

December 13th, 2021

Honorable Mayor Wendy Koenig
Town of Estes Park Board
170 MacGregor Ave.
Estes Park, CO 80517

RE: Accessory Dwelling Units in the Town of Estes Park

Dear Mayor Koenig & Trustees,

For 90 years the Rocky Mountain Conservancy has worked to conserve and protect Rocky Mountain National Park and similar lands across Colorado and Wyoming. Through our extensive work in the community and the programs we operate, we have had the privilege of working in nearly every facet of this community. Many of our staff are full time residents of this town, and it is due to our history within this area, and the people who make up our town that we write to you in support of Amending Chapters 5 and 13 of the Estes Park Development Code Regarding Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU).

By amending the respective chapters in the Estes Park Development Code, we can ensure that Estes Park is thinking about the current residents of the town, while also planning for the future and how to attract quality talent to our community. Over the years, Rocky Mountain Conservancy has introduced hundreds of professionals of all age ranges and backgrounds to the Estes Valley. For many, there is a strong interest to call this community home, however the difficulty to gaining adequate housing, and the subsequent price tag that partners prospective living areas make this prospect difficult to achieve. Allowing property owners to build and leverage ADU's on their land would provide Estes Park with an invaluable tool to increase housing opportunities without having to further develop the local area. Many properties throughout Estes Park can adapt existing structures to accommodate these spaces, or as the town has pointed out in their own documentation, it can prioritize infilling existing urban areas to better accommodate additional structures.

While ADUs can be beneficial for communities, they must be managed appropriately. Communities, such as Aspen¹ and Crested Butte², have passed similar measures allowing ADUs in their communities to help combat their respective affordable housing issues, but did not provide enough criteria for property owners to have to meet, this lack of oversight allowed ADUs to become short term rentals and used for additional space rather than people. We implore the Town of Estes Park to ensure that we avoid similar issues, and work with a broad stakeholder group of community members to construct the parameters that must be met to construct or develop existing structures in the future.

Rocky Mountain Conservancy has the distinct privilege to work with people of all ages and backgrounds within this community, and we want to work to retain and recruit the best talent possible. For the future of Estes Park, we urge the town board to approve these proposed amendments, as this will prove beneficial to our community and assist in making a more inclusive housing market more accessible to potential employees.

Sincerely,



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¹ Robbie, E. (2015, October 16). City of Aspen eliminates accessory dwelling units as affordable housing mitigation option. *The Aspen Times*.

² Reaman, M. (2021, September 1). CB to discuss accessory structure moratorium. *Crested Butte News*.