

Auxiliary Dwellings

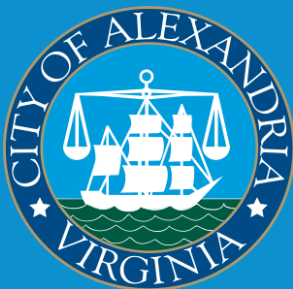
Flexibility & Functionality

At a glance

This zoning text amendment proposes to change the use from accessory apartments to auxiliary dwellings. The goal of the proposal is to provide consistency across similar zones and additional flexibility for property owners.

Planning & Zoning

To ask questions or provide feedback about this proposal please reach out to Marlo Ford, marlo.ford@alexandriava.gov.



BACKGROUND



In reviewing the City of Alexandria's policies around the existing accessory apartment use several issues were apparent including:

- Accessory apartments could be confused with other terms in the zoning ordinance like accessory uses and accessory dwelling units.
- Current regulations for accessory apartments are inconsistent across zones.
- As defined these uses must be located above retail or commercial spaces which limits the potential for conversion of some spaces into additional dwelling units.

Alignment with Regional Housing Goals

The Council of Governments has set regional targets for local governments around housing. The City of Alexandria can implement policies, like this text amendment, that are consistent with and help reach these objectives:

Regional Target 1:

AMOUNT

At least 320,000 housing units should be added in the region between 2020 and 2030. This is an additional 75,000 units beyond the units already forecast for this period.

Regional Target 2:

ACCESSIBILITY

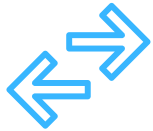
At least 75% of all new housing should be in Activity Centers or near high-capacity transit.

Existing Policy

Current regulations vary in the number of accessory apartments permitted in each zone; ranging from 2 to 8 units and accessory apartments are only permitted above first floor retail/commercial.

Policy Recommendations

The policy will allow flexibility in the number of units, the location of units, and ensure equity of the regulations across zones.



RENAME

Keep the use - change the name. This proposal recommends replacing the term accessory apartment with auxiliary dwelling to better distinguish this use from others in the zoning ordinance.



NUMBER OF APARTMENTS

Up to eight auxiliary dwellings located on the same floor, above, or below retail or commercial uses.



AREA AND BULK

Categorize use as nonresidential for the purpose of applying the area and bulk regulations of the zone.



PARKING

Each auxiliary dwelling shall provide parking based on Section 8-200(16).



FIRST FLOOR DETAILS

Only retail/commercial is permitted on the first floor within 50 feet of the front building wall; in a building that is set back no further than 30 feet from a front property line; and with a first floor of the building within four feet above the sidewalk grade. First-floor auxiliary dwellings will be permitted within 50 feet of the front building wall and in buildings not considered retail appropriate, including those that are elevated more than four feet above grade or set back more than 30 feet from the front property line.

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DETAILS



Options are critical when it comes to property owners' ability to convert underutilized spaces into dwelling units. To facilitate and encourage this adaptive reuse the ordinance needs to be more flexible while still preserving the retail and commercial character of these zones.



The proposed changes also aim to apply similar standards across zones as outlined in the table below for Commercial Zones for Auxiliary Dwellings.

Changes to the number of units or parking is not anticipated in the KR zone because it is within a Special Overlay Zone which allows for a greater number of units than is proposed for other zones.

COMMERCIAL ZONES FOR AUXILIARY DWELLINGS

	Units (Current)	Units (Proposed)
All Commercial Zones	0-4	4
All Mixed Use Zones	2	4
All Office Zones	2	4
King Street Retail Zone	8	8
Parking Requirement	Multifamily	Sec. 8-200(A)(16)