

**CITY OF BULLHEAD CITY  
PLANNING & ZONING**

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**DATE: FOR THE MARCH 5, 2009 MEETING**

**TO: PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION**

**FROM: JANICE D. PAUL, DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTOR**

**SUBJECT: CODE AMENDMENT – ACCESSORY BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES**

**REQUEST**

This is a request for an amendment to Section 17.06.140 (I, J, K, and L) of the city code regarding the square footage of accessory buildings and structures.

**AMENDMENT DESCRIPTION**

Staff has prepared the proposed code amendment to address a problem with the subject regulations.

In single family residential zoning districts, current zoning regulations allow 60% or 65% lot coverage depending on the location of the lot. Lot coverage includes the square footage of all building and structures under roof. The regulations also distinguish between primary and accessory buildings and structures. Typically, any square footage that is livable is considered the primary use and those things that are not livable are considered accessory uses.

The current accessory regulations were adopted by the City Council in April 2004. Prior to this time frame, a number of large garages were built on lots that typically measured less than 10,000 sq.ft. The residences on these lots were usually much smaller than the garages. This made the garages look out of scale because they were so much bigger than the residences. The 2004 regulations addressed this concern by limiting the square footage of the accessory buildings and structures to a percentage of the square footage of the setback areas or the square footage of the livable area.

When applying the current methodology to lots that measure 10,000 sq.ft. or less, the amount of square footage allowed for accessory buildings and structures, keeps the buildings in scale for the neighborhood. But, the methodology almost works in reverse and more strictly limits the amount of square footage allowed for accessory buildings and structures on lots that exceed 10,000 sq.ft. The limited amount of lot coverage begins to look out of scale.

Staff researched zoning regulations from other municipalities to see if there was a better way to calculate the square footage allowed for accessory buildings and structures. The cities reviewed had regulations that were far more restrictive than those currently used by our City. Other communities do not have the recreational vehicles to contend with like Bullhead City.

Next, staff started looking at other ways to calculate the square footage and still keep some scale to the neighborhoods. The three alternatives summarized below were reviewed. Staff believes using the Livable Floor Area Square Footage vs. Accessory Square Footage is in the best interest of the community. This methodology is simple to use and continues to keep neighborhoods to scale. A spreadsheet showing how the methodology would work is also included.

1. Livable Floor Area Square Footage vs. Accessory Square Footage – The square footage of the accessory buildings and structures is allowed to exceed the square footage of the livable floor area by a certain percentage.
2. Accessory Square Footage as a Percentage of the Total Lot Area - The square footage of the accessory buildings and structures is calculated as a percentage of the total lot area.
3. Accessory Square Footage as a Percentage of the Total Lot Coverage Square Footage - The square footage of the accessory buildings and structures is calculated as a percentage of the total lot coverage allowed on the lot(s).

Lastly, staff met with representatives of the development community to discuss the different methodologies. All felt that the proposed Livable Floor Area Square Footage vs. Accessory Square Footage methodology would work the best.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff recommends approval of an amendment to Section 17.06.140 (I, J, K, and L) of the city code regarding the square footage of accessory buildings and structures, as set forth in the attached ordinance.