
Massachusetts ADU Compliance Snapshot

Q1 2026

A structured analysis of local ADU bylaw consistency
with MGL c.40A §3 and 760 CMR 71.00

Prepared by ADU Pulse — adupulse.com

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This report provides structured statutory comparison and public-record analysis. It does not render legal opinions or determine enforceability in specific cases.

Executive Summary

Massachusetts legalized accessory dwelling units (ADUs) statewide effective February 2, 2025, through Chapter 150 of the Acts of 2024. The law amended MGL c.40A §3 to establish the right to build a first ADU by right on any single-family lot, with implementing regulations at 760 CMR 71.00.

In the first full year of the law, 1,639 ADU applications were filed and 1,224 approved across 293 Massachusetts municipalities responding to the EOHLC survey. ADUs now represent more than 25% of new housing permitted statewide, making them a significant contributor to the state's housing production.

However, many municipalities have adopted or retained local bylaws and ordinances that appear inconsistent with state law. This creates confusion for homeowners, uncertainty for builders, and potential legal exposure for municipalities.

This report analyzes **26 municipalities** and identifies **53 provisions** across **4 categories** that appear inconsistent with Chapter 150 and 760 CMR 71.00.

The Massachusetts Attorney General has formally disapproved provisions in **10 towns** to date, striking down **22 provisions** as inconsistent with state law. An additional **31 provisions** across **11 additional communities** appear inconsistent based on ADU Pulse's statutory analysis but have not yet been the subject of AG action.

A further **46 provisions** are classified as needing review — they fall in a gray area where the municipality's authority is unclear and further legal evaluation is recommended.

Metric	Value
Communities analyzed	26
Total provisions reviewed	202
Provisions inconsistent with state law	53
AG-disapproved provisions	22
Provisions needing review	46
Provisions consistent with state law	103
Towns with AG disapprovals	10

Methodology

Every analysis in this report follows a consistent process:

- We read the full local ADU bylaw or ordinance as adopted by the municipality.
- We compare each provision against Massachusetts Chapter 150 (the Affordable Homes Act) and the implementing regulations at 760 CMR 71.00.
- For towns, we review all published Attorney General decisions on that town's bylaw, including partial disapprovals. City ordinances are not subject to AG review — those inconsistencies are identified through independent analysis.
- We classify each provision into one of four confidence tiers based on available evidence.

This platform provides structured statutory comparison and public-record analysis. It does not render legal opinions or determine enforceability in specific cases. Consult a zoning attorney for project-specific guidance.

Confidence Tiers

Tier	Definition	Count
AG Disapproved	The Attorney General has formally disapproved this provision as inconsistent with state law.	22
Appears Inconsistent	ADU Pulse analysis identifies this provision as appearing to conflict with G.L. c. 40A §3 or 760 CMR 71.00, but no AG decision exists.	31
Needs Review	The provision is in a gray area and may face future challenges. Further legal evaluation recommended.	46
Consistent	The provision appears consistent with state law. No issues expected.	103

Data Sources

- **EOHLC ADU Survey (February 2026)** — Statewide survey of all 351 municipalities, providing aggregate counts of ADU applications submitted, approved, and denied.
- **U.S. Census Bureau** — American Community Survey population estimates and Building Permit Survey data for housing production context.
- **Attorney General Municipal Law Unit** — Published AG decisions on town bylaw articles, including partial and full disapprovals.
- **Municipal Bylaws and Ordinances** — The full text of each municipality's ADU bylaw or ordinance as publicly available on municipal websites or ecode360.

Confidence Tier Summary

Across 26 municipalities analyzed, ADU Pulse reviewed 202 individual provisions. The distribution across confidence tiers is shown below.

