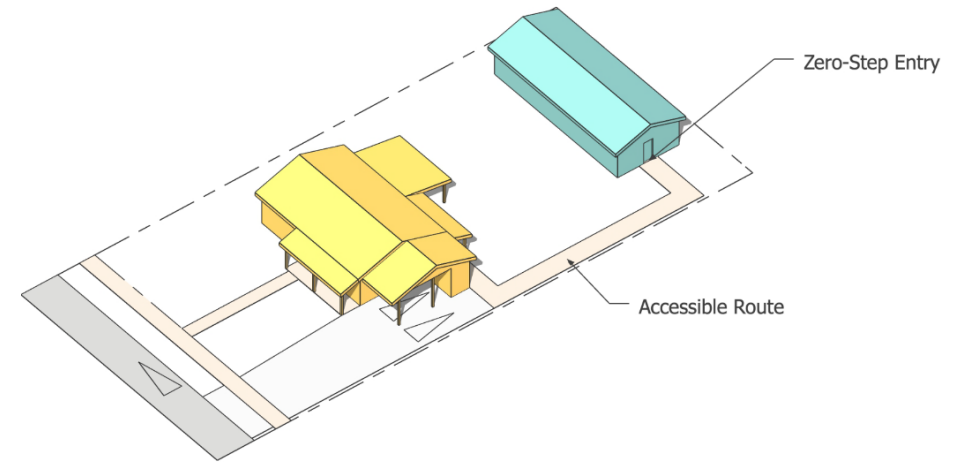


Existing Setbacks/Height Limits

# Draft Proposal: Building Standards

## Existing Building Standards:

- ADUs must be built on a permanent foundation
- ADUs must comply with Inclusive Home Design regulations such as zero step entry, grab bars, etc.



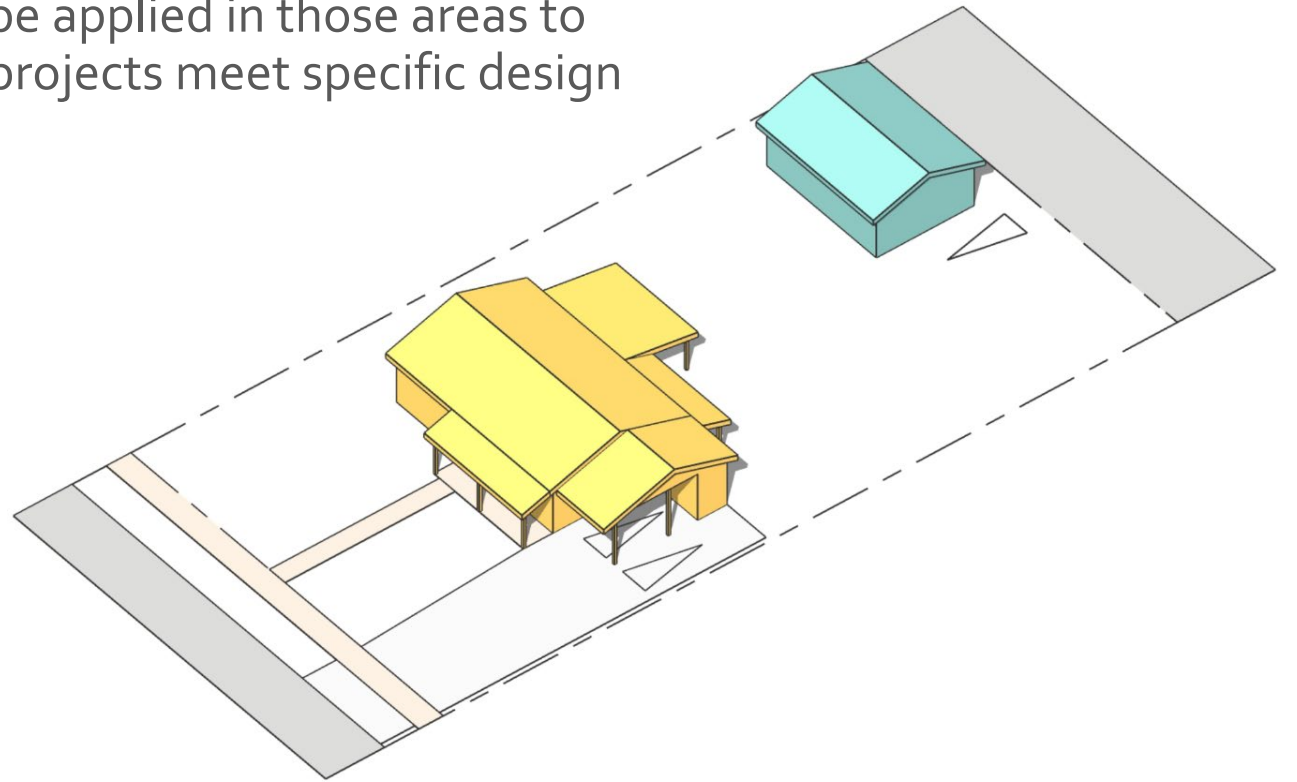
Inclusive Home Design: Accessibility Features

