

**ORDINANCE NO. 2480**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF WEST COVINA, CALIFORNIA, AMENDING PORTIONS OF CHAPTER 26 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE TO AUTHORIZE ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS AND JUNIOR ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS CONSISTENT WITH STATE LAW REQUIREMENTS**

**WHEREAS**, effective January 1, 2020, multiple new housing laws relating to accessory dwelling units (ADUs) became law, including AB 68, AB 881, SB 13, AB 587, AB 670, and AB 671; and

**WHEREAS**, effective January 1, 2021, AB 3182, a new housing law which includes certain standards relating to ADUs, became law; and

**WHEREAS**, to preserve what limited authority the City has remaining to regulate ADUs, it is desirable that the City update its laws consistent with State law; and

**WHEREAS**, on December 8, 2020, the Planning Commission conducted a duly noticed public hearing as prescribed by law regarding proposed Code Amendment No. 19-06. At the conclusion of the public hearing, the Planning Commission approved Planning Commission Resolution No. 20-6063, recommending that the City Council approve Code Amendment No. 19-06; and

**WHEREAS**, on April 6, 2021, the City Council conducted a duly noticed public hearing as prescribed by law regarding this ordinance approving Code Amendment No. 19-06; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council has duly considered all information presented to it, including written staff reports and any testimony provided at the public hearing, with all testimony received being made a part of the public record.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEST COVINA, CALIFORNIA DOES HEREBY ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:**

**SECTION 1. Code Amendment.** Division 11 (Accessory Dwelling Units) of Article XII (Special Regulations for Unique Uses) of Chapter 26 (Zoning) of the West Covina Municipal Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

**Division 11. Accessory Dwelling Units**

**Sec. 26-685.30. - Accessory dwelling units and junior accessory dwelling units—Purpose, definitions, occupancy.**

(1) Purpose and Interpretation. The intent of this Section is to ensure that accessory dwelling units and junior accessory dwelling units remain as an accessory use to a single-family and multifamily residential uses~~residence~~, that the structures on parcels are organized to accommodate an accessory dwelling unit and/or junior accessory dwelling unit, and that such dwelling units do not adversely impact surrounding residents or the community. This Division is intended to retain the maximum ability of the city to regulate accessory dwelling units and to comply with the requirements of state law, ~~but only to the extent the city is required to do so. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Division to the contrary, nothing in this Division shall be interpreted to allow any accessory dwelling unit or junior accessory dwelling unit except to the extent required by state law.~~

(2) Definitions.

a. The terms “accessory dwelling unit”, “public transit”, “passageway” and “tandem parking” all have the same meaning as that stated in Government Code section 65852.2 as that section may be amended time to time.

b. “Junior accessory dwelling unit” shall have same meaning as that stated in Government Code section 65852.22(h)(1) as that section may be amended time to time.

(3) Occupancy. Except as otherwise provided by law (e.g., Government Code section 65852.26), accessory dwelling units and junior accessory dwelling units may be rented separate from the primary residence, but may not be sold or otherwise conveyed separate from the primary residence.

**Sec. 26-685.31 - Accessory dwelling units—Application for accessory dwelling unit permit.**

(1) Accessory dwelling units are permitted only in ~~residential zones~~ areas zoned to allow multifamily and single family residential, subject to the issuance of a building permit. Any application for an accessory dwelling unit that meets the unit size standards and development standards contained in Sections 26-685.30 or 26-685.40 of this division, or is the type of accessory dwelling unit described in Subsection 26-685.50 of this division, shall be approved ministerially by the city by applying the standards herein and without a public hearing.

(2) An application for an accessory dwelling unit permit shall be made by the owner of the parcel on which the primary unit sits and shall be filed with the city on a city-approved application form and subject to the established fee set by city council resolution as it may be amended from time to time.

(3) Applications for accessory dwelling units shall conform to the requirements for, and shall obtain, a building permit consistent with the requirements of Chapter 7 (Buildings and Building Regulations) of the Municipal Code.