Municipality	AG Disapproved	Appears Inconsistent	Needs Review	Consistent	Total
Andover	—	—	3	5	8
Barnstable	—	—	3	7	10
Boston	—	3	3	4	10
Brookline	2	—	1	4	7
Canton	1	—	1	5	7
Duxbury	—	3	2	3	8
East Bridgewater	2	—	2	3	7
Falmouth	—	—	3	5	8
Hanson	1	—	1	4	6
Leicester	3	—	—	4	7
Milton	—	3	2	5	10
Nantucket	—	4	1	2	7
Needham	—	4	—	4	8
New Bedford	—	—	3	7	10
Newton	—	—	3	7	10
Plymouth	—	3	2	5	10
Quincy	—	3	1	2	6
Revere	—	4	—	0	4
Salem	—	1	2	1	4
Somerville	—	—	3	5	8
Southborough	—	1	—	0	1
Sudbury	4	—	2	4	10
Upton	2	—	2	3	7
Weston	3	—	2	4	9
Wilbraham	4	—	2	4	10
Worcester	—	2	2	6	10
TOTAL	22	31	46	103	202

Attorney General Action Timeline

The Massachusetts Attorney General has disapproved ADU bylaw provisions in 10 towns as of February 2026. The following table shows all AG actions in chronological order.

Town	AG Decision Date	Provisions Disapproved	Key Issues
East Bridgewater	Apr 2025	2	ADUs Limited to Single-Family Lots, 4-Year Waiting Period
Leicester	May 2025	3	Bedroom Limit on ADUs, Single-Family Zoning District Restriction, "All Dimensional" Compliance Requirement
Brookline	Jun 2025	2	Floor Area Ratio (FAR) Cap on ADUs, Pre-Existing Nonconforming Conditions
Hanson	Jun 2025	1	Site Plan Review as De Facto Special Permit
Canton	Jun 2025	1	Minimum Lot Size Requirement
Weston	Jun 2025	3	12-Month Minimum Lease, 4-Year Dwelling Existence Requirement, Special Permit for Newer Dwellings
Upton	Jun 2025	2	ADUs By-Right Limited to Residential Districts Only, Special Permit in Non-Residential Districts
Sudbury	Oct 2025	4	Single-Family Dwelling Restriction, Minimum Lot Size Requirements, Principal Dwelling Setback on ADUs (+1 more)
Wilbraham	Dec 2025	4	Single-Family-Only References, Minimum Lot Area 15k-60k sqft, Blanket Parking Requirement (+1 more)
Southborough	Feb 2026	0	

Note: AG review applies only to town bylaws. City ordinances (Boston, New Bedford, Newton, Somerville, Worcester, Quincy, Salem, Revere) are not subject to AG review; inconsistencies in city ordinances are identified through ADU Pulse's independent analysis.

Most Common Inconsistency Types

The following table shows the most frequently identified inconsistencies across all 26 municipalities analyzed, ranked by the number of towns affected.

By Provision Type

Provision Type	Towns Affected
Owner-Occupancy Requirement	7
Special Permit Requirement	2
Bedroom-Based Parking	1
District Scope Limitation	1
Internal-Only ADU Restriction	1
ADU Size Cap Below State Minimum	1
Principal Dwelling Scope	1
Bedroom Limit on ADUs	1
Single-Family Zoning District Restriction	1
"All Dimensional" Compliance Requirement	1
Floor Area Ratio (FAR) Cap on ADUs	1
Pre-Existing Nonconforming Conditions	1
Minimum Lot Size Requirement	1
Site Plan Review as De Facto Special Permit	1
Family-Only Occupancy Restriction	1

By Category

Category	Inconsistent Provisions
Use & Occupancy	28
Dimensional & Parking	15
Process & Administration	9
Building & Safety	1

Town-by-Town Profiles

The following pages provide individual profiles for each of the 26 municipalities analyzed. Each profile includes the municipality's provision-level analysis, permit data, and key findings.

Andover

Essex County · Pop. 36,569 · Town · Last reviewed: February 15, 2026

Bylaw source: Andover Zoning Bylaw Article VIII, Art. 22 (April 2025 Town Meeting) · Last updated: April 2025 (AG review pending)

Permits: 10 submitted, 9 approved, 0 denied (90% approval rate)

Andover's ZBA site plan review is the main friction point — it's not a special permit, but it adds time, cost, and unpredictability. ADUs are allowed by right, but expect the review process to take longer than towns without ZBA involvement.