# Draft Proposal:

## Privacy Mitigation / Historic Design Standards

### Proposed regulation:

- Historic Preservation Zone (HPZ) and Neighborhood Preservation Zone (NPZ) design standards and review process will continue to be applied in those areas to ensure that projects meet specific design standards

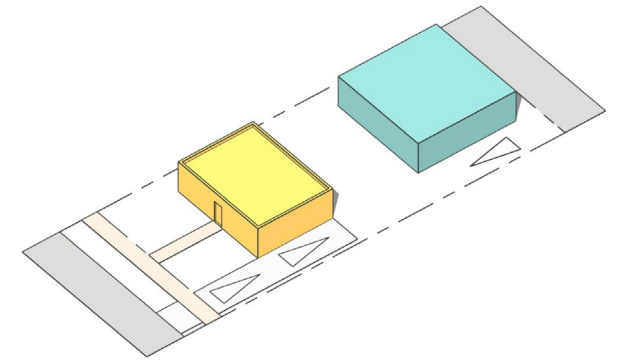


NPZ Standards Applied

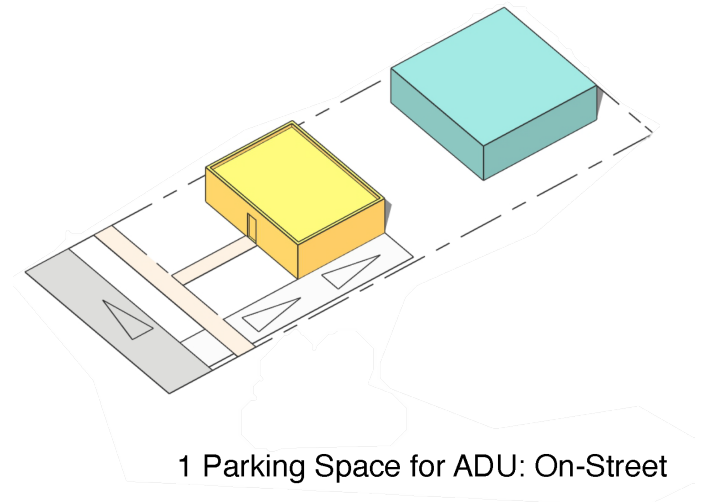
# Draft Proposal: Parking

## Proposed parking regulations:

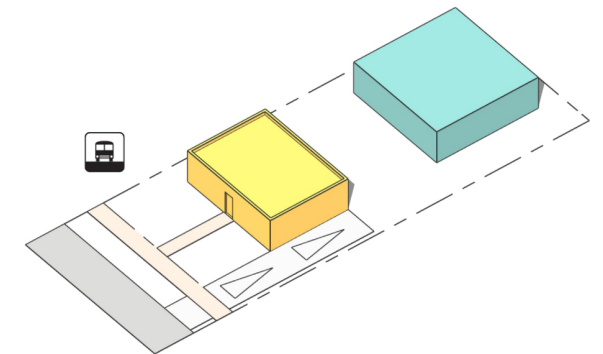
- 1 parking space required per ADU
- Requirement may be satisfied through on-site or on-street parking (on-street may require use of the City's Parking Permit program)
- Parking requirement can be waived based on proximity to transit or bike boulevards
- Parking may be accessed from alleys per UDC regulation
- parking requirements for sites with 5+ bedrooms in R-1 zones only triggered through on-site parking



