



## CITY OF RICHMOND

### Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

**CPCR.2019-110:** TO DECLARE AN INTENT TO TASK PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW STAFF WITH STUDYING THE APPROPRIATENESS AND FEASIBILITY OF PERMITTING ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS IN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS IN THE CITY OF RICHMOND.

---

**To:** City Planning Commission  
**From:** Department of Planning and Development Review  
**Date:** November 4, 2019

---

#### **PETITIONER**

City of Richmond  
900 East Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

#### **LOCATION**

The study area will include the entire city of Richmond.

#### **PURPOSE**

To study the potential effects of permitting Accessory Dwelling Units in residential zoning districts throughout the city of Richmond.

#### **SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION**

This Resolution of Intent is to initiate the study of Accessory Dwelling Units and their feasibility and appropriateness throughout residential zoning districts in the city of Richmond. Localities across the country and the Commonwealth have chosen to adopt ordinances permitting the building of a second housing unit sharing a lot with a primary unit. As housing prices rise and the need for density increases, many Richmonders have expressed interest in having Accessory Dwelling Units allowed by right. Another group has expressed concern with the concept. More study and public input is needed in order to know how best to proceed.

After adoption of this Resolution, PDR staff will conduct research of national precedents, hold public forums, and draft any ordinance amendments if appropriate, before bringing a proposal back before Planning Commission.

**Staff supports the resolution of intent.**

---

---

## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

### **Background**

This Resolution of Intent is to initiate the study of appropriateness and feasibility of permitting Accessory Dwelling Units in residential zoning districts in the city of Richmond.

### **Master Plan**

The research prepared in advance of Richmond 300 and published in the Insights Report points to a significantly rising population and a need to find new ways to accommodate housing for those people. Richmond gained 23,000 people in the years between 2010 and 2017, and that trend shows no sign of slowing. According to analysis conducted by the CoStar Group, the Richmond region needs 18,000 more units to accommodate the region's growing population, and housing cost burden has increased across all income levels since 2000.

### **Existing and Proposed Zoning**

Richmond's zoning ordinance currently does not allow dwelling units within accessory buildings in the R-1 through the R-5 districts. The R-6, R-7, R-8, R-48, R-53, R-63, and R-73 districts allow one dwelling unit in an accessory building that was existing at the effective date of the ordinance (i.e. no new units). The RO-3 district, as amended in July of 2019, allows one dwelling in an accessory unit by right.

### **Public Engagement**

After adoption of this Resolution of Intent, PDR staff will solicit feedback and hold public meetings on the subject of Accessory Dwelling Units, and any change in the zoning ordinance to that effect will be informed by public engagement.

### **Staff Contact:**

Anne W. Darby, AICP, Planner III – Zoning Specialist  
[Anne.Darby@richmondgov.com](mailto:Anne.Darby@richmondgov.com)  
646-5648