Provision	Category	Tier
Site Plan Review by ZBA	Process & Administration	Needs Review
Parking Requirement (>0.5mi from transit)	Dimensional & Parking	Needs Review
STR Prohibition	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
No Condo Conversion	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Principal Structure Must Be Complete	Process & Administration	Needs Review
By-Right Permitting	Process & Administration	Consistent
ADU Size Limits	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
Number of ADUs	Use & Occupancy	Consistent

Barnstable

Barnstable County · Pop. 48,916 · Town · Last reviewed: February 15, 2026

Bylaw source: Barnstable Zoning Ordinance §240-47.2 (May 2025 amendments) · Last updated: May 2025

Permits: 31 submitted, 6 approved, 0 denied (19% approval rate)

Barnstable has the lowest approval rate in the tracker at 19%. The entrance visibility requirement and site plan review process appear to be limiting approvals. Builders should factor in a longer timeline and potential pushback from planning staff.

Provision	Category	Tier
Entrance Visibility Requirement	Building & Safety	Needs Review
Site Plan/Floor Plan/Elevation Submission	Process & Administration	Needs Review
Design Compatibility Standards	Building & Safety	Needs Review
Owner-Occupancy Requirement	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
By-Right Permitting	Process & Administration	Consistent
ADU Size Limits	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
STR Regulation	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Number of ADUs	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Parking Requirements	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
Detached ADU Allowance	Use & Occupancy	Consistent

Boston

Suffolk County · Pop. 675,647 · Town · Last reviewed: February 15, 2026

Bylaw source: Boston Zoning Code (BPDA Citywide ADU Program, ongoing zoning updates) · Last updated: Ongoing (BPDA zoning updates)

Permits: 69 submitted, 44 approved, 0 denied (64% approval rate)

Boston is exempt from the state ADU law entirely — it's the only municipality in Massachusetts that doesn't operate under G.L. c. 40A. Owner-occupancy is required, only internal conversions are allowed, and workshop attendance is mandatory. The BPDA is working on zoning updates but hasn't changed the rules yet. The zero-interest loan program (up to \$30K) is a genuine advantage.

Provision	Category	Tier
State Law Exemption	Process & Administration	Appears Inconsistent
Owner-Occupancy Requirement	Use & Occupancy	Appears Inconsistent
Internal-Only Restriction (Current Program)	Use & Occupancy	Appears Inconsistent
Workshop Attendance Requirement	Process & Administration	Needs Review
1-3 Family Property Limitation	Use & Occupancy	Needs Review
Zoning Board of Appeal Relief	Process & Administration	Needs Review
ADU Size Limits	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
Rental Registry	Process & Administration	Consistent
ADU Loan Program	Process & Administration	Consistent
Number of ADUs	Use & Occupancy	Consistent

Brookline

Norfolk County · Pop. 63,191 · Town · Last reviewed: June 1, 2025

Bylaw source: Brookline Zoning Bylaw — Town Meeting Article · Last updated: June 2025 (AG partial disapproval)

AG action: June 1, 2025 — 2 provisions disapproved

Permits: 5 submitted, 2 approved, 3 denied (40% approval rate)

Brookline's bylaw is relatively clean with only one inconsistent provision (owner-occupancy for detached ADUs). The town is generally ADU-friendly with an 81% approval rate. Builders can operate with reasonable confidence here.

Provision	Category	Tier
Floor Area Ratio (FAR) Cap on ADUs	Dimensional & Parking	AG Disapproved
Pre-Existing Nonconforming Conditions	Dimensional & Parking	AG Disapproved
Historic District Design Review	Building & Safety	Needs Review
ADU Size Limits	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
By-Right Permitting	Process & Administration	Consistent
Detached ADU Allowance	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Parking	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent

Canton

Norfolk County · Pop. 24,370 · Town · Last reviewed: June 4, 2025

Bylaw source: Canton Zoning Bylaw — Town Meeting Article · Last updated: June 2025 (AG partial disapproval)

AG action: June 4, 2025 — 1 provision disapproved

Permits: 2 submitted, 1 approved, 1 denied (50% approval rate)

Canton lost its minimum lot size requirement to the AG in June 2025. The remaining bylaw is mostly consistent but the special permit requirement is a significant barrier — it adds months and creates discretionary denial risk.

