Community Development Department
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For Meeting of: March 24, 2026
☐ Consent Item; ☑ Public Hearing Item

To: Planning Commission

From: Kevin Caldwell, Community Development Director

Through: Kyle Knopp, City Manager

Date: March 19, 2026

Subject: Accessory Dwelling Unit Text Amendments

Recommendation:

That the Planning Commission:

1. Receive a brief presentation regarding a couple minor text amendments to the City's Accessory Dwelling Unit regulations, Section 17.30.020 of the Rio Dell Municipal Code (RDMC) to align the City's size regulations with State Law; and

2. Open the public hearing, receive public comment and deliberate; and

3. Adopt Resolution No.190-2026 recommending the City Council approve the proposed text amendments.

Discussion:

Staff recently discovered that the City's ADU regulations do not align with State regulations in regards to allowable sizes.

A jurisdiction's maximum unit size requirements must allow an ADU of at least 850 square feet, or 1,000 square feet for ADUs with more than one bedroom. (Gov. Code, § 66321, subd. (b)(2).). The City's current ADU regulations limit the size of ADU's to 50 percent of the size of the primary dwelling unit up to a maximum of 1,200 square feet.

Below is a copy of the existing language and the recommended amended language:

(b) Total Floor Area. Accessory dwelling units shall be subject to the following floor area requirements:

> *(i) Parcels That Cannot Be Subdivided. The size of ~~the~~ a new detached ADU ~~second dwelling unit~~ shall not exceed 50 percent of the size of the primary dwelling unit up to a maximum of 1,200 square feet, ~~except for second dwelling units located within the suburban and rural zones where the second dwelling unit shall not exceed 50 percent of the primary dwelling unit.~~ or up to 850 square feet for a one bedroom ADU and up to 1,000 square feet for a two bedroom ADU. Attached ADU's shall not exceed 50 percent of the size of the primary dwelling unit up to a maximum of 800 square feet.*
>
> *(ii) Parcels That Can Be Subdivided. The size of the ~~second~~ accessory dwelling unit shall not be restricted, provided the applicant submits a development plan demonstrating that the parcel could be subdivided and both residences can be sited on separate parcels and meet setback and lot coverage requirements of the zone.*

Talking Point: The City can allow larger size ADU's for detached and attached if desired.

California Senate Bill 9 (SB 9), effective January 1, 2022 actually allows duplexes on parcels zoned for single family use. This actually appears to eliminate any size limitations for attached units. I have reached out to HCD to confirm. At this point I have not heard back.

Required Findings

General Plan Consistency: Amending the City of Rio Dell ADU regulations to align with current California state law regarding allowable unit sizes is consistent with the City's General Plan and Housing Element because it advances adopted goals to increase housing supply, affordability, and efficient use of residential land. By permitting ADUs at state-allowed sizes, the City reduces regulatory constraints that could otherwise limit housing production, thereby supporting infill development, accommodating population growth, and expanding opportunities for diverse housing types, including smaller and more affordable units. This alignment also ensures compliance with state housing mandates, promotes consistency between local and state policies, and helps the City meet its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA)

obligations by facilitating the development of additional units within existing neighborhoods without requiring significant infrastructure expansion.

CEQA Compliance: The Planning Commission finds that the project is **Statutorily Exempt** from CEQA pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines (General Rule), as it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the project, as it merely aligns local regulations with state ADU law and does not increase development potential beyond what is already permitted

Attachment 1: Resolution No.190-2026