



**Pasadena City Council**  
**100 N. Garfield Ave,**  
**Pasadena, CA 91109**

**Dec. 8, 2017**

Dear Pasadena City Council Members,

Given that our state is in a housing crisis, with 1.3 million units short, thus pushing up the cost many times faster than wages, it is essential that you do all you can to help relieve this shortage. Therefore we recommend the following:

- A. We recommend no Minimum lot size requirement to build a detached ADU. While we are thankful that the Planning Commission voted to adjust their recommendation to the City Council from 15,000 to 5,000 square feet property size in their last proposal to the City Council, we are recommending that Pasadena follow the lead of Arcadia, Burbank, Glendale, Monrovia, and LA County (Altadena), all which have no minimum lot size for detached ADUs. No more than 35% of single family home properties in Pasadena can be covered with structure. This alone is a significant deterrent to ADUs. Santa Cruz allows ADUs on properties of 4,500 square feet, Long Beach 4,800, Santa Monica 4,000 and some cities, Beverly Hills 6,000 and San Jose at 5,445.
- B. ADUs should be allowed in all Landmark Districts, with or without the units being visible from the street.
- C. Increase the present 800 square feet limit on the unit size of the ADU to 1,200 square feet or 50% of the primary home, which is congruent with what the state law allows. This small 800 s.f. size is arbitrarily low, and does not accommodate the spatial needs of families residing in accessory residences. To have a healthy community and thriving school district we need children. 1,200 s. f. or 50% of the total living area of the primary dwelling is what South Pasadena, LA County, Santa Cruz and most cities allow.
- D. We are recommending that ADUs be allowed above garages by increasing the height to 25 feet. Pasadena allows homeowners to have a second floor in their homes and an ADU over an attached garage. Our recommendation is consistent with this. We are concerned about privacy issues and believe this can be mitigated by having no windows or entrances facing neighbors. Having the option to build an ADU above the garage will preserve off street covered parking and open space on a property. Instead of creating a new impervious surface, building above the garage is often more sensible to the environment.
- E. We appreciate the Planning Staff's fee reduction and recommend it. We know that you, our City Council member care about affordable housing, by lowering the fees, City of Portland, Ore. research shows that it lowers the rent. Presently the fees for a \$900 s.f. ADUs in Pasadena are about \$50,000. We believe this is excessive and needs to be greatly decreased. (Temple City fees are \$3,000 and Glendale's fees are \$10-12,000). This high fee is a deterrent from incentivizing homeowners to help contribute to California's shortfall of 1.3 million housing units which is pushing up the cost. Santa Cruz, CA does all they can to incentivize ADUs, including building over garages, free architectural plans, low cost loans and more, but even with all these incentives, typically only 10-12 are built in a year. This low number of added units to Pasadena's housing stock does not affect traffic or unfounded fears of higher density. Please follow the lead of the Staff recommendation that would reduce the fees from \$50,000 to \$21,158. This is still more than adjacent cities, but a much more reasonable amount.

In addition to helping to increase sorely needing housing stock, there are many good reasons to support all of our recommendations:

1. To create life cycle housing, for aging parents who might otherwise wind up in assisted-living facilities or nursing homes, thus reducing the cost of their care.
2. To keep affordable housing from being concentrated in one spot and invite economic diversity and be in keeping with historic heritage. Hunt who designed our library, Bachelder and one of the Green and Green brother's lived in ADUs. Pasadena's broad streets with the large stately craftsman homes adjacent to more narrow streets with smaller homes, allowed the servants to live close to wealthier residents. This rich heritage of a mixed income community sets a precedent for ADUs.
3. To house "boomerang" kids or those who wanted to stay close but couldn't afford local housing.
4. To provide a potential source of income when the homeowners ready to downsize, especially for seniors on a fixed income. They could live in the granny flat and family members could move into the main house, or rent it out for retirement income.
5. To allow more money to circulate and stay in the community, through the employment of local contractors and construction workers, as opposed to large developers that are usually from out of town.
6. To increase the property values and provide more property taxes for the city. This is a better use of underutilized land and infrastructure.
7. To minimize traffic by allowing people to live closer to family and work. When Cynthia Kurtz was the City Manager, she adamantly opposed to the need for a traffic study in relation to Granny Flats, feeling this was a non-issue and waste of tax payer's money. The number of people applying for permits to build ADUs in other cities has been minimal.
8. To prevent a possible fair housing lawsuit due to the disparity between those who want ADUs but don't have permission to build them due to the unreasonable 15,000 required lot size and those who have large lots, but don't have the need for them.
9. To help increase the city's housing stock without the use of any subsidy. Due to limited federal funds for housing, the city has lost 85% of its budget for affordable housing. ADUs are one important source for helping to solve the housing crisis without spending tax payer's dollars.
10. Safety. We ask for the city to regulate the construction ADUs, to remediate unpermitted, informal housing that can often be unsafe. Unpermitted housing exists in every jurisdiction, every geography, every demographic, and every socioeconomic stratum: unpermitted dwellings, garage conversions, subdivided houses, and occupied RVs exist across the City of Pasadena. Lack of affordable housing coupled with skyrocketing housing prices are partly due to unworkable zoning laws that stifle efforts to build legal accessory dwellings and therefore directly contribute to the proliferation of illegally built dwellings. It's a simple calculus: when people need housing, people build housing. And when the zoning code creates barriers, people ignore the code.

For all the above reasons, we ask that you support our position. Thank you for reading our letter and taking serious consideration of our recommendations.

Sincerely,

Elsa Rodriguez, City Planner for Los Angeles, Pasadena resident (District 1, Hampton); Adrienne Spires; Phil Burns, member of Pasadena Presbyterian and Pasadena Resident (District 6, Madison); Catalina Gonzales, Day One; Pastor Sylvester Williams, (District 3-Kennedy); Lorynne Young, member of All Saints, Pasadena Resident (District 3 Kennedy); Jill Shook, Housing Justice Professor at APU, Pasadena Resident (District 1, Hampton); Maria Teresa Kowal, Architect, Pasadena Resident (District 1, Hampton); Ed Washatka, Board Member with POP—Pasadenians Organizing for Progress; Hannah Petrie, UMC Pastor; Rosie Tina Hooper, Property Manager, District 3-Kennedy; Dr. Anthony Manousos, Gloria Mushonga Roberts