**Sec. 26-685.32. -Accessory dwelling units—Unit size standards.**

Except as otherwise provided in Section 26-685.50 of this division, ~~below~~, all accessory dwelling units shall not exceed the size standards listed below. ~~No accessory dwelling unit may contain more than two (2) bedrooms.~~

- (1) Attached accessory dwelling units: The maximum floor area of an attached accessory dwelling unit shall be the higher of:
  - a. 850 square feet for an accessory dwelling unit with 0-1 bedrooms or 1,000 square feet for an accessory dwelling unit with two (2) or more bedrooms; or
  - b. If there is an existing primary single-family dwelling, 50% of the square footage of the existing primary single family dwelling; or
  - c. All properties developed with a residential use shall be allowed to construct at least an 800-square foot accessory dwelling unit with four-foot side and rear setbacks; or
  - d. Existing habitable and/or nonhabitable areas may be converted into an attached accessory dwelling unit without any size and/or setback limitations.
- (2) Detached Units. A detached accessory dwelling unit shall not have more than one thousand two hundred (1,200) square feet of living area.
- (3) Setback requirements.
  - a. No setbacks are required for: either (i) those portions of accessory dwelling units that are created by converting existing living area or existing accessory structures to new accessory dwelling units or (ii) constructing new accessory dwelling units in the same location and to the same dimensions as an existing structure.
  - b. For all other accessory dwelling units, there must be a minimum of four (4) feet of setbacks from side and rear lot lines and comply with all applicable front yard setbacks.
  - c. The minimum required distance between a detached accessory dwelling unit and the primary dwelling unit, and all other structures, including garages, on the property, shall be ten (10) feet.

**Sec. 26-685.33. - Accessory dwelling units—Development standards.**

Any permit for an accessory dwelling unit shall be subject to the development standards listed below.

- (1) Legal lot/residence. An accessory dwelling unit shall only be allowed on a lot within the city that contains a legal, single-family or multi-family residence as an existing or proposed primary unit on a lot.

(2) Accessory dwelling units and junior accessory dwelling units are accessory to the primary ~~use dwelling unit~~. Therefore, accessory dwelling units shall not be assigned an address separate from the primary dwelling unit, unless the accessory dwelling unit is accessory to a multifamily residential use. ~~For multi-family residential dwellings, the project plans and application shall clearly identify the unit the proposed accessory dwelling unit is accessory to.~~

(3) Number of accessory dwelling units per lot.

a. For lots with proposed or existing single-family residences, no more than one (1) accessory dwelling unit and one (1) junior accessory dwelling unit may be on the lot.

b. For lots with existing multi-family residential dwellings:

i. No more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the number of the existing units, but at least one (1) unit, shall be permitted as accessory dwelling units constructed within the non-livable space (e.g., storage rooms, boiler rooms, hallways, attics, basements, or garages) of the existing multifamily dwelling structure provided that applicable building codes are met; or

ii. No more than two (2) detached accessory dwelling units, provided that no such unit shall be more than sixteen (16) feet in height, and each such unit complies with front yard setbacks, and meets rear-yard and side yard setbacks of four feet. The maximum square footage of detached accessory dwelling units on lots with existing multi-family residential dwellings shall ~~comply with the limits set forth in subsection C (or E, if applicable) of this section~~ be limited to one thousand two hundred (1,200) square feet of living area.

(4) Building Code Compliance. All new accessory dwelling units must comply with Chapter 7 of the Municipal Code (“Buildings and Building Regulations”) and any other applicable provisions of the California Building Standards Code. However, fire sprinklers shall not be required if they are not required for the primary residence.

(5) Utilities.

a. All accessory dwelling units and junior accessory dwelling units must be connected to public utilities (or their equivalent), including water, electric, and sewer services.

b. All accessory dwelling units and junior accessory dwelling units shall have adequate water supply and sewer service.

c. No overhead utility lines are to be relocated or otherwise modified to permit construction of an accessory dwelling unit or junior accessory dwelling unit. If existing overhead utility lines are to be relocated or otherwise modified to permit

construction of an accessory unit, such lines shall be converted to underground services.

- d. ~~Except as provided in subsection e below,~~ the City may require the installation of a new or upgraded utility connection for ~~the~~ a new accessory dwelling unit structure ~~junior accessory dwelling unit and~~ and/or the existing house to accommodate the additional burden of the proposed accessory dwelling unit on the existing utility infrastructure. The connection fee or capacity charge shall be proportionate to the burden of the proposed accessory dwelling unit based on either its square feet or number of drainage fixture unit values. New or upgraded utility connection shall not be required for existing structures converted into accessory dwelling units.
- e. ~~No separate connection between the accessory dwelling unit and the utility shall be required~~

(6) Parking.