1 Parking Space for ADU: On-Site (Alley-Loaded)



1 Parking Space for ADU: On-Street



ADU Parking Not Required: Proximity to Transit

# Draft Proposal:

## ADU Occupancy

### Proposed regulation:

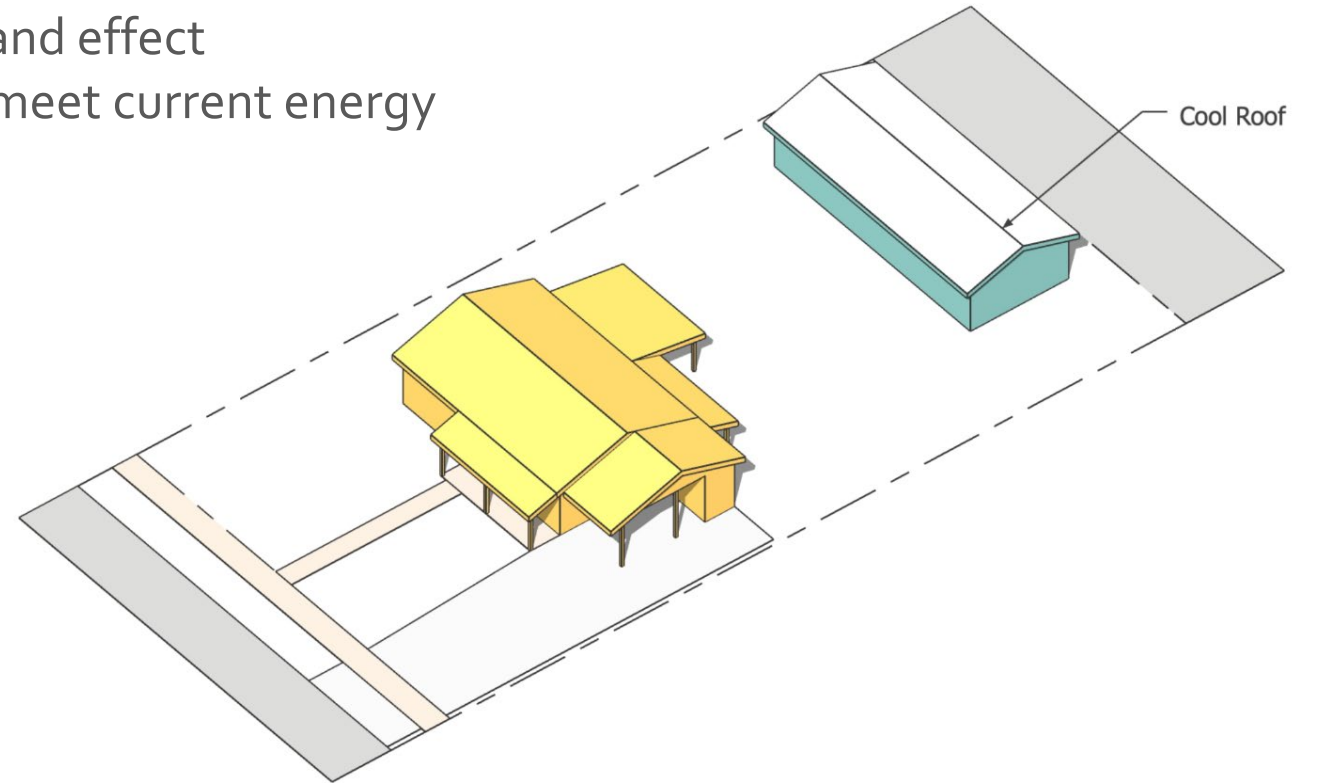
- No proposed owner-occupancy requirement
- Occupancy of ADUs must comply with group dwelling regulations



# Draft Proposal: Sustainability

## Proposed regulation:

- All new ADUs must be developed with a cool roof to address the Urban Heat Island effect
- Projects must meet current energy code



