

Seattle City Council

Proposed Legislation by Councilmember Mike O'Brien to Amend AADU/DADU Regulations

Policy Area	How it is Today	O'Brien ADU Proposal
Number of ADUs allowed on lots in single-family zones	A lot with or proposed for a single family dwelling may have no more than one accessory dwelling unit.	Allow a property to have two ADUs (either an AADU and a DADU or two AADUs). A second ADU can be added if a lot has been in the same ownership for at least one year.
Off-street parking requirement for ADUs	One off-street parking space is required for the ADU, unless located in an urban center or urban village.	No off-street parking required for ADUs.
Owner-occupancy requirement	An owner must occupy either the principal dwelling unit or the accessory dwelling unit.	No requirement for an owner to occupy the principal dwelling unit, AADU, or DADU.
Minimum lot size for a DADU	The current minimum lot size for a site with a DADU is 4,000 square feet.	Reduce the minimum lot size for a site with a DADU to 3,200 sq. ft.
Maximum square footage of a DADU	The maximum gross floor area of a DADU is 800 square feet including any garage and storage areas. The maximum gross floor area of an ADU is 1,000 square feet.	Increase the maximum gross floor area of a DADU to 1,000 square feet; exclude garage and storage areas.
Minimum lot size to create a new single-family lot	SF 5000: 5,000 sq. ft. SF 7200: 7,200 sq. ft. SF 9600: 9,600 sq. ft.	No change proposed.
Height limit for a DADU	The maximum height limit a DADU depends on the width of the lot; on wider lots, a taller DADU is permitted (see Table A below)	Increase maximum height by 1-2 feet (See Table B below) and allow 1 to 2 additional feet for a DADU that incorporates green building strategies.
Rear yard coverage limit	A maximum of 40% of a rear yard may be covered by accessory structures and any portion of the main house. This limit is in addition to the overall lot coverage limit for a single-family lot.	Increase rear yard coverage to 60% for a DADU whose total height is no more than 15 feet, subject to limitations on tree removal. Rear yard coverage for structures other than a DADU cannot exceed 40 percent.
Location of entries	DADU entrances cannot face the nearest side or rear lot line unless that lot line abuts an alley or other public right-of-way.	Allow DADU entrances on any façade, provided it is 10 feet from the lot line if located on the façades facing nearest side or rear lot line (unless abutting right-of-way).
Roof features	Exceptions for roof features for a accessory units are not permitted.	Height limit exceptions are allowed for projections like dormers that add interior space, subject to the provisions applicable to single-family houses.
Maximum household size	Any number of related people, or up to eight unrelated people, can live on lots in single-family zones including in an AADU or a DADU.	Any number of related people, or up to eight unrelated people, can live on lots in single-family zones with an AADU or a DADU. If the lot has two ADUs, the limit is 12 unrelated people.

Maximum floor area ratio (FAR) limit	No FAR limit for single-family zones. The maximum size for the main house is effectively set by the yard requirements, height limit, and lot coverage limit. ADUs are subject to the maximum size limits described above.	<p><u>New construction</u> FAR limits apply to development in single-family zones. New houses (i.e., principal structures) are subject to an FAR limit of 0.5 or 2,500 square feet, whichever is greater. Below-grade floor area and floor area in an ADU is exempt.</p> <p><u>Existing houses</u> Existing lots in single-family zones exceeding the FAR or 2,500-square-foot limits can convert existing space to an AADU and add a DADU subject to the size limit above.</p>
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Height Limits for DADUs

Table A - Current

Lot width (ft)	<30	30-35	35-40	40-50	>50
Base height (ft)	12	14	15	16	16
Additional height for pitched roof (ft)	3	7	7	6	7
Additional height for shed/butterfly roof (ft)	3	4	4	4	4

Table B – Proposed

Lot width (ft)	<30	30-50	>50
Base height (ft)	14	16	18
Additional height for pitched roof (ft)	3	7	7
Additional height for shed/butterfly roof (ft)	3	4	4