Provision	Category	Tier
Minimum Lot Size Requirement	Dimensional & Parking	AG Disapproved
Impervious Surface Cap	Dimensional & Parking	Needs Review
ADU Size Limits	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
By-Right Permitting	Process & Administration	Consistent
Detached ADU Allowance	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Parking	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
Owner-Occupancy	Use & Occupancy	Consistent

Duxbury

Plymouth County · Pop. 16,090 · Town · Last reviewed: February 15, 2026

Bylaw source: Duxbury Zoning Bylaw · Last updated: June 2025 (STM amendments pending AG approval)

Permits: 3 submitted, 2 approved, 0 denied (67% approval rate)

Provision	Category	Tier
Owner-Occupancy Requirement	Use & Occupancy	Appears Inconsistent
Special Permit Requirement	Process & Administration	Appears Inconsistent
10-Year Home Age Requirement	Process & Administration	Appears Inconsistent
Site Plan Review as Quasi-Special-Permit	Process & Administration	Needs Review
STR Regulation Pending	Use & Occupancy	Needs Review
ADU Size Limits	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
Detached ADU Allowance	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Number of ADUs	Use & Occupancy	Consistent

East Bridgewater

Plymouth County · Pop. 14,440 · Town · Last reviewed: April 14, 2025

Bylaw source: East Bridgewater Zoning Bylaw (AG Decision Case #11579, April 14, 2025) · Last updated: 2025 (AG partially disapproved April 2025)

AG action: April 14, 2025 — 2 provisions disapproved

Permits: 8 submitted, 8 approved, 0 denied (100% approval rate)

East Bridgewater had 2 provisions disapproved by the AG in April 2025. The single-family-lot restriction and a 4-year waiting period were both struck down. Site plan review scope and design standards remain under review.

Provision	Category	Tier
ADUs Limited to Single-Family Lots	Use & Occupancy	AG Disapproved
4-Year Waiting Period	Use & Occupancy	AG Disapproved
Site Plan Review Scope	Process & Administration	Needs Review
Design Standards	Building & Safety	Needs Review
ADU Definition	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
By-Right in Residential Districts	Process & Administration	Consistent
Short-Term Rental Restrictions	Use & Occupancy	Consistent

Falmouth

Barnstable County · Pop. 32,517 · Town · Last reviewed: February 15, 2026

Bylaw source: Falmouth Zoning Bylaw Chapter 240, ADU provisions (amendments under Planning Board review) · Last updated: Pre-Chapter 150

Permits: 12 submitted, 12 approved, 0 denied (100% approval rate)

Falmouth requires site plan review for ALL ADU types — internal, attached, and detached. The \$200 fee and abutter notification create a quasi-hearing process. The design compatibility requirement is subjective and could be used to slow approvals.

Provision	Category	Tier
Site Plan Review for ALL ADUs	Process & Administration	Needs Review
Design Compatibility / Single-Family Appearance	Building & Safety	Needs Review
Abutter Notification Requirement	Process & Administration	Needs Review
6-Month Minimum Lease	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
By-Right Permitting	Process & Administration	Consistent
ADU Size Limits	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
Number of ADUs	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Detached ADU Allowance	Use & Occupancy	Consistent

Hanson

Plymouth County · Pop. 10,639 · Town · Last reviewed: June 1, 2025

Bylaw source: Hanson Zoning Bylaw — Town Meeting Article · Last updated: 2025 (AG partial disapproval)

AG action: June 1, 2025 — 1 provision disapproved

Permits: 3 submitted, 2 approved, 1 denied (67% approval rate)

Provision	Category	Tier
Site Plan Review as De Facto Special Permit	Process & Administration	AG Disapproved
Deed Restriction Requirement	Use & Occupancy	Needs Review
ADU Size Limits	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
Detached ADU Allowance	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Parking	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
Owner-Occupancy	Use & Occupancy	Consistent

Leicester

Worcester County · Pop. 11,087 · Town · Last reviewed: May 27, 2025

Bylaw source: Leicester Zoning Bylaw — Town Meeting Article 9 · Last updated: May 2025 (AG partial disapproval)

AG action: May 27, 2025 — 3 provisions disapproved

Permits: 2 submitted, 2 approved, 0 denied (100% approval rate)

Leicester was one of the first AG decisions and set the precedents other towns ignored. The bedroom cap, single-family restriction, and dimensional provisions were all struck down. The remaining bylaw is workable but the town's enforcement posture may still reflect the old rules.

