



Neighborhood Workshop

September 7, 2023, 5:30pm – 8:30pm at the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office

Workshop Summary

Overview

Approximately twenty-four people attended this event. The agenda consisted of an overview of Centennial's Neighborhood Services, an interactive discussion on Accessory Dwelling Units, and a presentation on community safety from the Arapahoe County Sheriff's office. The workshop agenda was as follows:

- Welcome (5:30-6:00pm)
- Centennial Neighborhood Services (6:00-6:30pm)
- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) (6:30-7:40pm)
- Community Safety (7:45-8:30pm)

The workshop began with a presentation about Centennial's Neighborhood Services Program to include Code Compliance and Animal Services. This summary is specifically on the ADU discussion.

Introduction and Background

The workshop attendees were divided into five small groups to meet and talk with fellow neighbors about Accessory Dwelling Units, also known as "ADUs." They were asked to think about this new housing concept and the role that it could play within their neighborhoods. Before the activity began, Staff provided some background on how we got here.

- In 2021, the City of Centennial began a Housing Study and Policy Development project to better understand various housing issues and needs within our community and identify strategies to potentially inform policy. Several housing strategies (including the allowance of ADUs) were developed, further refined, and are now currently being discussed with City Council for policy consideration.
- The Housing Study prioritized community input and collaboration across a wide variety of stakeholders, and we want to ensure that this momentum is continued through this workshop.



- The State is also looking into legislation that may require communities and HOAs to allow ADUs. If this were to happen, City Council wants to hear from you – our neighborhood homeowner associations, civic associations, and residents on effective ways to regulate ADUs.
- Important to note: City Council has not made any final decisions on the allowance of accessory dwelling units in Centennial.
- City Council recognizes the importance of our neighborhoods and how vital the HOAs and Civic Associations are in creating a positive impact on our residents and image of our beautiful City and they appreciate your participation and input.

Next, a brief video was shared explaining:

- WHAT accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are,
- WHY they are being considered as a unique housing option, and
- HOW they might fit into our community and our neighborhoods using a variety of design standards, regulations and creative ideas.

Following the video, everyone broke out into their small discussion groups to include two City Staff.

ADU Workshop Summary

The following is a summary of the input received from each of the five groups for each of the discussion questions. Comments that appear to contradict each other are presented where attendees had differing opinions or groups reached different conclusions.

What do you love about your neighborhood and Centennial?

- Low turnover and the ability to retire in my neighborhood.
- Large lots and lots of space.
- Great schools and higher property values because of the schools.
- Living in a neighborhood with no HOA or regulations.
- Walking trails and mature landscaping.
- Family focused, sense of community, family friendly.
- Smaller neighborhoods
- Neighborhood events and organized activities.
- Appreciates that their neighborhood has an HOA with regulations.

Can you please tell the group about your experiences, if any, with Accessory Dwelling Units?

- One attendee had experience with an ADU in a different state and enjoyed the experience.
- One group member has a daughter who lives in an ADU in Palo Alto, CA, and viewed it as a positive, safe, affordable living option.
- One group member likes the ADUs in Boulder, CO. Some are noticeably different, and some ADU exteriors match the primary home, which all group members preferred.



- Stayed in a short-term rental ADU in Ft. Collins – the rate was nice and it was in a good location.
- Brother had an attached ADU for father.
- Lived in a detached ADU as an undergrad.
- Colleague built a detached ADU for a family member.

Many of our largest communities are managed by HOAs or Civic Associations; what role should Homeowners Associations/Civic Associations have in the regulation of ADUs in their communities?