Cool Roof Required for ADU

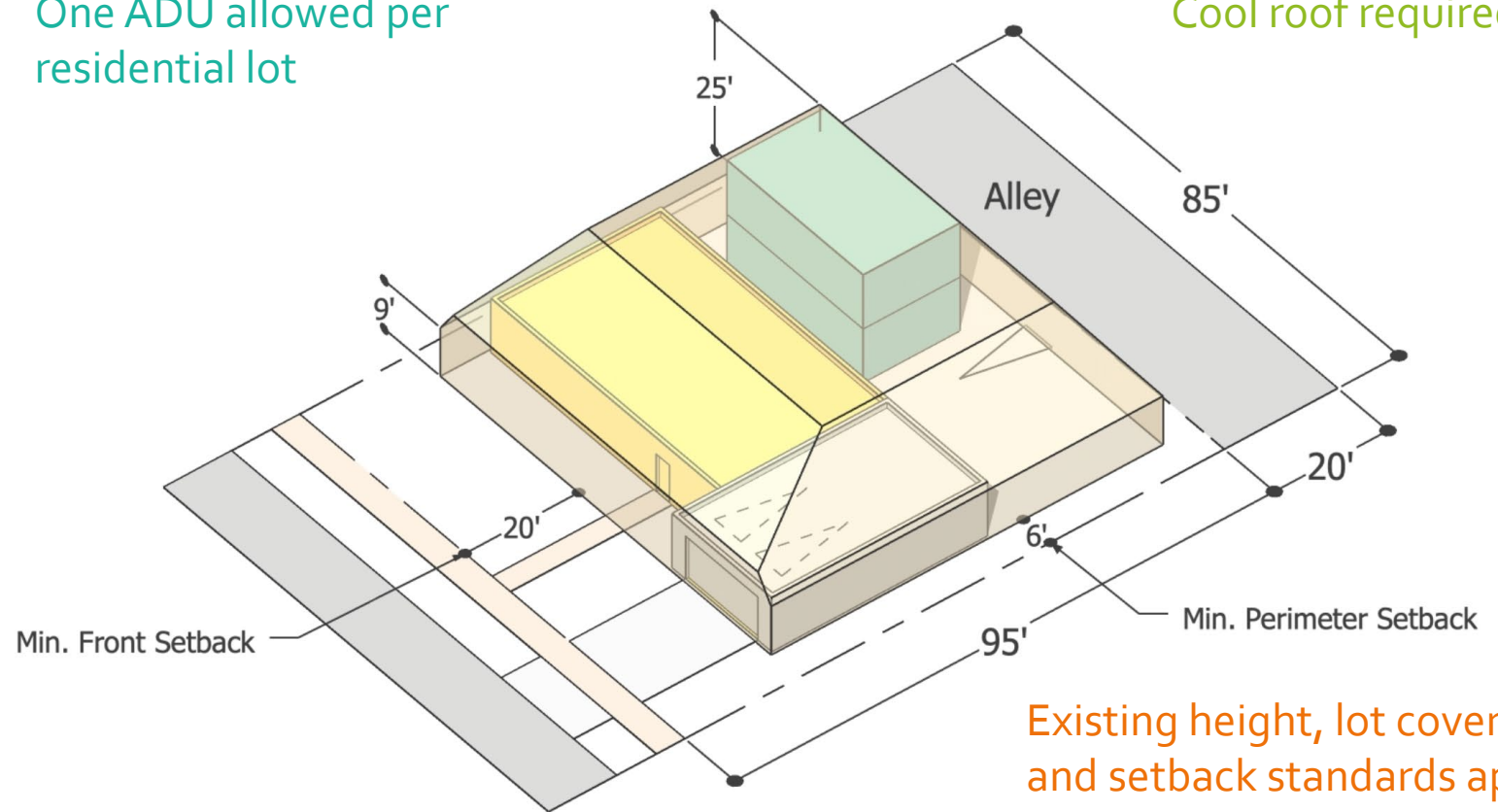


# Summary of ADU Proposal

One ADU allowed per residential lot

1,000 SF maximum ADU

Cool roof required



Existing height, lot coverage and setback standards apply

1 parking space required per ADU w/ reductions for transit access and use of on-street parking allowed

No owner-occupancy requirement

# How do ADUs provide affordable housing?

- Add to supply of housing for our community
- Market-rate ADUs tend to rent for less than is typical for the neighborhood where an ADU is located, promoting mixed-income neighborhoods<sup>1</sup>
- Smaller units can be lower cost to rent
- Units can also be developed and rented for lower costs using subsidies or incentives
- Units can provide additional income for homeowner, making homeownership more sustainable and promoting neighborhood stability
- Many units are not rented on the market, instead serving as housing for family members or friends

<sup>1</sup>Jake Wegmann & Karen Chapple (2014) Hidden density in single-family neighborhoods: backyard cottages as an equitable smart growth strategy, *Journal of Urbanism: International Research on Placemaking and Urban Sustainability*, 7:3, 307-329, DOI:10.1080/17549175.2013.879453

## ADU Supportive Programs:

### Affordable Housing

#### Proposal:

Partner with Cuadro/Pima County Community Land Trust to conduct outreach and provide technical assistance to low- and moderate-income households

Develop model plans that can be used to bring down costs through a design competition or other means

Explore local funding sources and options to provide financial assistance



1-Bedroom Garage Conversion + Modern-Inspired + Warm Neutral

## ADU Supportive Programs:

Amnesty for unpermitted and guest houses

### Proposal:

Amnesty program to be developed to create incentives to bring unpermitted ADUs into conformance with code and to convert existing guest quarters into ADUs



# Initial Online Survey Results



# Initial Online Survey Results

New survey was posted online after Public Meetings on Tuesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>

