

Accessory Dwelling Units

Final Environmental Impact Statement



The City proposes to remove regulatory barriers in the Land Use Code to make it easier for property owners to create accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and increase the number and variety of housing choices in Seattle's single-family zones. On October 4, 2018, we issued a Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that analyzes how the proposed changes could affect the environment.

What is an ADU?

ADUs are small secondary dwelling units inside, attached to, or in the rear yard of a single-family house. An attached ADU (AADU), often called an in-law unit or basement apartment, is contained within or attached to a single-family house. A detached ADU (DADU), often called a backyard cottage, is a separate structure allowed in the rear yard of certain single-family-zoned lots.

Next steps

The Final EIS identifies and describes potential environmental impacts that could result from the proposal. In 2019, after considering the EIS alternatives and holding a public hearing, the City Council will consider whether to adopt changes to the Land Use Code related to ADUs. The public hearing and all Council meetings offer opportunities for public comment.

For more information visit seattle.gov/council/ADU-EIS.

Email the project team at ADUEIS@seattle.gov.



Preferred Alternative

The Final EIS analyzes a Preferred Alternative that combines elements of the two action alternatives evaluated in the Draft EIS and reflects input received during the Draft EIS comment period. Its key features include:

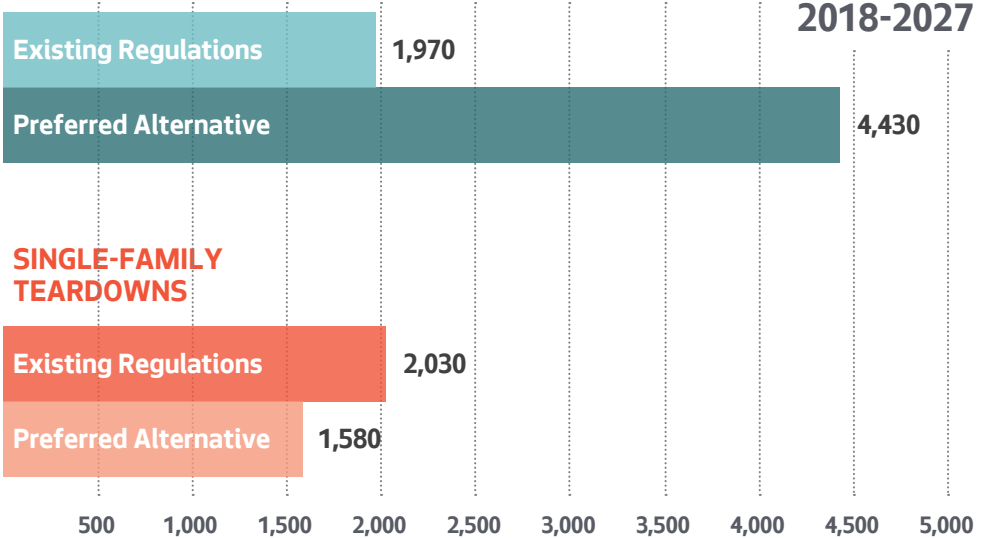
- » Allowing two ADUs on one lot
- » Removing the off-street parking requirement
- » Allowing DADUs on lots of at least 3,200 square feet
- » Removing the owner-occupancy requirement
- » Requiring one year of continuous ownership to establish a second ADU
- » Allowing DADUs of up to 1,000 square feet, the same size currently allowed for AADUs
- » Increasing DADU height limits by 1-2 feet, with flexibility for green building strategies
- » Providing flexibility for one-story DADUs accessible to people with disabilities or limited mobility, with limitations on tree removal
- » Establishing a new floor area ratio (FAR) standard that limits the maximum size of new single-family homes and encourages ADUs

Forecasting ADU production

To evaluate potential impacts of the proposed Land Use Code changes, the EIS includes estimates of the **number of ADUs produced** over the next 10 years under existing regulations and under the Preferred Alternative.

We also compare estimates of **single-family homes that would be torn down** under baseline conditions and under the proposal.

ADUs PRODUCED



Development outcomes 2018-2027

Summary of issues

In December 2016, the City's Hearing Examiner identified several issues of concern for additional analysis in this EIS. These include evaluating and focusing the impacts discussion on the following elements of the environment:

» Housing and Socioeconomics (Section 4.1)

The analysis considers how the proposal changes could alter the underlying real-estate economics in single-family zones. We evaluate potential impacts on housing affordability and displacement.

» Land Use (Section 4.2)

We evaluate potential land use impacts by considering whether the proposed code changes would result in changes to building density, population density, or scale that would be incompatible with existing development in Seattle's single-family zones.

» Aesthetics (Section 4.3)

We evaluate how the proposal would affect the visual character of single-family zones. We use three-dimensional visual modeling to illustrate the potential changes to the scale and form of development.

» Parking and Transportation and (Section 4.4)

We compare existing on-street parking with the expected increase in demand for on-street parking. We also consider how overall population changes would affect the service levels of existing transportation networks in the context of the growth and impacts considered in the Comprehensive Plan EIS.

» Public Services and Utilities (Section 4.5)

We evaluate potential impacts to public services and utilities by considering the overall changes in population anticipated under each EIS alternative relative to the existing service levels for each public service and utility.

EIS study area

The study area for the EIS includes all land in single-family zones outside existing urban villages and proposed urban village expansion areas studied in the Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) EIS.

