

**CITY OF SOUTH JORDAN
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
September 8, 2026**

Present: Commissioner Steven Catmull, Chair Nathan Gedge, Commissioner Michelle Hollist, Assistant, Commissioner Nik Anderson, Commissioner Bryan Farnsworth, Commissioner Lori Harding, Assistant City Attorney Greg Simonson, City Planner Greg Schindler, Planner Joe Moss, , Deputy Recorder Cindy Valdez, Director Brian Preece, IT Director Matt Davis, GIS Matt Jarman.

**6:30 P.M.
REGULAR MEETING**

A. WELCOME AND ROLL CALL – (*Chair Nathan Gedge*)

Chair Gedge welcomed everyone to the Planning Commission Meeting and noted that all (6) of the Planning Commissioner's are present at tonight's meeting. Our new Commissioner Nik Anderson will be sworn in, so he will be participating in the discussion and will also be voting.

A.1 OATH OF OFFICE FOR NEW PLANNING COMMISSIONER

Deputy City Recorder performed Oath of Office for Nik Anderson.

B. MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA

B.1. Approval of the September 8, 2026 Planning Commission Agenda.

Commissioner Hollist motioned to approve the September 8, 2026 Planning Commission Agenda. Chair Gedge seconded the motion. Vote was 6-0 unanimous in favor.

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C. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

C.1. Approval of the August 25, 2026 - Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.

Commissioner Hollist motioned to approve the August 25, 2026 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes with Correction to Item H.1. with a typo. Chair Gedge seconded the motion. Vote was 6-0 unanimous in favor.

D. STAFF BUSINESS



September 7, 2026

South Jordan Planning Commission
South Jordan City Hall
1600 W Towne Center Drive
South Jordan, UT 84095

**Re: Ordinance 2026-24 – Legislative Updates to ADU and Accessory Building Standards
(Chapters 17.08, 17.30, 17.40, 17.130.030)**

Dear Chair Hollist and Commissioners:

On behalf of **Wasatch Advocates for Livable Communities (WALC)**, thank you for the work already underway to bring South Jordan into compliance with Senate Bill (SB) 284's detached accessory dwelling unit (DADU) requirements. WALC supports this ordinance and commends the City for treating this update as an opportunity to craft rules that will result in these much-needed smaller-scale homes actually getting built — not merely checking a compliance box.

Who We Are

WALC is a network of neighbors across the Wasatch Region helping our region stay vibrant, welcoming, and full of opportunity for people at every stage of life. We work with residents, local leaders, and policymakers to advance practical, evidence-informed policies that support expanding housing choices — addressing housing affordability challenges and empowering neighborhoods to thrive.

What the Research Shows

Our review of ADU policy across the country — academic literature, case studies of high-producing cities, and conversations with practitioners — points to three consistent drivers of ADU construction: removing red tape and unnecessary zoning barriers, giving homeowners clear information and a streamlined process, and pairing flexible rules with incentives for affordability. Measured against that framework, this draft gets more right than most ordinances we review, and we want to acknowledge that clearly for the record.

What the Draft Gets Right

- **Lot size drops to 6,000 square feet** — down from 14,520 square feet today, and well below SB 284's statewide 11,000-square-foot floor. This is among the lowest DADU lot-size thresholds we've seen adopted in the Wasatch Region post-SB 284.
- **Maximum DADU size increases to 50% of the primary dwelling's living area** (up from 35%), still capped at 1,500 square feet.
- **Elimination of the maximum footprint limit, the 16-foot average wall height cap, and the pitched-roof requirement** for accessory buildings, removing several of the most common cost and design barriers to building.

- **Height flexibility improves**, moving from "no taller than the primary structure" to up to five feet taller than the primary structure (still capped at 25 feet), without requiring a conditional use permit.
- **The existing-structure conversion language is clean and well drafted** — allowing a legal accessory structure to become a DADU where the habitable portion meets setback standards, while leaving the remainder of the structure in place as a non-DADU accessory use. This is exactly the kind of low-cost path to new housing we've encouraged other Wasatch Region cities to preserve.
- **The flat one-space parking requirement is retained** without new conditions attached, which matches the reality that most South Jordan lots outside Daybreak have ample room to accommodate it.