157 total responses

Survey is located here: <https://arcg.is/1SW9C9>

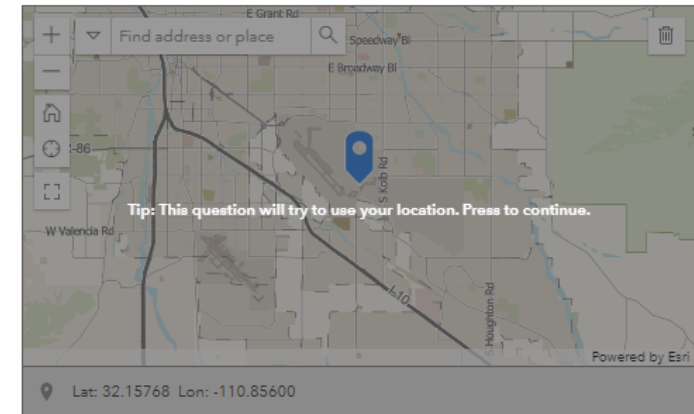
## Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Code Amendment Proposal

This is a survey on the proposed Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Unified Development Code (UDC) code amendment as presented at the four public meetings in May. If you did not attend one of these meetings or would like to review the proposal again, please view the draft proposal [here](#).

Name

Email Address

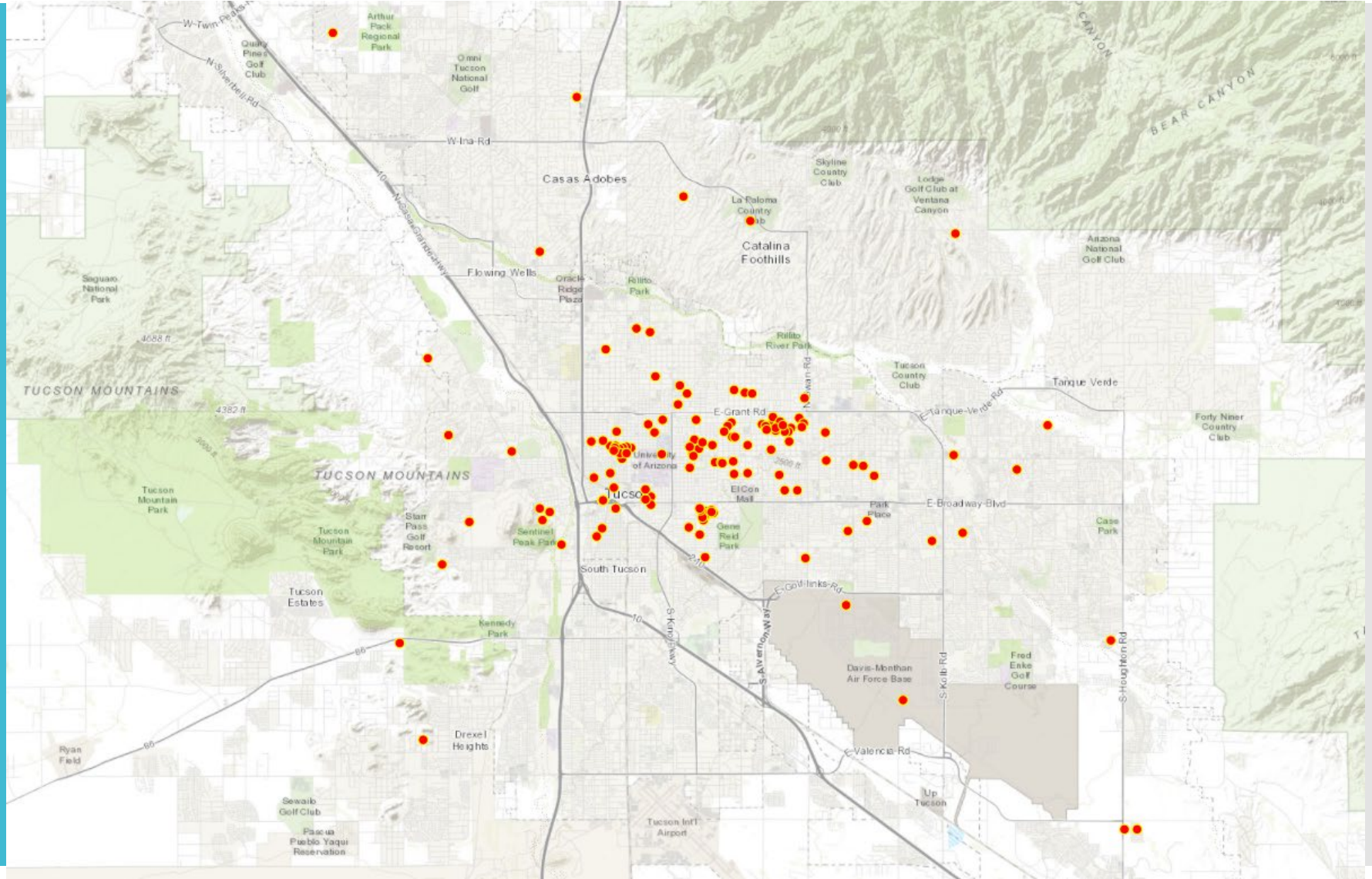
What neighborhood do you currently live in?