- If your HOA/CA currently prohibits ADUs, do you see a path where they are eventually permitted?
 - HOA's regulations should provide flexible regulations that allow homeowners to tailor ADUs in such a way as to work within the constraints and opportunities of the existing home and/or property.
 - HOA's should balance the number of ADU's allowed within the neighborhood.
 - Flexible regulations so people can make improvements to their homes to better fit the needs of their families.
 - Civic Association neighborhood:
 - Concerned about unenforceable covenants and would want to have:
 - City assistance with ADU regulations, and
 - Some level of input on ADU regulations
 - No HOA in neighborhood:
 - Concerns about ADU development in a neighborhood with no HOA, would like City to assist with enforcement but understands that is not a possibility.
 - HOA neighborhoods:
 - Valley Club: No regulations
 - Willow Creek 2: No regulations
 - Some HOA members expressed a desire for the City to require HOA approval before issuing building permits
 - *Note: City has never required this for any building permits*
 - ADU regulations should apply City-wide, and HOAs should have the ability to specialize and tailor the City ADU regulations to best fit the neighborhoods.
- As a reminder, the State may require HOAs/Cas to allow ADUs. If this were to happen, what would be the right approach for your neighborhood?
 - The group was in favor of the City adopting ADU standards instead of letting the State dictate requirements.



If Accessory Dwelling Units were allowed in Centennial, who do you think would benefit?

- What role would ADUs play in addressing the housing needs of Centennial?
 - ADUs could be a good solution to addressing housing needs.
 - Prefer ADUs over infill high density or multifamily housing.
- Would this be something that would fit in your neighborhood?
 - Our group was in favor of attached/interior ADUs, and multiple participants mentioned that adding on to the existing house was highly preferable to a detached structure.
 - There were concerns about added cars, particularly in neighborhoods where parking inside the garage is encouraged/required.
 - One group member was concerned that the home-based business standards being added to the ADU draft would permit homeowners to use ADUs as purely commercial spaces.
 - *Note: under today's regulations, any permitted Home-Based Business is allowed to be conducted in an accessory building.*
 - Homeowners should have the flexibility to make improvements to better fit the needs of their families, and ADUs would assist with this by providing a unique living space.
- We heard about various regulatory possibilities in the presentation. What types of regulations are most important for ADUs to fit within your neighborhood?
 - All four attendees were supportive of interior ADUs. Two were supportive of any ADU type.
 - The group's opinion on detached ADUs was much more negative, with concerns about added density, change to neighborhood character, and loss of trees/vegetation, and were concerned that the 50%-of-the-main-house size limit was too generous/large
 - The group was in favor of attached/internal ADUS and split on detached ADUs.
 - Requiring off street parking for an ADU.
 - Some not in favor of income restrictions or rent control for ADU renters.
 - *Note: proposed regulations do not include income restrictions.*
 - Requiring detached ADUs to match the design scheme of the primary dwelling.
 - One reason is that the group was concerned that shipping containers or other temporary structures could be lawfully converted into permanent structures/ADUs.
 - ADU regulations should allow creative design and creative solutions.
 - Architectural style/matching the house did not seem to be a significant concern to some.



- Support for material requirements / detached ADUs matching, or complementing, the existing house and specific setback requirements for detached ADUs.
- No clear preference or direction from the group on setback requirements or location on the property.
- ADU regulations might need to be different for more rural vs more [suburban] residential lots. Regulations should take lot size and dimensions into consideration.
- The group was not in favor of requiring the property owner to live in either the ADU or primary dwelling.
- Group members advocated for owner occupancy and per-bedroom occupancy limits, but worried about how this would be enforced long-term.
- Concerns about utilities (“overloading the grid” or “our neighborhood water and sewer infrastructure cannot handle more new development” were oft said).
- Anxiety about ADUs being used as short-term rentals.
- Some expressed the need for age restrictions in ADUs.
- City should pre-approve lots within the City for ADUs based on lot size and dimensions.

What would you like to communicate to Council?

- Regulations should be compatible with existing character of neighborhoods.
- Concerns about how an ADU could affect property taxes.
- The group advocated for new development of multifamily/missing-middle housing (such as California-style courtyard casitas/patio homes) to add housing options to Centennial, rather than permitting ADUs.
- City regulations should protect the neighborhoods without HOAs to preserve architectural character and quality.
- Centennial is diverse, ADUs might work in one neighborhood, but may not work in another neighborhood.
- Would like to see the City assist HOAs with this process.

For More Project Information, visit:

<https://www.centennialco.gov/Housing>

or Email the Project Team at:

Housing@CentennialCo.gov