- a. The City shall require the owner to provide one (1) parking space unless the accessory dwelling unit has no bedrooms (e.g., a studio), in which case no space is required. The required parking space shall have a minimum dimension of ten (10) feet in width and twenty (20) feet in depth. The required parking space may be provided as:
- i. Tandem parking on an existing driveway in a manner that does not encroach onto a public sidewalk and otherwise complies with city parking requirements; or
  - ii. Within a setback area or as tandem parking in locations determined feasible by the City for such use. Locations will be determined infeasible based upon specific site or regional topographical or fire and life safety conditions, or that such parking is not permitted anywhere else in the City.
- b. Notwithstanding the foregoing, no parking space shall be required for an accessory dwelling unit if:
- i. It is located within one-half mile walking distance of public transit;
  - ii. It is located within an architecturally and historically significant district;
  - iii. It is part of a proposed or existing primary residence or accessory structure;
  - iv. When on-street parking permits are required but not offered to the occupant of the accessory dwelling unit; or
  - v. Where there is a car share vehicle located within one block of the accessory dwelling unit.

- c. When a garage, carport, or covered parking structure is demolished in conjunction with the construction of an accessory dwelling unit or converted to an accessory dwelling unit, the off-street parking spaces do not have to be replaced.

(7) Siting. Detached accessory dwelling units may not be located within the area between the front property line and the line parallel to, and touching, the back of the primary residence. ~~For reversed corner lots where a house is facing and located fronting on a street side property line, an accessory dwelling unit shall not be located within the area between the street side property line and a line parallel to the most distant part of the house from the street side property line.~~

(8) Exterior Access. The entrance to an accessory dwelling unit shall be separate from the entrance to the primary dwelling unit, ~~and shall not be on the front elevation. If topography restricts access from all side and rear elevations, the accessory dwelling unit door may be on the front elevation provided it is not prominently visible from the right of way.~~

~~9. Wall and/or Fence Requirement. A six (6) foot high wall or solid fence shall be provided and maintained on the rear yard boundary of any lot containing an accessory dwelling unit. Said wall or solid fence shall comply with this Code in relation to height and location as approved by the planning director.~~

~~10. Windows and doors along the side and/or rear property lines. No windows and/or doors shall be located within 10 feet from the side and/or rear property lines.~~

(9) Recorded Covenants. Before obtaining a permit for an accessory dwelling unit, the property owner shall file with the county recorder a declaration or agreement of restrictions ~~and an agreement to subordinate executed by all senior lienholders on title to prevent extinguishment of the easement via foreclosure~~ which has been approved by the city attorney as to its form and content, describing restrictions that allows for and the continued use of the accessory dwelling as follows:

- a. the accessory dwelling unit shall not be sold separately from the primary residence;
- b. the accessory second unit is restricted to the maximum size allowed per the development standards set forth in this section;
- e. ~~starting in January 1, 2025, the accessory dwelling unit shall be considered legal only as long as either the primary residence or the accessory dwelling unit is occupied by the owner of record or state law is amended to prohibit such requirements; and~~
- c.d. the restrictions shall be binding upon any successor in ownership of the property, and lack of compliance shall result in legal action against the property owner for noncompliance with the requirements for an accessory dwelling unit. In the event of violation, the property owner shall be responsible for all fees and penalties, as well as the city's enforcement costs.

- (10) Conversion of existing primary unit. An existing primary dwelling may be converted to an accessory dwelling unit if it complies with all applicable requirements of this ordinance. If so, a new, larger primary residence may be constructed.
- (11) Design requirements for new units. All new accessory dwelling units must comply with the following design requirements:
- a. The exterior materials, colors, roof pitch and architecture shall match the primary unit.
  - b. Accessory dwelling units shall not exceed 16 feet in height, unless the accessory dwelling unit is a conversion of an existing second floor area, a second-story addition to an existing residence, or is located on the second-floor of a new two-story house. the height level of the tallest existing structure on the parcel, or as required in the base zoning district, whichever is less.
    - i. All second-story additions to an existing residence, and/or new two-story homes shall require the approval of an administrative use permit per Section 26-270 of the West Covina Municipal Code.
    - ii. Exterior staircases serving second-floor accessory dwelling units shall not be located in between the property line and the existing building.
  - c. Lighting shall not ~~spill~~ be directed on to neighboring lots.
  - d. Any attached accessory dwelling unit shall be attached to the living area of the primary dwelling unit by a common wall or floor/ceiling, and not simply by an attached breezeway, porch, or patio.
- ~~14. Accessibility standards. New construction of any ground level accessory dwelling unit shall be designed and constructed to allow for disability/accessibility standards. Plans shall demonstrate future entrance capability and actual construction shall include adequate door and hallway widths, maneuvering space in kitchens and bathrooms, and structural reinforcements for grab bars.~~
- (12) Passageway. No passageway shall be required in conjunction with the construction of an accessory dwelling unit.

