

Recommended Amendments to County Code Chapter 19.15: Accessory Dwelling Units

Presented by MSD Planning and Development Services



Unincorporated SLCo Moderate Income Housing Strategy 2023-2027

B. INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

Demonstrate investment in the rehabilitation or expansion of infrastructure that facilitates the construction of Moderate Income Housing.



E. ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

Create or allow for, and reduce regulations related to, internal or detached accessory dwelling units in residential zones.

F. DENSITY IN LAND USE CENTERS

Zone or rezone for higher density or moderate income residential development in commercial or mixed-use zones, commercial centers, or employment centers.



O. WORK WITH PARTNERS

Apply for or partner with an entity that applies for state or federal funds or tax incentives to promote the construction of moderate income housing, [...] or any other entity that applies for programs or services that promote the construction or preservation of moderate income housing.



V. SMALL-SCALE MULTIFAMILY USES

Create or allow for, and reduce regulations related to, multifamily residential dwellings compatible in scale and form with detached single-family residential dwellings and located in walkable communities within residential or mixed-use zones.



Unincorporated SLCo Moderate Income Housing Strategy E

E: "Create or allow for, and reduce regulations related to, internal or detached accessory dwelling units in residential zones"



01

Research existing barriers to ADU construction in Unincorporated County

2023

02

Review literature and case studies related to overcoming identified barriers

2023-2024

03

Present findings to Salt Lake County Council

2024

04

Implement solutions as directed by the Council

Ongoing



Utah Moderate Income Housing Reporting Requirements



On an annual basis, Salt Lake County must show new progress toward implementing each of its five adopted housing strategies.

Failure to demonstrate progress toward the implementation of housing strategies could result in Salt Lake County losing priority funding status for a number of State funding programs.