What aspects of the draft proposal do you think need refinement?

ADU size and site standards (unit size, setbacks, etc.)

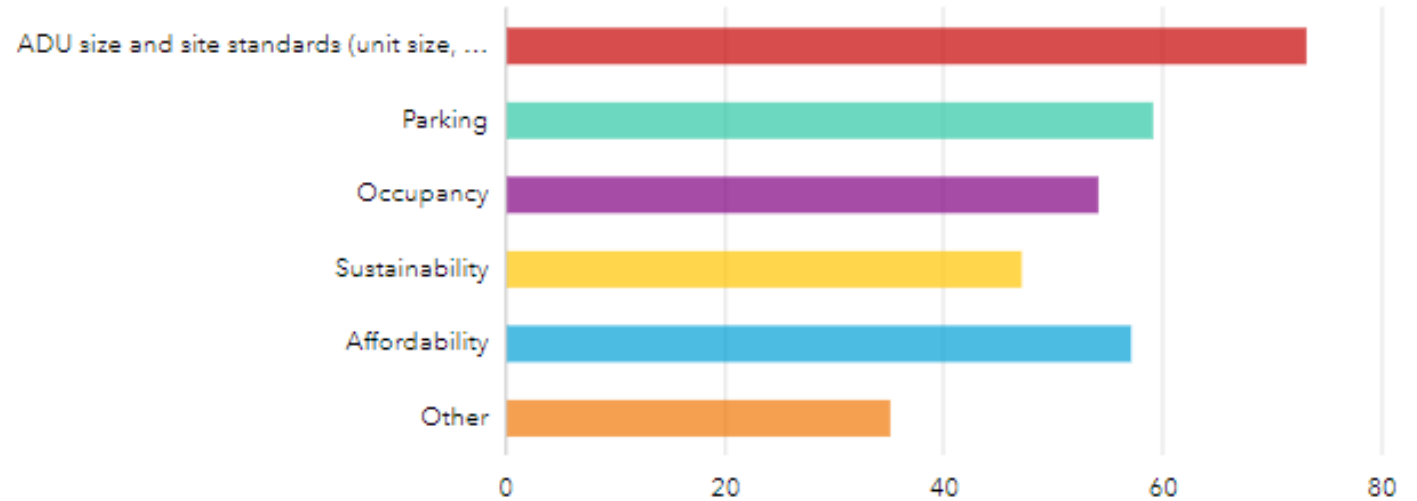
# Initial Survey Results – geographic distribution



# Initial Survey Results – What needs refinement?

What aspects of the draft proposal do you think need refinement?

Column Bar



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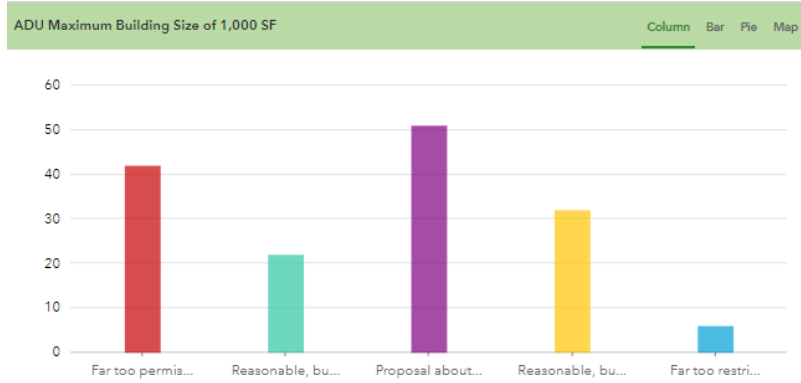
Other response  Empty categories

Answers	Count	Percentage
ADU size and site standards (unit size, setbacks, etc.)	73	46.5%
Parking	59	37.58%
Occupancy	54	34.39%
Sustainability	47	29.94%
Affordability	57	36.31%
Other	35	22.29%