**Sec. 26-685.34. - Accessory dwelling unit and junior accessory dwelling unit exceptions.**

(1) Accessory dwelling units shall be approved for the following types of accessory dwelling units, regardless of whether the applicant meets the development standards contained in this Title. ~~In no event may any parcel with a single family dwelling have more than one accessory dwelling unit on site or more than one junior accessory dwelling unit per site. In no event may any parcel with a multi-family housing unit have more than two accessory dwelling units or any junior accessory dwelling units on site.~~ Accessory dwelling units and junior accessory dwelling units are accessory to the primary use dwelling unit. Therefore, accessory dwelling units and junior accessory dwelling units shall not be assigned an address separate from the primary dwelling unit, unless the accessory dwelling unit is accessory to a multifamily residential use. ~~For multi-family residential dwellings, the project plans and application shall clearly identify the unit the proposed accessory dwelling unit is accessory to.~~

- a. For Single Family Dwelling lots in residential zones, either:
  - i. One accessory dwelling unit and one junior accessory dwelling unit per lot may be constructed, ~~within an existing or proposed single family dwelling. Alternatively, the accessory dwelling unit may be constructed within an existing accessory structure (as that term is defined in Government Code section 65852.2) and such proposal may include an expansion of not more than 150 square feet beyond the physical dimensions of the existing accessory structure to accommodate ingress and egress.~~ Each accessory dwelling unit and junior accessory dwelling unit must have exterior access and side and rear setbacks sufficient for fire safety and comply with all other setback requirements. If the unit is a junior accessory dwelling unit, it must also comply with the requirements of Section 26-685.70 below; or
  - ii. One detached, new construction, accessory dwelling unit with setbacks of at least four (4) feet from side and rear yards and in compliance with front yard setbacks, no more than eight hundred (800) square feet floor area, and a height not exceeding sixteen (16) feet on a lot with an existing or proposed single family dwelling. ~~No windows and/or doors shall be located within 10 feet from the side and/or rear property lines.~~
- b. On a lot with an existing multifamily residential use dwelling ~~within a residential zone~~:
  - i. Accessory dwelling units may be constructed in areas that are not used as livable space within an existing multi-family dwelling structure (e.g., storage rooms, boiler rooms, passageways, attics, basements, or garages), provided the spaces meet state building standards for dwellings. The number of interior accessory dwelling units permitted on the lot shall not exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the current number of units of the multi-family complex on the lot and at least one such unit shall be allowed; and
  - ii. Up to two (2) detached accessory dwelling units may be constructed, provided they are no taller than sixteen (16) feet, and they have at least four

(4) feet of side and rear yard setbacks. Detached accessory dwelling units constructed pursuant to this subsection (b) shall not exceed ~~eight hundred~~ one thousand two hundred (1,200) square feet in floor area.

- (2) Accessory dwelling units approved under this Section 26-685.50 shall not be rented for a term of 30 days or less.
- (3) Accessory dwelling units or junior accessory dwelling units approved under this Section 26-685.50 shall not be required to correct legal nonconforming zoning conditions as a pre-condition to obtaining this authorization.

**Sec. 26-685.35. - Accessory dwelling units—General plan consistency.**

In adopting these standards, the city recognizes that the approval of dwelling units may, in some instances, result in dwelling densities exceeding the maximum densities prescribed by the general plan. The city finds that this occurrence is consistent with the general plan, as dictated under state planning and zoning law applicable to accessory dwelling units.

**Sec. 26-685.36. - Junior accessory dwelling units.**

- (1) Purposes: This section provides standards for the establishment of junior accessory dwelling units. Junior accessory dwelling units will typically be smaller than an accessory dwelling unit, will be constructed within the walls of an existing or proposed single family residence and requires owner occupancy in the single-family residence where the unit is located.
- (2) Size: A junior accessory dwelling unit shall not exceed 500 square feet in size.
- (3) Owner Occupancy: The owner of a parcel proposed for a junior accessory dwelling unit shall occupy as a primary residence either the primary dwelling or the junior accessory dwelling. Owner-occupancy is not required if the owner is a governmental agency, land trust, or "housing organization" as that term is defined in Government Code Section 65589.5(k)(2), as that section may be amended from time to time.
- (4) Sale Prohibited: A junior accessory dwelling unit shall not be sold independently of the primary dwelling on the parcel.
- (5) Short term rentals: The junior accessory dwelling unit shall not be rented for periods of 30 days or less.
- (6) Location of Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit: A junior accessory dwelling unit shall be entirely within a single-family residence; an attached garage is considered a part of the residence.