Unincorporated SLCo Housing Challenges

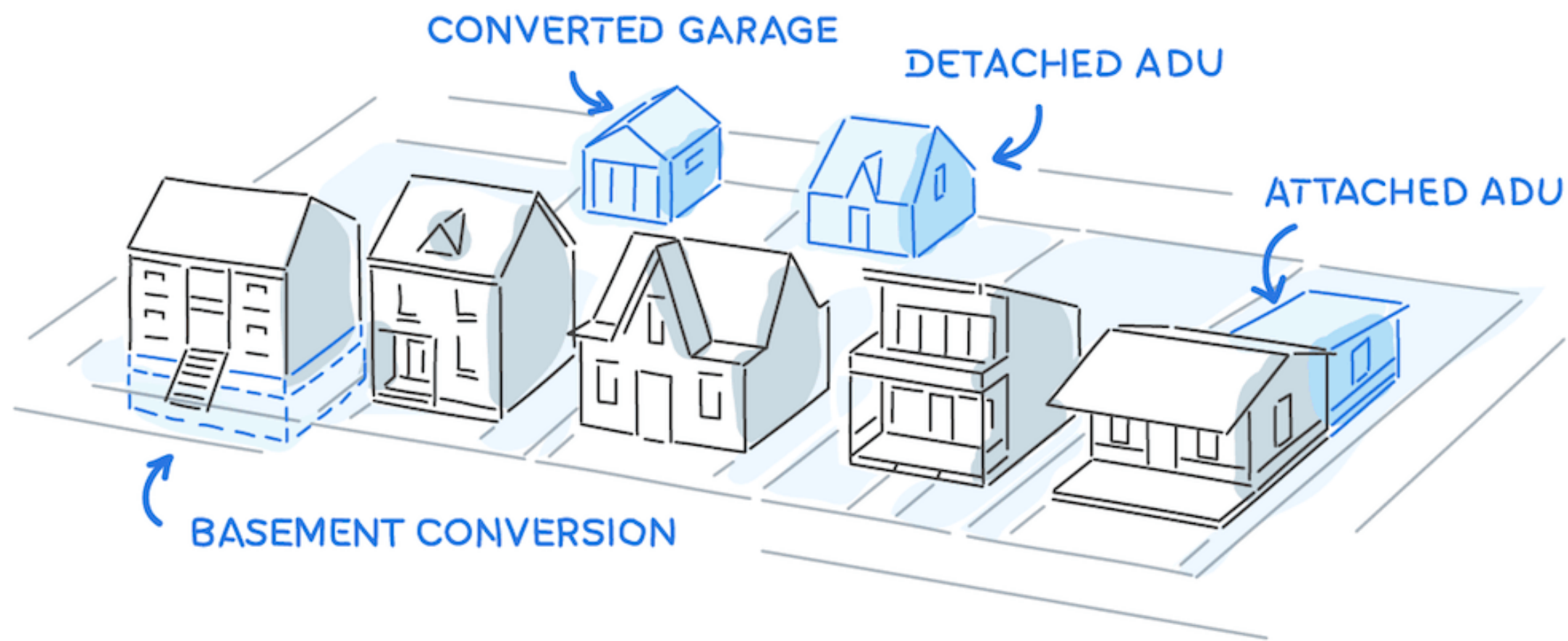


**23% of Unincorporated Salt Lake County
Households are housing-cost burdened.**

(Spending more than 30% of their income on housing)

Housing cost-burden was a significant issues for BOTH owners and renters.





Credit: City of South Gate

Why are ADUs an attractive solution to SLCo housing challenges?

BONUS! The Turner Center for Housing Innovation recently found that on average, ADUs are offered for 58% below market rent.

Provide small-scale affordable rental options.

ADUs increase rental supply incrementally. They will not have the same visual or traffic impact as a new multi-family building.

Produce supplemental income for homeowners.

Homeowners can add ADUs to their property as a way to supplement their income and keep up with mortgage payments.

Create opportunities for residents to age in place.

Residents on fixed income can rely on rent from ADUs to help pay housing costs. They can also rent out units to caretakers, or downsize.





POLITICAL



REGULATORY



FINANCIAL



PROCEDURAL

What are the potential barriers to ADU development?



Only two units have received land use and building permit approvals since 2021.

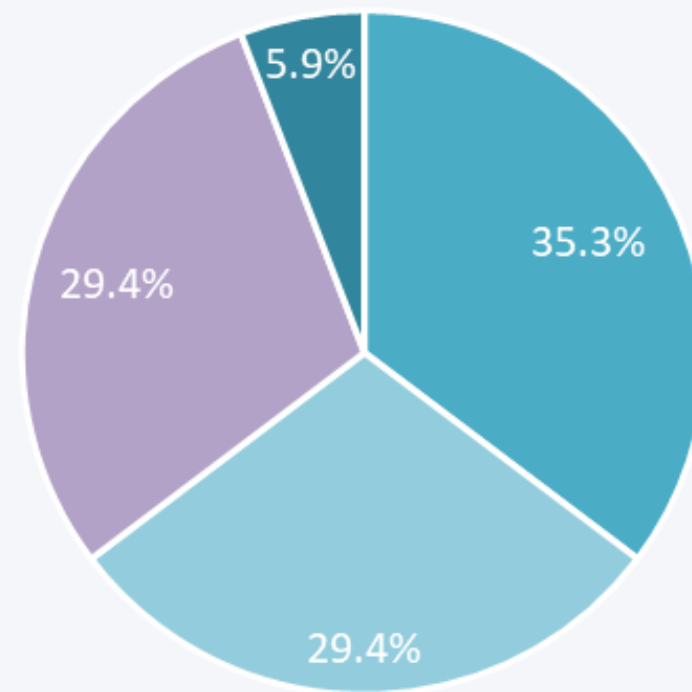


2023-2024 ADU Survey

NOTE: responses from Unincorporated residents were low, so staff paired these results with additional research.

Have you considered adding an ADU on your own property?

- Yes, but there are too many regulations.
- Yes, but I have not yet pursued an application.
- No, because I have no interest.
- I already have an ADU on my property.