Two Items Worth Continued Attention

Transit-Adjacent Parking Flexibility. South Jordan is served by both FrontRunner and the TRAX Red Line, yet the draft does not include a parking exemption or reduction for DADUs near these stations. Excessive parking mandates are one of the most common and avoidable barriers to ADU production nationally: a single required stall can add meaningfully to project cost and consume yard space that would otherwise fit the unit itself. We'd encourage the Commission and Council to consider a parking exemption or reduction within a reasonable walking distance (we suggest 0.25 miles) of FrontRunner and TRAX stations as this ordinance is finalized or revisited.

Setbacks. The draft's 10-foot minimum setback for DADUs, plus the additional one-foot setback for every foot of height above 16 feet, will meaningfully constrain what can actually be built on some of the smaller lots this ordinance newly makes eligible at the 6,000-square-foot threshold. We understand from staff that this standard is likely to remain unchanged in this round, and we don't want that discussion to hold up an otherwise strong ordinance. We'd simply ask that the Commission and Council flag it for the record and revisit it as part of a future iteration, once South Jordan has a track record of DADU permits to evaluate actual neighborhood impacts against.

We're grateful for the Commission's work on this ordinance and for South Jordan's timely effort to comply with state law ahead of the October 1, 2026 effective date. We're happy to serve as a resource as this ordinance moves toward a recommendation and, ultimately, a City Council vote.

Respectfully,



Turner C. Bitton
 Founding Executive Director
 Wasatch Advocates for Livable Communities
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E. COMMENTS FROM PLANNING COMMISSION

Chair Gedge said I would like to ask Commissioner Harding if she would like to Chair the next Planning Commission Meeting on September 22, 2026. I am trying to let everyone get the opportunity to Chair before the first of the year.

Commissioner Harding said yes, that would be great.

F. SUMMARY ACTION

G. ACTION

H. ADMINISTRATIVE PUBLIC HEARINGS

I. LEGISLATIVE PUBLIC HEARINGS

I.1. Legislative Updates to ADU and Accessory Building Standards in Chapters 17.08, 17.30, 17.40, 17.130.030 of City Code

Address: 1600 W Towne Center Drive

File No: PLZTA202600164, ORDINANCE NO. 2026 – 24

Applicant: City of South Jordan

Planner Joe Moss reviewed background information from the staff report.

Commissioner Catmull said so that means the exterior walls could be any size that supports that.

Planner Moss said yes, and like I said, the most common reason people were coming is that average wall height for the conditional use permit. So, I guess the discussion with the city council was that they were comfortable with the overall height limits as long as we kept those additional setbacks for anything over 16 feet, and then we can just eliminate that particular requirement in this situation.

Commissioner Catmull said what about the setbacks?

Planner Moss said if you're anything over 16 feet, still requires an additional one foot of setback, so that all still applies because setbacks are something we can still regulate.

Director Brian Preece said I would like to add that I think the reason that the 16 feet was added, is if you want a two-story building, you can't do it in 16 feet because you got eight-foot walls and nothing for your floor joist in between. So, it was usually around 18 to 19 feet that people wanted, so they could fit their floor choice in.

Commissioner Catmull said while we're on that topic, it doesn't stop them from having two floors or even three floors if they go to the basement. Is that correct?

Planner Moss said so there's not currently a limit on the number of floors we regulate just by overall height.

Commissioner Catmull said but, they can go down to get more space, it just doesn't have the exterior, because then they will have lighting issues they have to deal with.

Planner Moss said, like I said, that was the most common reason people were coming in is for the average wall height for for that conditional use permit.

Commissioner Catmull said why 20 feet there, in a lot of setbacks, rear setbacks are like 35 feet. It seems like you could get closer to your neighbor, and that's one of the frequent complaints I hear.

Planner Moss said so, accessory buildings have always been allowed closer than rear setbacks. There's different things. So your building envelope is what's going to have your rear setback and your side setbacks, and those are going to be different than the requirements for your building envelope for an accessory building. So typically, if you were going to build a detached garage, you could go up to five feet to that property line. That said, or three feet in some circumstances even, and that's always been the case. But with ADUs, the setback has always been a minimum of 10 feet from the property line, and that's a rear or a side property line, and that remains in effect. So, any ADU would specifically remain that way.

Commissioner Catmull said guess what I'm saying is like, so you have a house. Doesn't matter what it is. In Chapter 16, those goals of clean air, or whatever air, privacy seems to be what we're addressing here, and it feels like there's a different standard for the ADU rather than say. And it says 20 feet, you can have basically a second story overlook, but you couldn't build your house back, any part of it, even if it was the same dimensions as an accessory building, to go back to that 20 feet and have a patio off the extension of that. Help me to understand why it is that different? Why would that be a different standard if privacy is what we're trying to address.