- (7) Kitchen Requirements: The junior accessory dwelling unit shall include an efficiency kitchen, including a food preparation counter and storage cabinets that are of reasonable size in relation to the size of the junior accessory dwelling unit.
- (8) Parking. No additional parking is required beyond that already required for the primary dwelling.
- (9) Fire Protection; Utility Service. For the purposes of any fire or life protection ordinance or regulation or for the purposes of providing service for water, sewer, or power, a junior accessory dwelling unit shall not be considered a separate or new unit, unless the junior accessory dwelling unit was constructed in conjunction with a new single-family dwelling. No separate connection between the junior accessory dwelling unit and the utility shall be required for units created within a single-family dwelling, unless the junior accessory dwelling unit is being constructed in connection with a new single-family dwelling.
- (10) Deed Restriction. Prior to the issuance of a building permit for a junior accessory dwelling unit, the owner shall record a deed restriction in a form approved by the city that includes a prohibition on the sale of the junior accessory dwelling unit separate from the sale of the single-family residence, requires owner-occupancy consistent with subsection (3) above, does not permit rentals for periods 30 days or shorter, and restricts the size and attributes of the junior dwelling unit to those that conform with this section.

**SECTION 2. Compliance with CEQA.** Adoption of this Ordinance is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") under Public Resources Code section 21080.17 [statutory exemption for second unit ordinances]; CEQA Guidelines sections 15282(h) [statutory exemption for second unit ordinances]; 15303 [new construction or small structures] and 15305 [minor alterations to land]. This Ordinance is also exempt under CEQA Guidelines section 15061, because this Ordinance will not have a significant effect on the environment, because ADUs will largely constitute infill housing which is exempt from CEQA.

**SECTION 3. Inconsistencies.** Any provision of this Ordinance which is inconsistent with state law shall be interpreted in a manner to be consistent with state law. Any provision of the West Covina Municipal Code or appendices thereto inconsistent with the provisions of this Ordinance, to the extent of such inconsistencies and no further, is hereby repealed or modified to that extent necessary to affect the provisions of this Ordinance.

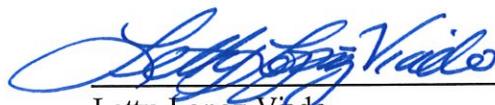
**SECTION 4. Severability.** If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or portion of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by the decision of any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance. The City Council of the City of West Covina hereby declares that it would have adopted this Ordinance and each section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or portion thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, phrases or portions be declared invalid or unconstitutional.

**SECTION 5. Effective Date.** This Ordinance shall take effect and be in force thirty (30) days from and after the date of its passage.

**SECTION 6. Certification.** The Mayor shall sign and the City Clerk shall certify to the passage and adoption of this Ordinance and shall cause the same to be published or posted in the manner required by law.

**SECTION 7. Transmit Ordinance to HCD.** The City Clerk is directed to send a copy of this Ordinance to the Department of Housing and Community Development within 60 days of the adoption of this Ordinance.

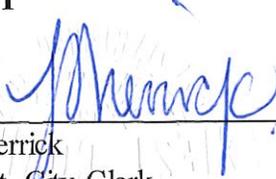
**PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED** on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of Apr. 1, 2021.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Letty Lopez-Viado  
Mayor

**APPROVED AS TO FORM**

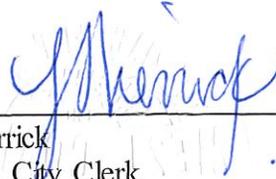
  
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Thomas P. Duarte  
City Attorney

**ATTEST**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Lisa Sherrick  
Assistant City Clerk

I, LISA SHERRICK, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK of the City of West Covina, California, do hereby certify that the foregoing Ordinance No. 2480 was introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council held on the 6th day of April, 2021, and adopted at a regular meeting of the City Council held on the 20th day of April, 2021, by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Castellanos, Diaz, Lopez-Viado, Tabatabai, Wu
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Lisa Sherrick  
Assistant City Clerk