Provision	Category	Tier
Bedroom Limit on ADUs	Dimensional & Parking	AG Disapproved
Single-Family Zoning District Restriction	Use & Occupancy	AG Disapproved
"All Dimensional" Compliance Requirement	Dimensional & Parking	AG Disapproved
ADU Size Limits	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
By-Right Permitting	Process & Administration	Consistent
Detached ADU Allowance	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Parking	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent

Milton

Norfolk County · Pop. 28,630 · Town · Last reviewed: February 15, 2026

Bylaw source: Milton Zoning Bylaw §275-10.13 · Last updated: Pre-2025 (Town Meeting referred back to Planning Board)

Permits: 25 submitted, 24 approved, 0 denied (96% approval rate)

Milton's bylaw predates the state ADU law and has not been reconciled with G.L. c. 40A §3. Three provisions — owner-occupancy, family/caregiver restrictions, and the special permit requirement — are preempted by state law. Homeowners should cite G.L. c. 40A §3 if the town tries to enforce them.

Provision	Category	Tier
Owner-Occupancy Requirement	Use & Occupancy	Appears Inconsistent
Family-Only Occupancy Restriction	Use & Occupancy	Appears Inconsistent
Special Permit for Detached/Addition ADUs	Process & Administration	Appears Inconsistent
Site Plan Review by Planning Board	Process & Administration	Needs Review
Design Compatibility Standards	Building & Safety	Needs Review
12-Month Minimum Lease	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
ADU Size Limits	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
Parking (>0.5mi from transit)	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
Number of ADUs	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Landscaping Buffer	Building & Safety	Consistent

Nantucket

Nantucket County · Pop. 14,255 · Town · Last reviewed: February 15, 2026

Bylaw source: Nantucket Zoning Bylaw §139-16A · Last updated: Pre-2025 (not updated for Chapter 150)

Permits: 27 submitted, 27 approved, 0 denied (100% approval rate)

Nantucket's HDC review adds a layer of design scrutiny that doesn't exist on the mainland. The 4 inconsistent provisions are preempted by state law, but the island's unique regulatory culture means pushback is common. Budget extra time for approvals.

Provision	Category	Tier
Owner-Occupancy Requirement	Use & Occupancy	Appears Inconsistent
Internal-Only ADU Restriction	Use & Occupancy	Appears Inconsistent
ADU Size Cap Below State Minimum	Dimensional & Parking	Appears Inconsistent
Principal Dwelling Scope	Use & Occupancy	Appears Inconsistent
Short-Term Rental of ADUs	Use & Occupancy	Needs Review
By-Right Permitting	Process & Administration	Consistent
Parking	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent

Needham

Norfolk County · Pop. 32,091 · Town · Last reviewed: February 15, 2026

Bylaw source: Needham Zoning Bylaw (2023, Planning Board planning fall 2025 update) · Last updated: 2023 (Planning Board planning fall 2025 update)

Permits: 4 submitted, 4 approved, 0 denied (100% approval rate)

Needham is a textbook restrictive town — special permit required, no detached ADUs, owner-occupancy enforced. The result: 12 ADUs in 3+ years (Green Needham, April 2023). All 4 inconsistent provisions are preempted by state law. Planning Board is working on updates but hasn't adopted them yet.

Provision	Category	Tier
Owner-Occupancy Requirement	Use & Occupancy	Appears Inconsistent
Attached-Only Restriction	Use & Occupancy	Appears Inconsistent
Special Permit Requirement	Process & Administration	Appears Inconsistent
Occupancy Restrictions (Legacy)	Use & Occupancy	Appears Inconsistent
By-Right Permitting	Process & Administration	Consistent
ADU Size Limits	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
STR Restrictions	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Number of ADUs	Use & Occupancy	Consistent

New Bedford

Bristol County · Pop. 101,079 · Town · Last reviewed: February 15, 2026

Bylaw source: New Bedford Zoning Ordinance Ch. 9, §§2340 & 1200 · Last updated: September 2024

Permits: 6 submitted, 2 approved, 4 denied (33% approval rate)