Planner Moss said the difference is in your building envelope, we're talking about your primary structure, you're permitted to go up to 35 feet in height on that primary structure. So anywhere inside that building envelope can be you know basically taller than what you would normally be allowed with an accessory structure. So there's different set, there's different requirements because again, they're you know with an accessory structure your maximum height would still be 25 feet, so you're lower than what you would be permitted inside that main building envelope. The idea is to make sure that you have a feasible place to be able to build an accessory building. Otherwise, if you had a backyard shed, for instance, and you wanted to put it in the back corner, kind of you know, that has different requirements than the actual house, and so that's allowed to get closer because it's a smaller building. It's the same concept with the detached ADU.

Commissioner Catmull said I'm just struggling with that from the perspective of my neighbor, looking at it, because one might make the claim and say, okay, 35 foot setback from the envelope. If you go beyond the envelope, but if you're within 20 feet, you can still build X, Y, but your max height in that part of the envelope is 25 feet within that setback area. I guess I'm just saying, it just it seems like one path provides a a mechanism to give a different privacy experience than the other, but I don't understand why.

Planner Moss said I think it's because those detached ADUs can get closer to the property line than like a primary structure is able to specifically on a rear property line. That's the reason that that outdoor space prohibition has been included, because again, it's one of those things where we're trying to balance privacy, but also the feasibility of someone being able to legitimately build a detached ADU in their backyard, and so you know we're limited on what kind of elements we can regulate, but we felt like that was an important enough one to to address to make sure that we can minimize potential conflicts in the future.

Commissioner Hollist said that's like seven units per acre, though, right? When you're down to the 6000 square foot lot size, I'm glad you included the justification that Mr. Shelton mentioned, because otherwise, that's pushing what we even typically allow for density in residential areas anyway, and then adding an ADU on top of it.

Planner Moss said we looked at some case studies in like an R3 neighborhood where there were some above and some below an 11,000 square foot lot size. Frankly, some even above the 11,000 square foot lot size. If they were like a kind of funky shaped lot or something, they might have a difficult time making it work depending on how the primary house is laid out over the lot, and so, but there were some that were you know 10,000 square feet, and it worked pretty easily for them. It just depends on how that lot was built on originally and the shape of that you know house and lot. Some people will call in and be like, can I build a guest house under the current ordinance? And they're 30 square feet shy, and it's like you know at this point, it's that's kind of an arbitrary number about where it is, so we just decided that if the setbacks could work and it's feasible that way, then they can determine whether or not they want to have a detached or an internal or however they want to configure it on their property.

Commissioner Hollist said and then with the removal of the conditional use, we won't see these anymore, right? They will have to comply with these setbacks.

Planner Moss said yes that is correct.

Director Preece said it almost felt like what was happening was they would come in with this is what we want to build, and we'd say, well, it doesn't meet these requirements, and they would say we can get a conditional use permit, so we'll just go get a conditional use permit. And now with these set guidelines, they'll have to design into rather than trying to get forgiveness for what they want. They'll need to design into and and then they can make it work if they design into meet setbacks, so it should be a little more compatible.

Commissioner Hollist said can they still, however, build to this 1500 and then have additional storage for whatever, and have a structure that's larger than the primary residence.

Planner Moss said so the actual ADU is what we're limiting to 1500 square feet. So any of that litigating space, anything associated with that is part of that. The accessory building portion, if they have, you know, so say they have an ADU and a garage, you know, for the detached garage, that ADU is the 1500 square feet, and then the overall footprint of the building is going to have to just fit within their maximum lot coverage and things that is allowed under the the zoning district. Because we do, we currently have that requirement for the maximum building footprint for those accessory buildings, which was a little bit tricky because there was always a way to circumvent that under the existing code. You could just build two smaller ones that are right next to each other and achieve basically the same thing as far as massing and size go, but technically they're separate, so they didn't kind of come into violation with that part of the code. And so, in order to just simplify it and say what are the regulations that have actually been working for us, we stuck with the maximum percentage of the living area, but we wanted to allow for a little bit more flexibility to make sure that folks can reasonably build an ADU. But we also thought it was reasonable to keep that 1500 square foot limit.

Commissioner Catmull said I wonder sometimes if it might be just to say what percent of a lot is based on its own, can be habitable, whether it's in the primary or the secondary.