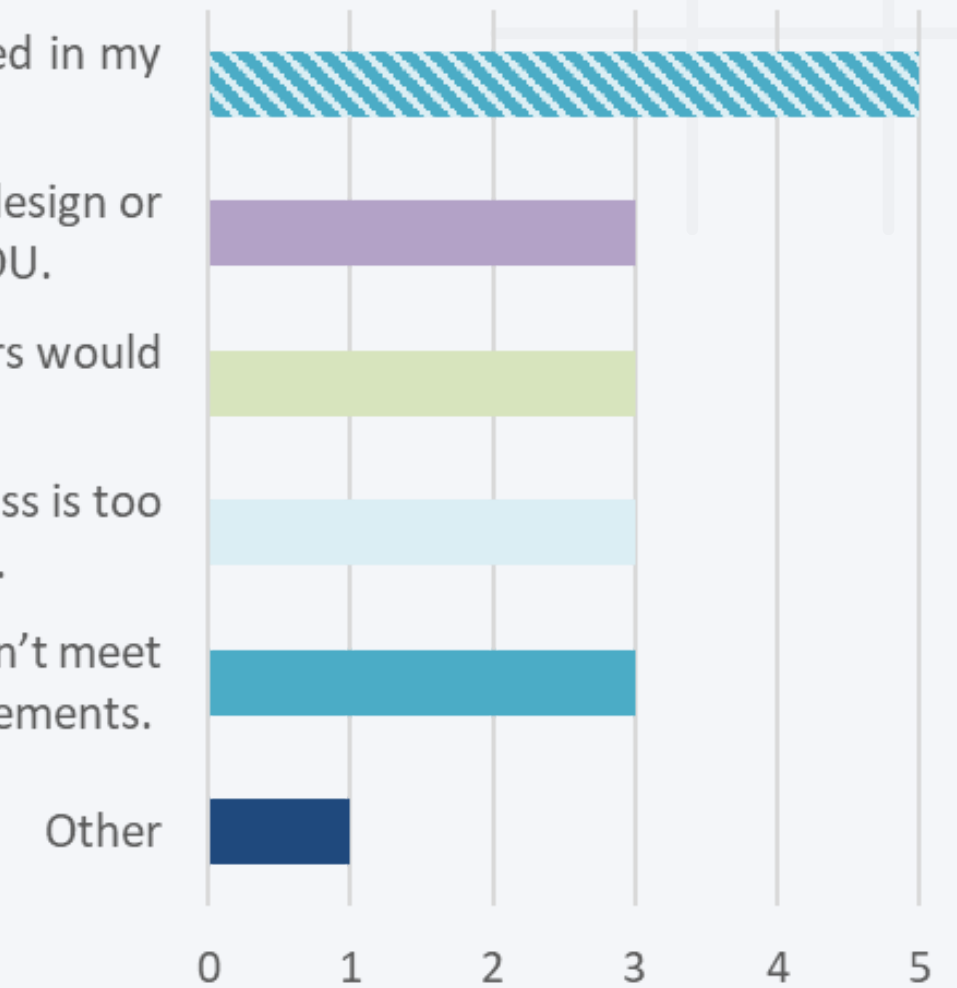


n=17

70.6% of Salt Lake County respondents wanted to add an ADU to their property or already had an ADU on their property.

