

MOTION

**HOUSE LA: Facilitating Accessory Dwelling Units**

Safely constructed, legally permitted second units occupying a property with a single-family home offer numerous neighborhood and household benefits in addition to increasing the housing supply citywide. The units can provide an important source of affordable rental housing. Neighborhoods with second units can be more walkable with more public transit opportunities and more local services because more people reside nearby. Backyard homes may also help to stabilize communities by providing flexible housing alternatives while offering families the opportunity to stay in their house for decades.

The potential rents from second units can make it easier for young or middle-class households to own single family homes. They can provide flexible space for growing families, and nearby but independent housing for adult children. They also provide an unmatched opportunity for seniors to live independently with their caregivers in close proximity. Yet another benefit may be the opportunity to provide a smaller unit for households that seek to "age in place" and do not need all the living space afforded by the primary unit but may need the supplemental income that comes from renting the larger, front house.

Nearly 500,000 single-family residential properties exist in the City of Los Angeles. For various reasons, not all of these lots will be appropriate sites for a backyard home, nor will all property owners want a second unit, but the challenges Los Angeles continues to face with its housing shortage warrants the need to facilitate a process that allows for both flexibility and provides other housing alternatives.

Cities and states throughout the country have recognized the benefits of Accessory Dwelling Units. Seattle, Portland, Denver, Santa Cruz and other jurisdictions have revised zoning codes to permit interested homeowners to build Accessory Dwelling Units. In 2002, the California State Legislature adopted Assembly Bill 1866 to encourage Accessory Dwelling Units by requiring cities to reduce or eliminate local barriers to their development.


The American Dream of owning a free-standing home remains a strong ideal, even though it has moved further out of reach for most Angelinos. Accessory Dwelling Units cannot completely solve the City's housing crisis, but offer a strategy to improve conditions for many. Of the half million single-family residential properties in Los Angeles, creating only 10% with Accessory Dwelling Units will add 50,000 new housing units.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council instruct the Department of Building and Safety to report on the number of illegal/unapproved second units occupying single-family residential properties discovered per year by building inspectors over the last five years, including but not limited to the number of unapproved housing units corrected and legalized, the number eliminated from the housing market, and how many remain out of compliance with the Los Angeles Municipal Code.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Council instruct the Department of Building and Safety to work with the Chief Legislative Analyst and any other appropriate city departments to identify options for preserving unapproved second housing units, including measures utilized by other jurisdictions to preserve unapproved units.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Council request the City Attorney, in conjunction with the Department of City Planning and Department of Building and Safety, to prepare and present an ordinance that prescribes a permit process to allow the development of Accessory Dwelling Units in accordance with Assembly Bill 1866.

PRESENTED BY:   
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Councilman, 1<sup>st</sup> District

SECONDED BY: 

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