Commissioner Lori Harding said so I just have a clarifying question on this: at 50% of the primary dwelling, maximum 1500 square feet. This being a detached, does that mean if that the maximum size of a garage, with a second level as a dwelling living area can be only 1500 square feet, or or can they do a larger garage? But then a smaller portion above would be the dwelling, a maximum of 1500.

Planner Moss said if you had an accessory like currently an ADU is defined as basically the living spaces for that dwelling unit. So, kitchens, bathrooms, hallways, but the living spaces, living rooms, bedrooms, all of that is under that living space for the for the ADU. But if you built an ADU that has a garage space and a storage area it's the same as well. But again, you're probably you can't get to it from the ADU. You go outside to get into you know that those are considered that's the accessory structure part, and then this is the ADU part. So the living area itself would be limited to 1500, and then the accessory building could be whatever you want as long as it's within that lot coverage and setbacks of the of the zoning.

Chair Gedge opened the Public Hearing to comments. There were none. He closed the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Catmull said on architectural, alot of times, and I can speak to this from firsthand experience. You'll hire an architect to go design something and to kind of prevent, so, here's my question. Let me be more upfront, the definitions that you listed there for architectural massing and so forth is pretty generic in the proposed language. In other words, what does it mean to have a visual relationship with the main building? I'm not quite sure what that is. Will the city be publishing somewhere further guidance about what that means, so that when someone hires a

professional or chooses to go on their own route and say: I have reasonable confidence that I will be able to hit the architectural standard without having to do a lot of iterations with the city about what these more vague terms mean.

Planner Moss said the language used in there is by design because those are not things specifically regulated by the state, and they say that we can regulate. That said, when it comes to something like a visual relationship, we want to make sure that I mean we can't regulate the exact materials, but we can say it needs to look like it's you know from the same you know, chapter in the book here to to make sure that you know you're not building, you know, something out of corrugated metal when you have a stucco house or something because there needs to be some you know coordination between the two, whether that's you know the exact materials or whether that's the the design or something. There needs to be something that kind of ties those two structures together visually.

Commissioner Hollist said is there a standard that your department will use for that review, or will it be case by case and personal preference?

Planner Moss said I mean, obviously, as time goes on precedents kind of get established, and we look at that in a little bit more detail. But, because we're trying to describe more things about massing and things. Sometimes you can have buildings that are technically smaller, but they feel bigger just because of the way they're oriented and designed. That's what we're trying to avoid. But yeah, it's it's difficult because the state does have a very long list of things that are prohibited from being regulated because anything that we can't regulate with single family is now something we can't regulate with the detached ADU as well.

Commissioner Hollist said that seems tricky because if they can associate their ADU with an additional use, it can be enormous compared to the house, so that's a hard one to site.

Planner Moss said that's the part in there that we talk about it, so you know definitely looking like an accessory structure being subordinate to that primary dwelling. We want to make sure that it's not trying to be the star of the show, if you will. And I know that they have some size limitations and things, but you know the accessory building component of it obviously complicates it a little bit. So, we're doing the best we can with the toolbox the state has given us.

Chair Gedge said we did receive an email prior to the meeting. I just want to make sure it's announced in the public record. It was from a Turner Bitten from Wasatch Advocates for Livable Communities. We had a letter of support for this ordinance, so that has been received by staff. It's included in the public record. So hopefully, you all had a chance to review that.

Chair Gedge said are there any current applications that have not come before the commission under the current ordinance that would be impacted by the adoption this October 1, 2026.

Director Preece said We've had some inquiries, and they're waiting for this ordinance. But I don't believe we have anything right now pending under the old.

Commissioner Hollist said I appreciate city council taking the time to find a solution that brings us into compliance with state code. That's obviously necessary. I feel like this is yet another overreach by state government, but I understand that we also have to be in compliance.

Commissioner Catmull said I think there's a lot of elements to like about it. I am nervous about that architecture piece. I mean, that long list from the state might just get longer as we try to take these terms, and I am somewhat nervous that it's going to be hard to be consistent. This could open the city up to some of that arbitrary, capricious, at least interpretations. But I'm sure we can manage that as a staff and as a department. But other than that, there's a lot to like.

Commissioner Harding motioned to send a recommendation for approval for File No. PLZTA202600164 Legislative updates to ADU and Accessory Building Standards in Chapters 17.08,17,30,17.40.17.130.030 of City Code. Chair Gedge seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote was 6-0 unanimous in favor.

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Gedge motioned to Adjourn.

The Planning Commission Meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

This is a true and correct copy of the September 8, 2026 Planning Commission minutes, which were approved on September 22, 2026.