Answered: 128 Skipped: 29



## ADU Maximum Building Size



[Hide table](#)  Empty categories [Sort](#)

Answers	Count	Percentage
Far too permissive	42	26.75%
Reasonable, but too permissive	22	14.01%
Proposal about right	51	32.48%
Reasonable, but too restrictive	32	20.38%
Far too restrictive	6	3.82%

## Development Standards

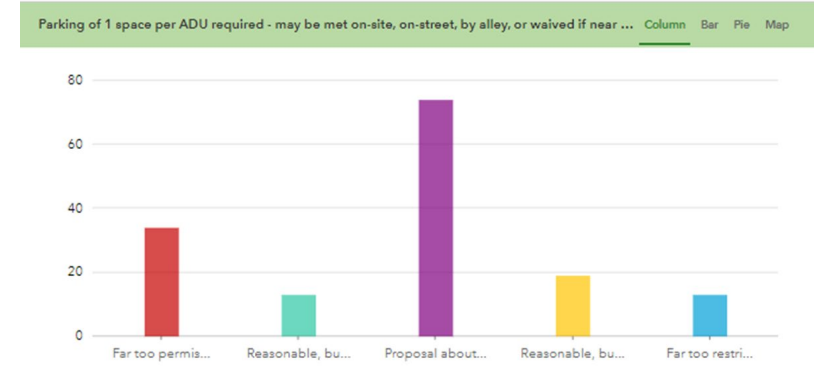


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Answers	Count	Percentage
Far too permissive	28	17.83%
Reasonable, but too permissive	13	8.28%
Proposal about right	69	43.95%
Reasonable, but too restrictive	29	18.47%
Far too restrictive	14	8.92%

Answered: 153 Skipped: 4

## Parking



[Hide table](#)  Empty categories [Sort](#)

Answers	Count	Percentage
Far too permissive	34	21.66%
Reasonable, but too permissive	13	8.28%
Proposal about right	74	47.13%
Reasonable, but too restrictive	19	12.1%
Far too restrictive	13	8.28%

