



## **SCAN Position on Accessory Dwelling Units**

January 10, 2017

South Central Association of Neighbors (SCAN) discussed accessory dwelling units (ADUs) at its January 10, 2017, board meeting. It unanimously adopted (9-0) the following position:

### **Planning for Housing Choice and Affordable Housing**

ADUs may be a useful housing choice in residential zones, but should not be relied on to meet Salem's multi-family or affordable housing needs. Salem's projected need for over 200 acres of additional multi-family zoned land should be met by rezoning the surplus of single-family zoned acres to multi-family. Do not rely on ADU to help meet that demand. It is unknown how many ADUs might actually be developed, and whether they could actually help meet Salem's projected housing needs. There would be no way to plan for how ADUs might affect housing density, amount of housing stock, transit demand, or school enrollments.

If ADUs are allowed, their use in single-family zones must be well-regulated to protect the quality of life and investment of residents who bought into a single family zone with the expectation that it retain the look and function of a single-family zone. A concentration of ADUs in a small area needs to be avoided.

Standards and regulations must not be designed to encourage ADUs. Demand for smaller dwellings can best be met by adequately zoning for multi-family dwellings and by homebuilders responding to the demand for smaller homes. If the intent is to encourage ADUs as a housing choice, they should be allowed only in new residential developments where all buyers know what they are buying into.

### **Standards for ADUs in Single Family Zones**

In general, ADUs should be held to the same standards/requirements as a single family house, including setbacks, maximum lot coverage, building codes, fire and safety devices, and access for emergency vehicles.

- Allow only one ADU per single family zoned lot that meets current minimum lot size (4,000 sq. ft.). No ADUs allowed on nonconforming lots.
- Allow no more than 50% of the living area of the existing house (not including an attached garage), or a maximum of 800 sq. ft., whichever is less. This is consistent with the size restriction used by many Oregon cities. It is important to keep ADUs truly "accessory" to the main dwelling.
- Prohibit a property owner from renting both the main house and the ADU to unrelated renters. Two rented houses are multi-family housing and do not belong in a single-family zone.
- Prohibit short-term (28 days or less) rentals. ADUs should not be used to provide rental income to the owner or to accommodate visitors.
- Prohibit ADUs in historic districts.

- Require one off-street parking space for an ADU.
- Allow only in rear or side yards, not front yards.
- ADUs must meet the underlying zone's setback, lot coverage maximums, and other standards with NO adjustments allowed. If adjustment process is allowed to deviate from some standards, then neighbors must have an opportunity to comment.
- Height restrictions should protect neighboring homes' access to natural light and to direct solar rays for solar panels.
- Require system development charges for ADUs. The added density from ADUs will impact parks, traffic, and water and sewer utilities the same as other new housing construction.
- Prohibit re-classifying an existing house as an ADU, thus allowing a larger "main" house to be built on the same lot. This is not consistent with the intent to provide a smaller, more affordable home choice.



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SCAN President – 2016-17