Provision	Category	Tier
Short-Term Rental Restriction	Use & Occupancy	Needs Review
Design Guidelines for Detached ADUs	Building & Safety	Needs Review
Special Permit for Larger ADUs	Process & Administration	Needs Review
By-Right Permitting	Process & Administration	Consistent
ADU Size Limits	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
Detached ADU Allowance	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Owner-Occupancy	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Parking	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
District Scope	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Number of ADUs Allowed	Use & Occupancy	Consistent

Newton

Norfolk County · Pop. 88,923 · Town · Last reviewed: February 15, 2026

Bylaw source: Newton Zoning Ordinance §30-22 (April 2025 amendments) · Last updated: April 2025

Permits: 40 submitted, 18 approved, 0 denied (45% approval rate)

Newton's two-tier system creates confusion but most ADUs can proceed by right. The site plan review path adds cost and time for larger units but isn't technically a barrier. Builders should confirm which tier applies before quoting projects.

Provision	Category	Tier
Owner-Occupancy Requirement	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
By-Right Permitting (under 900 sqft)	Process & Administration	Consistent
Special Permit for Larger ADUs	Process & Administration	Needs Review
Design Compatibility Standards	Building & Safety	Needs Review
Historic District Carriage House Exemption	Use & Occupancy	Needs Review
ADU Size Limits	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
Parking Requirements	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
STR Prohibition	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Number of ADUs	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Detached ADU Allowance	Use & Occupancy	Consistent

Plymouth

Plymouth County · Pop. 61,217 · Town · Last reviewed: February 15, 2026

Bylaw source: Plymouth Zoning Bylaw §205-51 · Last updated: October 2024

Permits: 42 submitted, 34 approved, 8 denied (81% approval rate)

Plymouth has 3 inconsistent provisions on the books that haven't been reviewed by the AG. Owner-occupancy and lot frontage requirements mirror provisions struck down in other towns. These are preempted by state law but may still be applied locally.

Provision	Category	Tier
Owner-Occupancy Requirement	Use & Occupancy	Appears Inconsistent
Bedroom-Based Parking	Dimensional & Parking	Appears Inconsistent
District Scope Limitation	Use & Occupancy	Appears Inconsistent
Design Review / Compatibility	Building & Safety	Needs Review
Setback Requirements	Dimensional & Parking	Needs Review
ADU Size Limits	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
By-Right Permitting	Process & Administration	Consistent
Number of ADUs Allowed	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Building Code Compliance	Building & Safety	Consistent
Detached ADU Allowance	Use & Occupancy	Consistent

Quincy

Norfolk County · Pop. 101,636 · City · Last reviewed: February 15, 2026

Bylaw source: Quincy ADU Guidelines (February 28, 2025) · Last updated: February 2025

Permits: 17 submitted, 6 approved, 0 denied (35% approval rate)

Quincy has 3 provisions identified as inconsistent through ADU Pulse's independent analysis. District exclusions, a variance lot exclusion, and a detached ADU one-story limit all conflict with state law. The 35% approval rate is among the lowest for cities and may reflect these barriers.

Provision	Category	Tier
District Exclusions (Bus C, Ind A, Ind B)	Use & Occupancy	Appears Inconsistent
Variance Lot Exclusion	Use & Occupancy	Appears Inconsistent
Detached ADU One-Story Limit	Dimensional & Parking	Appears Inconsistent
320 SF Minimum Size	Dimensional & Parking	Needs Review
Transit Parking Exemption	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
STR Prohibition	Use & Occupancy	Consistent

Revere

Suffolk County · Pop. 62,186 · City · Last reviewed: February 15, 2026

Bylaw source: Revere Zoning Ordinance, Title 17, Chapter 17.25 (October 2022) · Last updated: October 2022

Permits: 17 submitted, 9 approved, 0 denied (53% approval rate)

Revere is actively resisting the state ADU law. A city councillor filed a Home Rule Petition in March 2025 seeking exemption (Revere Journal, March 2025). The planning director expressed skepticism about its viability (Revere Journal, March 2025). Meanwhile, all 4 conflicting provisions have been preempted by state law since February 2, 2025.

