



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT CODES

Clark County is seeking community feedback on proposed development codes for urban accessory dwelling units, urban cottage housing and a new rural accessory dwelling units.

We hope these frequently asked questions will give you enough introductory information to prepare you for coming discussions on the proposed changes.

Why is the county considering changes to the accessory dwelling unit codes?

Many people are frustrated in their search for an affordable home. Clark County is participating in a communitywide effort to provide a greater variety of housing choices. The proposed amendments to the Clark County Unified Development Code are intended to support greater diversity of housing, especially for smaller households, and promote housing affordability.

What are ADUs, cottage houses and RADUs?

Urban Accessory Dwelling Units, or ADUs, are small residential units that can be converted basements, additions to an existing home or a new backyard building.

Cottage houses are houses on a shared or individual lot oriented to a common green space.

Rural Accessory Dwelling Units, or RADUs, are small residential units – sometimes called granny flats – that are conversions of basements or additions to an existing home.

Are ADUs and cottage housing currently allowed in the county?

Yes. Urban accessory dwelling units were introduced in the 1993 Washington Housing Policy Act RCW 43.63A.215. Under Section 3, local governments were required to include ADUs in their development and zoning regulations. This act required counties planning under the GMA and cities with populations more than 20,000 to adopt ordinances before 1995 that incorporate accessory apartment recommendations developed by the state. Here, Clark County, all the cities and the one town all adopted an ADU code. Now, the county has documented 22 ADUs in the unincorporated Vancouver urban growth area.

The county's cottage housing code was adopted in 2012; no units have been built yet.

Are RADUs currently allowed in the county?

No. The county is proposing a new rural accessory dwelling unit code that would allow a RADU in rural, rural center and resource districts if attached to the primary unit. This code would be in addition to an existing detached guest house code.

What is proposed to change?

ADUs

- Eliminate the one bedroom restriction
- Allow basement ADUs to match main floor square footage
- Allow manufactured or modular homes
- Reduce transportation and park impact fees by 75 percent
- Reduce the minimum square footage to 150
- Remove site plan review requirement for conversions or expansions

COTTAGE HOUSING

- Minimum square footage from 500 to 150
- Maximum square footage from 1,200 gross floor area to 1,600 gross floor area; main floor maximum square footage from 800 to 1,200

RADUs

- Allow attached RADUs in rural centers, rural and resource lands
- Allow basement RADUs to match main floor square footage
- Reduce transportation impact fees by 75 percent
- Set minimum square footage to 150
- Owned by the same single-family home owner
- Require one on-site parking space
- Conform to standards of the zone (lot coverage, setbacks)
- Prohibited from where a Type II home business is operating
- Compatible with primary structure
- Covenant must be recorded certifying property will be owner-occupied



When will the proposed code changes be considered?

Following the Oct. 25 and Oct. 26 open houses, the proposed code changes will be considered:

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| Nov. 2 | Planning Commission work session,
5:30 – 6:30 pm |
| Nov. 16 | Planning Commission hearing, 6:30 pm |
| Jan. 10 | County Council work session, 9 am |
| Jan. 23 | County Council hearing, 10 am |

All four meetings will be held in the sixth-floor Hearing Room of the Public Service Center, 1300 Franklin St.

How do I submit comments or get additional information?

Written and oral testimony can be given at the Nov. 16 and Jan. 23 hearings.

Written testimony can be mailed any time to
Community Planning,
PO Box 9810
Vancouver, WA 98666-9810

All comments will be part of the official record.

For questions or for more information, contact Colete Anderson of Community Planning at colete.anderson@clark.wa.gov
More information about the project can be found at www.clark.wa.gov/community-planning/housing-initiative



For other formats, contact
the Clark County ADA Office

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Relay 711 or 800.833.6388
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