



Comprehensive Plan Policy or Development Regulation Amendment Suggestion

Planning & Development Services · 1800 Continental Place · Mount Vernon WA 98273
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Per RCW 36.70A.470(2), this form is intended for use by any interested person, including applicants, citizens, hearing examiners, and staff of other agencies, to suggest amendments to Skagit County's Comprehensive Plan policies or its development regulations, which are contained in Skagit County Code Title 14. Please do not combine multiple unrelated Comprehensive Plan policy or development regulation amendments on a single form. This form is for policy or development regulation amendments; use the Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment Request form for changes to the land use/zoning map.

Submitted By

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Proposal Description

Please answer all of the questions below that are applicable to your suggestion.

1. Describe your proposed amendment.

This proposal relaxes the family member occupancy requirement and current ADU size restrictions for existing structures. The family member occupancy requirement would be eliminated. An existing structure converted to ADU could not exceed the square footage of the primary residence. This would retain the existing code for new construction. No other changes are proposed for the ADU code at this time.

2. Describe the reasons your proposed amendment is needed or important.

In order to provide rental properties the family member occupancy requirement should be dropped in order to create more housing opportunities in Skagit County. Property owners may have a shop or a small barn that could be suitable for an ADU but is too large to meet the current requirements. It is an undue burden on the property owner to be required to modify the size of the habitable area to meet the current arbitrary dimensions. There needs to be a reasonable allowance for existing structures so that a property owner can create an affordable living space from an existing structure. The size restriction is more reasonable given the current code restricts occupation by a single family. Given the recognized need for housing in Skagit County, the County should be removing barriers to creating new affordable housing.

3. If you are suggesting revision to a particular section of the Comprehensive Plan, please identify which section(s):

NA

4. If you are suggesting revision to the Comprehensive Plan, would the revision create inconsistencies with existing sections of the Comprehensive Plan? If so, please list those sections:

NA

5. If you are suggesting revision to the Comprehensive Plan, would the revision require corresponding amendments to the County's development regulations?

NA

6. If you are suggesting revision to a particular section of Skagit County Code Title 14, please identify which section(s).

- SCC 14.16.710 Accessory dwelling units.
- (1)(a) Owner Occupancy.
- (1)(d) Size and Scale.

7. *If you are suggesting this development regulation amendment as a result of a particular project or permit application, please identify which project or application:*

This has grown out of a building permit application we have submitted. We don't expect a change in the code on our required timeline but if we can save another property owner the trouble and expense of this overly restrictive regulation we'll be satisfied.

8. *If you are suggesting specific language as part of your amendment, please attach that specific language. Specific language is not required.*

Proposed additional language is added in **bold** to the existing code:

(a) **Repealed**

(d) Size and Scale. The square footage of a **newly constructed** accessory dwelling unit shall be the minimum allowed by the building code and a maximum of 900 square feet excluding any garage area; provided, however, the square footage of the accessory dwelling unit shall not exceed 50% of the total square footage of the principal unit of the single-family dwelling excluding the garage area as it exists or as it may be modified. **An existing detached structure may be converted to an ADU with a square footage that shall not exceed the total square footage of the principal unit of the single-family dwelling excluding the garage area as it exists or as it may be modified.**

9. *Describe why existing Comprehensive Plan policies should not continue to be in effect or why they no longer apply.*

NA

10. *Describe how the amendment complies with the Comprehensive Plan's community vision statements, goals, objectives, and policy directives.*

-Increase the housing choices for all residents: Self explanatory.

-Respect property rights: This respect the rights of property owners to do what they see fit on their land.

-Encourage citizen participation and involvement: Loosening the restrictions on regulations such as this can increase citizen participation in the building permit process by making it more reasonable. This is a small start but other such leniencies should be considered.

11. *Describe the anticipated impacts to be caused by the change, including geographic area affected and issues presented.*

This will benefit all of Skagit County by making it easier for property owners to modify existing structures to become ADUs.

12. *Describe how adopted functional plans and Capital Facilities Plans support the change.*

Unknown

13. *Describe any public review of the request that has already occurred.*

This was mentioned in my public comments at the East County Forum in Concrete on July 31, 2019.

Notices

Fees. No fees are required for a policy or code change suggestion, per SCC 14.08.020(6).

Docketing. SCC Chapter 14.08 governs the process for docketing of Comprehensive Plan amendments; suggestions for changes to the development regulations are docketed following the same process. Docketing of a suggestion is procedural only and does not constitute a decision by the Board of County Commissioners as to whether the amendment will ultimately be approved. Amendments are usually concluded by the end of the year following the request. State law generally prohibits the County from amending its Comprehensive Plan more than once per year.

Submission deadline. Suggestions must be received by the last business day of July for docketing. Suggestions received after that date will not be considered until the following year's docket.

How to Submit. Submit your suggestion via email (preferred) to pdcomments@co.skagit.wa.us or to Planning & Development Services at the address above.