



May 11, 2026

City Hall, Council Chambers, 3rd Floor
2263 Santa Clara Avenue
Alameda, CA 94501

Re: Item 5-A – Study Session on ADU and Condominium Conversion Zoning Text Amendment

Dear Members of the Alameda Planning Board,

The Housing Action Coalition (HAC) is a member-supported nonprofit advocating for more housing at all income levels across California. We write in support of the proposed amendments to the Alameda Municipal Code and offer targeted input on two policy questions that we believe will shape whether this ordinance meaningfully expands housing opportunity in Alameda.

Support for AB 1033 Opt-In and ADU Condominium Conversion

HAC strongly supports the City's consideration of opting in to AB 1033 to allow separate conveyance of ADUs as condominiums. Alameda has approved roughly 50 ADUs per year since 2017 – a real track record of scaling density that deserves to be built upon. Allowing property owners to sell an ADU as a standalone condo creates a meaningful incentive for new ADU construction and, importantly, opens a more accessible homeownership pathway in a city where for-sale homes are increasingly out of reach for working families.

Staff's analysis showing that even full conversion of all existing ADUs would represent less than 3% of Alameda's rental stock is well-reasoned. The rental affordability risk is real in the abstract but modest in practice, and should not be a barrier to adopting this tool. We encourage the Board to give staff clear direction to proceed with the AB 1033 opt-in.

Preserve the Impact Fee Waiver for ADUs

We urge the Board to maintain Alameda's current policy of waiving impact fees for ADUs. Alameda's adopted Housing Element already commits to this waiver as part of the City's strategy to incentivize ADU production. Introducing impact fees on larger ADUs would be inconsistent with that commitment and would add cost at precisely the scale of ADU construction where feasibility margins are thinnest. HAC's experience across Bay Area jurisdictions confirms that fee stacking is one of the most common and least visible barriers to housing delivery. The current waiver policy is working and the ADU pipeline reflects it.

Protect Ministerial Pathways

As the Board considers changes to development standards and procedures, we encourage care around any amendments that could introduce discretionary review into ADU permitting. The speed and predictability of ministerial approval is a core reason Alameda's ADU production is strong. Clarifications



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around Design Review triggers and nonconforming accessory structures should be drafted in a way that keeps 66323 Units fully on a ministerial track without ambiguity.

This study session represents an opportunity to modernize Alameda's ADU framework in a way that expands homeownership access and continues the city's progress away from its historically exclusionary land use legacy. We appreciate staff's thoughtful analysis and encourage the Board to embrace the full scope of these updates.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brianna Morales".

Brianna Morales, *Political Organizing & Programs Manager*
Housing Action Coalition (HAC)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Corey Smith".

Corey Smith, *Executive Director*
Housing Action Coalition (HAC)

Planning Board
City of Alameda
2263 Santa Clara Avenue
Alameda, CA 94501

Subject: 2026-5995 Study Session Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment - Accessory Dwelling Unit and Condominium Conversion Updates

Dear Planning Board Members,

My name is Hank Hernandez, I've been an Alameda resident since 2001, and am President of Alameda Tiny Homes, a local ADU design build firm.

I would like to thank you and the City of Alameda planning staff for your efforts to update our ADU related code. As someone specializing in ADU development in Alameda I would like to offer my assistance to the planning board and city staff as you consider these important changes.

Specifically, I encourage the board to pursue policies that would allow condominium conversions under AB1033. From my experience talking 'ADU' with hundreds of Alameda families, this will be an important pathway to more affordable homeownership in our community.

I personally don't see any danger in ADU to condominiums creating negative pressure on rental stock and I can tell you anecdotally that less than one third of the ADUs we have built in Alameda were slated for rental from the start.

The vast majority of ADUs we have built are for family or extended family use- primarily aging in place, leg-up or starter homes for family members, or additional space for growing families that need to accommodate family visitors.

I think it would be informative for the city to conduct a survey of the roughly 450 completed ADU projects- to better understand what they are being used for, and if they would consider converting their ADU to a condominium should it become an option.

As you look at this issue, I think it is important that Alameda residents and other stakeholders be given the opportunity to review how this might work. Of particular importance is how the City in partnership with Alameda Power will treat utility connections.

In my experience utility connection requirements are a major cost and can create logistical and sometimes financial roadblocks to the development of ADUs. This is especially important for existing ADU to convert, let alone those purpose built with the idea of condominium conversion.

I think it is appropriate for you to consider a specialized process to handle existing ADU conversions.

In regards to parking, I encourage the board to consider a comprehensive review of our offstreet parking standards rather than looking at just ADU specific changes. For example, the City climate goals and AMP widely promote adoption of electric vehicles, but we have not yet updated offstreet parking requirements to reflect the realities of EV charging. For example I often see parking in the front yard to charge an electric vehicle.

I encourage the City to refrain from implementing Impact fees for ADUs of any size as they create unnecessary cost burdens and disincentivize ADU development.

Finally, in regard to rooftop patios or balconies, it is our understanding that 66323 ADUs, by state definition, are exempt from design review. 66323 ADUs that include these elements as part of an integrated design should not undergo design review.

I have completed several detached ADU projects, that include rooftop patios and small balcony elements and believe there should continue to be a pathway for these buildings to be approved in Alameda that does not include design review.

This is because new detached ADU can use considerable space in a limited backyard. An ADU that integrates a modest patio or balconies restores some access to the outdoors and creates meaningful quality of life improvements for the residents.

This should be differentiated from balconies or deck improvements made to existing structures.

Thank you again for your time and your work on this important topic and I look forward to helping any way I can.

Sincerely,

Hank Hernandez, President
Alameda Tiny Homes