

Information Item

Date: April 11, 2023

To: Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, and Members of the City Council

From: Aaron King, Assistant City Manager
Chris Murphy, Director of Planning and Development Services

Subject

Update on Accessory Dwelling Units

Strategic Focus Area: Livable Neighborhoods

Strategic Objective: N/A

Strategic Plan Action Item: N/A

Key Work Item: N/A



Background

Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are small dwelling units which provide similar amenities as a standard house but are secondary to a principal residential structure. Sometimes referred to as granny flats or in-law apartments, ADUs can be created by converting a basement or attic in the principal structure, expanding the principal structure, constructing a separate building on the lot, or converting an existing accessory structure such as a detached garage. They often provide more diverse housing options within lower density, primarily single-family residential neighborhoods.

Accessory dwelling units, either attached or detached, have existed in the Winston-Salem Zoning Ordinance since as early as 1930. In 2017, an update to the Unified Development Ordinances (UDO) amended the ADU regulations by removing kinship requirements per state law and changing the approval process to a Special Use Rezoning which had a minimum \$1,000 fee and required Elected Body approval. The result of these changes was a reduction in the use of the provision, with only two ADUs being approved through the Special Use Rezoning process.

In spring 2021, City Council asked staff to review the ADU ordinance and propose updated provisions to help eliminate barriers to the development of ADUs as one way to aid in addressing housing needs, particularly affordable housing. Staff researched peer cities and best practices and proposed changes to the existing UDO provisions to allow ADUs by-right with specified conditions. In February 2022, City Council approved UDO-CC15 which codified these changes into the UDO. At that time, Council asked staff to return in one year to provide an update on implementation of the amendment changes.

Status Update

Since adoption of UDO-CC15, staff has experienced a significant rise in the number of inquiries regarding ADU regulations particularly regarding setbacks, dimensional allowances, and parameters for conversions of existing structures. Between the adoption of UDO-CC15 in February 2022 and the end of February 2023, a total of ten ADUs have been permitted, three attached and seven detached (see table below and attached map).

Site number	Address	Attached/Detached	Ward
1	1650 Briar Lake Road	Attached	Southwest
2	504 W Sprague St	Attached	South
3	3952 Glen Oak Drive	Attached	Northeast
4	4633 Crestview Drive	Detached	Southwest
5	632 Oaklawn Avenue	Detached	West
6	2461 W Clemmons ville Road	Detached	Southwest
7	5685 Hunsford Drive	Detached	Northeast
8	814 S Hawthorne Road	Detached	Southwest
9	865 Long Drive	Detached	North
10	2314 Elizabeth Avenue	Detached	Southwest

ADUs permitted to date are scattered throughout multiple neighborhoods indicating that the changes to the UDO are achieving the goal of encouraging the creation of ADUs. There may be external reasons why, despite the uptick in inquiries, more ADU permits have not been filed. These could include supply chain issues, financing and mortgage rate increases, and contractor availability. However, staff continues to respond to increased inquiries on ADU possibilities.

Staff will be available at the April Community Development/Housing/General Government Committee meeting to answer any questions regarding the status of ADU regulations in the UDO.