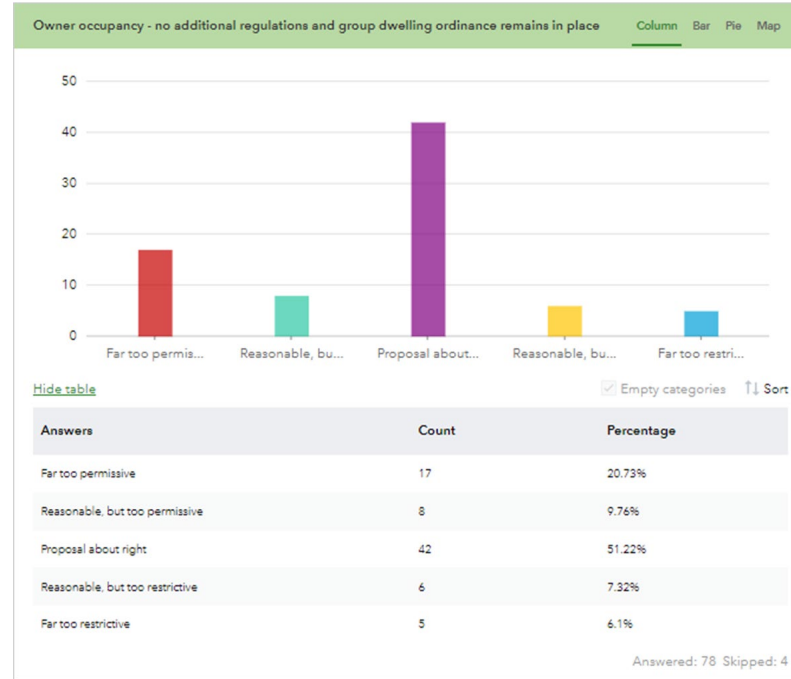
Answered: 153 Skipped: 4

# Initial Survey Results – ADU Size, Development Standards, & Parking

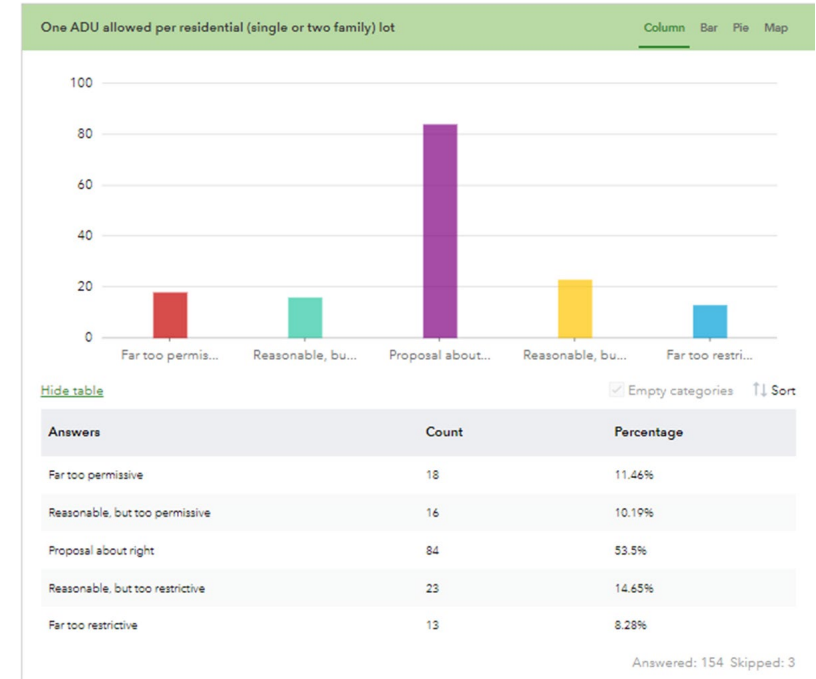
## Sustainability



## Owner-occupancy



## One ADU per Lot

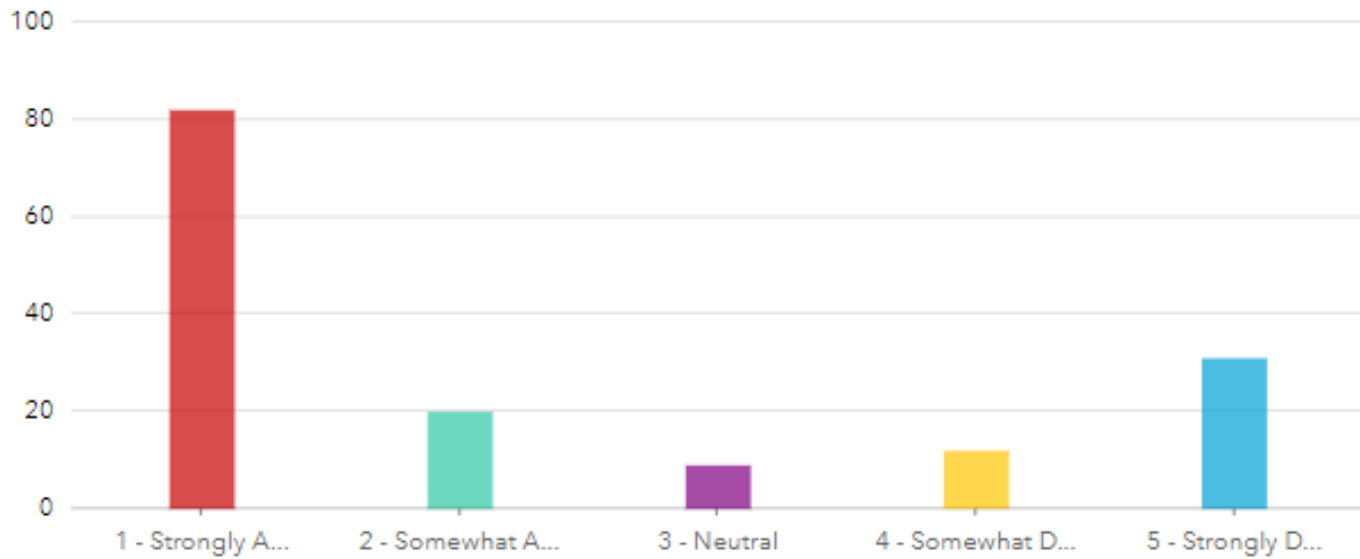


Initial Survey Results – Sustainability, Owner-occupancy, One ADU per Lot

# Initial Survey Results – will this benefit the community?

Do you feel this proposal will benefit our community?

Column Bar Pie Map



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Empty categories [Sort](#)

Answers	Count	Percentage
1 - Strongly Agree	82	52.23%
2 - Somewhat Agree	20	12.74%
3 - Neutral	9	5.73%
4 - Somewhat Disagree	12	7.64%
5 - Strongly Disagree	31	19.75%

Answered: 154 Skipped: 3

# Recommendation

Staff recommends the Planning Commission approve a motion to:

**“Set the Accessory Dwelling Units UDC text amendment for a public hearing on July 28, 2021.”**