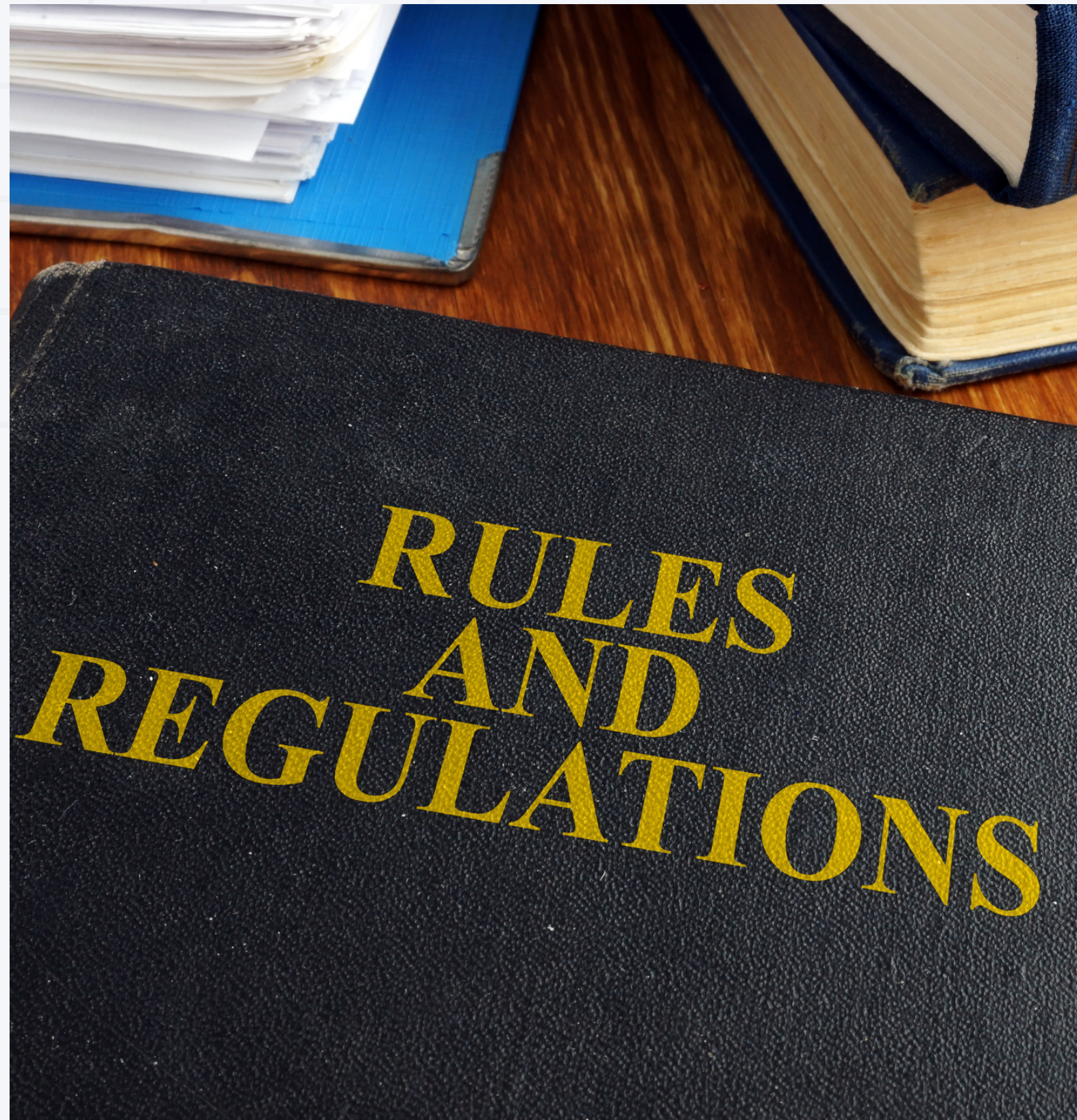
What has prevented you from pursuing or following through with an application for an ADU?

- I don't know if they are allowed in my area.
- I can't afford the cost for design or construction of an ADU.
- I am worried my neighbors would complain.
- The permitting process is too cumbersome.
- I am interested in one but can't meet the zoning or building requirements.
- Other



n=11





Regulatory Barriers

“I don’t know if they are allowed in my area”

“I am interested in one but can’t meet the zoning or building requirements”

Affected **8/11** of Unincorporated respondents

Affected **32/59** of all respondents

Most common regulatory barriers include zoning that severely limits where ADUs can be built (zoning district limitations), processes that rely on discretionary approvals (NA), and overly strict standards related to lot size, setbacks, design, etc.



Survey Respondents' Preferred Interventions

UNINCORPORATED Preferred Interventions:

1. Informational guide about the ADU process including application process and regulations.
2. A program that provides design and plans assistance for the application and construction process.
3. Resources with information about funding.
4. A program that allows pre-existing ADUs to come into compliance, with reduced permitting fees.
5. Reduced building requirements to include only life safety regulations.
6. Reduced setback standards for existing detached ADU conversions (i.e. garage conversion).

n=11



Staff Recommendations

Based on the survey results and literature review, staff has recommended several near-term and long-term actions to reduce or remove barriers to ADU construction.

Salt Lake County Council authorized Planning Staff to bring proposed amendments to Chapter 19.15 to the Planning Commission for review and possible recommendation.



Staff Recommendations

Section	Proposed Revision	Justification
19.15.020	Update the definition of primary dwelling to include an attached garage.	This reflects a change to Utah Code which occurred during the 2023 Legislative Session.
19.15.030	Reduce minimum lot size for detached ADUs from 12,000 sq.ft. to 7,000 sq.ft.	This increases the percentage of residential lots in Unincorporated Salt Lake County that are eligible for detached ADUs. Previously, only 41% were eligible.
19.15.050	Reduce setback requirements for detached ADUs.	Reduce owner costs by allowing them to convert an existing detached structure to an ADU. Focus new detached ADU standards on minimum life safety requirements.
19.15.060	Reduce required on-site parking spaces for detached ADUs from 2 to 1.	This would allow internal and detached ADUs to be regulated in the same way.
19.15.070	Set a maximum height for ADUs which may in no case exceed the height of the primary dwelling.	This provision limits the height of an ADU to 20' / 28', or the height of the primary dwelling (whichever is shorter). This helps protect the existing form of the neighborhood.
19.15.110	Allow an ADU to be built in the front yard if the property is at least one acre in size and if the ADU is set back at least 30 ft from the front property line.	This provision grants some flexibility to owners who have large lots with primary dwellings located toward the rear of the lot.

