



Lake Havasu City

Lake Havasu City
Council Chambers
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Legislation Text

File #: ID 24-4357, Version: 1

COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Jeff Thuneman, Development Services Director

SUBJECT:

Adopt Ordinance No. 24-1337 Amending Lake Havasu City Code Section 14.02.03, Residential Units, Tables 2-3, 2-4, 2-5, 2-6, 2-7, and 2-8, and Section 14.04.01, Dimensional Standards, Table 4.01-1, To Remove Maximum Lot Coverage Percent Requirements from Residential Districts (*Chris Gilbert*)

FUNDING SOURCE:

N/A

PURPOSE:

To approve a City-initiated application removing Maximum Lot Coverage Percentage Requirements from all Residential Districts.

BACKGROUND:

The text amendments contained in this request are necessary as the City has not historically applied lot coverage percentage requirements to residential developments. Rather, the City used setbacks as the guarantor of sufficient open space on residential lots. With the citywide increase in land values, the need for accessory dwelling units (elderly population/workforce housing), along with the changes in the macroeconomic climate since the pandemic, have resulted in both developers and homeowners utilizing their property as much as possible.

As staff examined the current situation citywide, it became apparent that enforcing this standard today would cause numerous existing residential dwellings in all parts of the City to become legal non-conforming (“grandfathered”). This can create issues for the property owners, particularly when trying to sell. It would also likely prevent many other properties that are not grandfathered from being able to install RV garages and accessory buildings on their property, an action that could push lot coverage over the limit in many cases. These types of residential improvements have been very common in Lake Havasu City and very desirable to pursue for new residents, so implementing enforcement measures at this point will not sit well with the community.

Setbacks have traditionally been used to manage lot coverage, with Planned Developments being allowed even higher lot coverage than code permits by permitting reduced setbacks through the public hearing process. The

lot coverage percentages in the Development Code vary from 50% to 60% maximum of a lot being covered by roofed structures, such as homes, garages, sheds, cabanas, pool houses, accessory dwellings, gazebos, and similar structures.

An example of how setbacks regulate open space is to consider that a standard 10,000 square foot Single Family Residential (R-1) lot, say 100 feet by 100 feet in size, has 46% of its land area within the setbacks as open space. This can be reduced further with accessory buildings that have lesser setbacks in rear yards, but a substantial percentage of the lot will still remain open but could be less than 40%. Under current code, if a house was submitted for approval using the entire buildable area defined by the standard R-1 setbacks, it would have to be denied at 54% lot coverage, and in addition, no accessory buildings would be possible. Eliminating this requirement and relying solely on setbacks is not expected to cause significant problems moving forward.

The text amendments contained in this request are as follows:

Section 14.02.03 Residential Units, Tables 2-3, 2-4, 2-5, 2-6, 2-7, and 2-8: Removes Lot Coverage from the bulk regulation table under each residential district heading.

Section 14.04.01 Dimensional Standards, Table 4.01-1: Removes lot coverage as an item from the dimensional standards table.

The Planning Commission recommended approval by a 7-0 vote at its June 5, 2024, Regular Meeting.

COMMUNITY IMPACT:

The proposed lot coverage percentage removal should have wide ranging community impact but is not expected to create future undesirable lot coverage issues due to the application of front, side, and rear yard setbacks among other requirements that regulate residential lot construction.

FISCAL IMPACT:

N/A

ATTACHMENTS:

Ordinance No. 24-1337

Tracked Changes - Development Code Amendments

SUGGESTED MOTION

I move to adopt Ordinance No. 24-1337 amending Lake Havasu City Code Section 14.02.03, Residential Units, Tables 2-3, 2-4, 2-5, 2-6, 2-7, and 2-8, and Section 14.04.01, Dimensional Standards, Table 4.01-1, to remove maximum lot coverage percent requirements from residential districts.