Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

Public Hearing
A public hearing will be held on **Tuesday, November 19, at 7:00 p.m.** at City Hall, 18120 68th Avenue NE, regarding the Planning Commission’s preliminary recommendations for changes to the City’s accessory dwelling unit (ADU) code.

Background
ADUs are secondary dwelling units located on single-family zoned lots. The two main types of ADUs are “attached” and “detached.” Attached ADUs are located inside or in an addition to a preexisting single-family residence. Detached ADUs (DADUs) are smaller, separate structures from the primary residence. Attached ADUs are more common, and often involve the conversion of a garage or basement into an independent living space.

ADUs provide a variety of benefits, including support for the elderly and intergenerational households. ADUs also are an effective means to support more affordable housing the City.

Presently, Kenmore allows both attached and detached ADUs. However, since 2012, only 14 ADUs have been permitted. The City Council directed the Planning Commission to review the City’s ADU standards, compare them with best practices in other jurisdictions, identify any roadblocks to ADU development, and make recommendations on amendments to the existing regulations.

Before developing the recommended code changes, Commissioners reached preliminary consensus on the following principles:

**Code amendments to allow more ADU production:**

- Are not necessary for achieving the city’s general housing targets.
- Should seek to increase the variety of housing types in Kenmore.
- Should support ADUs as an affordable housing choice for families and individuals who need affordable housing.
- Should benefit homeowners, such as those who need or provide care to other family members, those who need supplemental financial assistance, and seniors who want to age in place.
- Should support single-family neighborhood character.
- Should avoid creating loopholes for developers to create excessive density, permit unattractive structures, or displace vulnerable residents through redevelopment.

Using these principles, the Commission has recommended preliminary changes to the ADU code. Click [here](#) to see the draft amendments. Significant changes include:

- An allowance for up to two ADUs on a lot—one attached and one detached.
- Reduction of the lot size for detached ADUs from 10,000 sq.ft. to 4,500 sq.ft.
- Revised size limitations for both attached and detached ADUs.
- Up to a one-year owner occupancy hardship exemption if certain criteria are met.
- Allowance for an ADU to extend into the rear yard in the R4 and R6 zones as long as a 10’ rear property line setback is provided.