Other Relevant Ordinances



- Only one family is allowed per ADU.
- Only one ADU is allowed per property.
- Properties with an ADU must be owner-occupied.
- ADUs may NOT be used as Short Term Rentals (STRs).
- ADUs are only permitted on single-family home lots in residential zones.
- An owner may NOT convert required parking spaces for the primary dwelling to parking spaces for the ADU.
- Houses with an ADU must continue to maintain the look of a single-family house.



Examples



Above-garage ADU (True Built Home, 2024)



Detached ADU near rear property line (Millcreek, 2021)

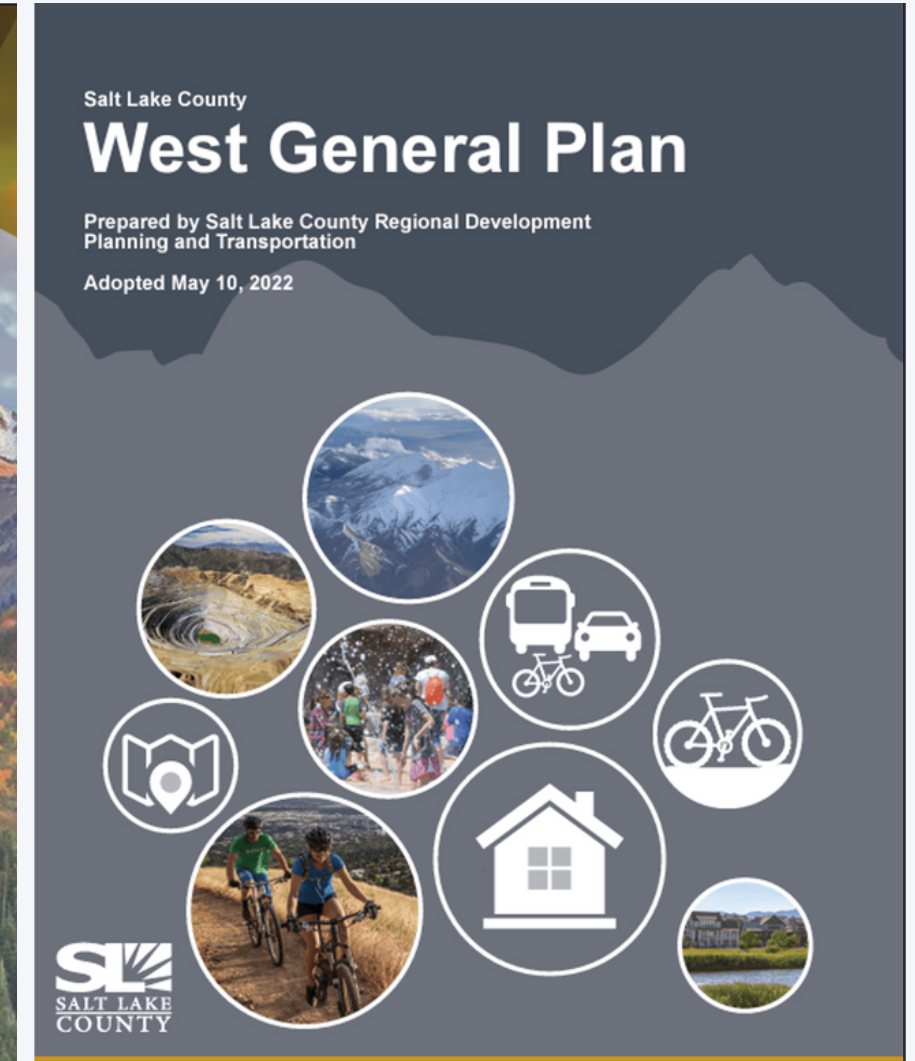
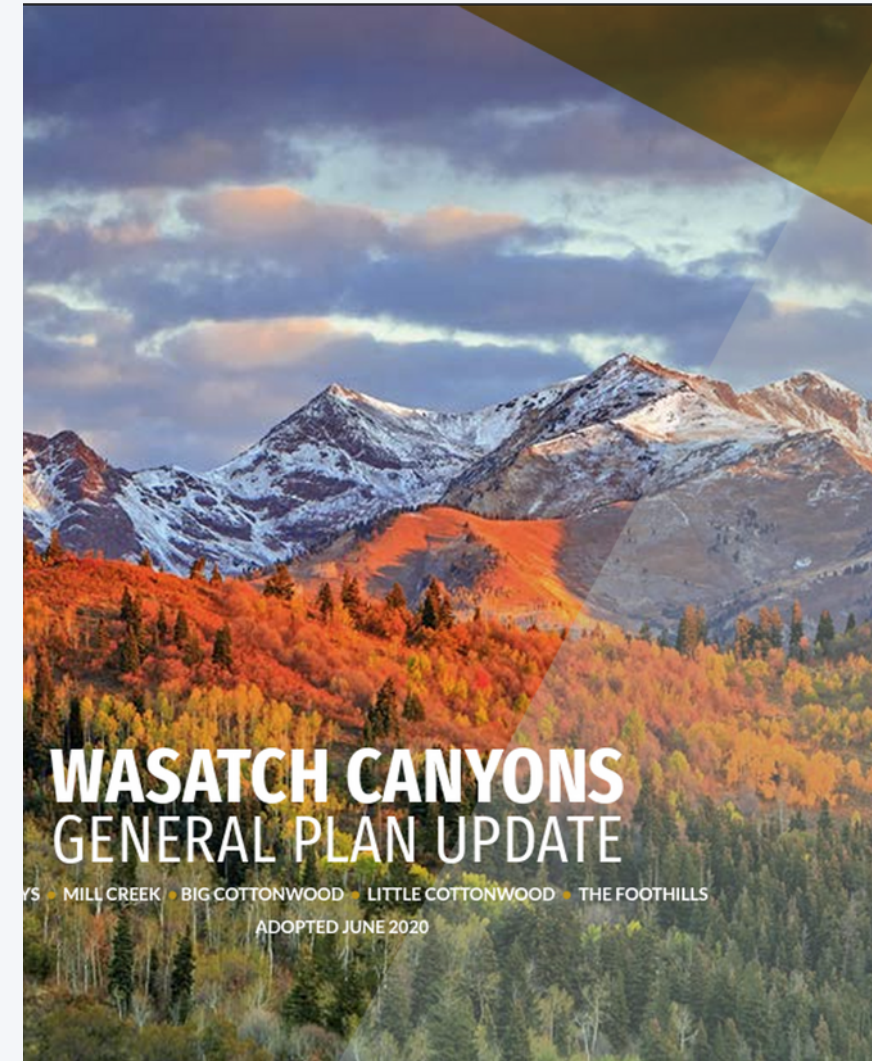


Detached ADU in front yard (Morgan Taylor Homes, 2022)



General Plan Support

The facilitation of ADU development is encouraged as a housing strategy in both the Wasatch Canyons and West General Plans. However, specific implementation actions are not identified. The Sandy Hills General Plan does not directly address ADUs.



In 2020, the Kem C. Garner Policy Institute published a report on best practices for promoting housing affordability in Utah. The report featured an entire section on facilitating ADU development.



Expected Outcomes



If the minimum lot size for detached ADUs is decreased, 1,136 additional properties within Unincorporated Salt Lake County could become eligible for ADU construction.

Staff would expect to see increases in the number of ADU applications and approvals in subsequent years.

Ordinance amendments should be paired with outreach which informs residents of ADU policies and procedures.



Staff Recommendation

Make a recommendation of adoption to the County Council, **with revision.**

[19.15.050 and 19.15.070 - Setbacks and Height Limitations](#)

For the conversion of existing accessory structures built prior to the adoption of this ordinance, ADUs are subject to the setbacks in place at the time the accessory structure was legally erected. If the rear or side setback is less than 10 feet, the structure may not exceed 20 feet in height. If the setback is 10 feet or more, the structure may be as tall as the primary dwelling.

For new detached ADUs, the minimum rear setback is 5 feet. Height may not exceed 20 feet.



Questions / Discussion?

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