Provision	Category	Tier
Owner-Occupancy (2-Year Minimum)	Use & Occupancy	Appears Inconsistent
Single-Family Homes Only	Use & Occupancy	Appears Inconsistent
No Enlarging Principal Dwelling	Use & Occupancy	Appears Inconsistent
600 SF Max / 1-Bedroom Limit	Dimensional & Parking	Appears Inconsistent

Salem

Essex County · Pop. 44,480 · City · Last reviewed: February 15, 2026

Bylaw source: Salem Zoning Ordinance, ADU provisions (2022, amendment pending May 2025) · Last updated: 2022 (amendment pending May 2025)

Permits: 9 submitted, 9 approved, 0 denied (100% approval rate)

Salem has 1 provision identified as inconsistent: a mandatory 70% Fair Market Rent cap that conflicts with state regulations. Two additional provisions are under review. Despite this, Salem has a 100% approval rate on the 9 permits submitted.

Provision	Category	Tier
70% Fair Market Rent Cap	Use & Occupancy	Appears Inconsistent
350 SF Minimum Size	Dimensional & Parking	Needs Review
District Limitations	Use & Occupancy	Needs Review
STR Restrictions	Use & Occupancy	Consistent

Somerville

Middlesex County · Pop. 81,045 · Town · Last reviewed: February 15, 2026

Bylaw source: Somerville Zoning Ordinance (Ord. 2025-16, adopted 06/26/2025) · Last updated: June 2025

Permits: 40 submitted, 24 approved, 0 denied (60% approval rate)

Somerville is relatively ADU-friendly after adopting Ord. 2025-16. The ‘Backyard Cottage’ building type makes detached ADUs straightforward. The main watch item is the affordability requirement in Neighborhood Residential zones — it adds compliance costs that may discourage some projects.

Provision	Category	Tier
3-Unit Cap in Neighborhood Residential	Use & Occupancy	Needs Review
Affordability Requirement	Use & Occupancy	Needs Review
Previous Owner-Occupancy Requirement	Use & Occupancy	Needs Review
Backyard Cottage Building Type	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
By-Right Permitting	Process & Administration	Consistent
ADU Size Limits	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
STR Restrictions	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Number of ADUs	Use & Occupancy	Consistent

Southborough

Worcester County · Pop. 10,450 · Town · Last reviewed: February 17, 2026

Bylaw source: Southborough Zoning Bylaw, ADU provisions (AG Decision, February 17, 2026) · Last updated: 2025 (AG partial disapproval February 2026)

AG action: February 17, 2026 — 1 provision disapproved

Permits: 2 submitted, 0 approved, 0 denied (0% approval rate)

Southborough tried to ban mobile homes from being used as ADUs, but the AG struck down the restriction because the town’s broad definition of “mobile home” included manufactured homes protected under state law. The travel trailer ban was upheld. The Planning Board is already working on revisions for April Town Meeting. This decision sets a precedent: towns cannot use overbroad definitions to exclude modular or manufactured ADUs. (My Southborough, February 2026)

Provision	Category	Tier
ADU Structure Type Restrictions	Building & Safety	Appears Inconsistent

Sudbury

Middlesex County · Pop. 18,934 · Town · Last reviewed: October 1, 2025

Bylaw source: Sudbury Zoning Bylaw, Art. 28 (May 2025 STM — AG partially disapproved October 2025) · Last updated: May 2025 (AG partially disapproved Oct 2025)

AG action: October 1, 2025 — 3 provisions disapproved

Permits: 3 submitted, 3 approved, 0 denied (100% approval rate)

Sudbury’s bylaw was partially gutted by the AG in October 2025 — 3 provisions deleted, 1 partially struck. The surviving ‘architecturally harmonious’ requirement is a gray area. Confirm with the building department which version of the bylaw they’re enforcing.

Provision	Category	Tier
Single-Family Dwelling Restriction	Use & Occupancy	AG Disapproved
Minimum Lot Size Requirements	Dimensional & Parking	AG Disapproved
Principal Dwelling Setback on ADUs	Dimensional & Parking	AG Disapproved
Parking Provisions (Partial)	Dimensional & Parking	AG Disapproved
Architecturally Harmonious Requirement	Building & Safety	Needs Review
No New Driveway Connections	Dimensional & Parking	Needs Review
By-Right Permitting	Process & Administration	Consistent
ADU Size Limits	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
STR Prohibition	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Number of ADUs	Use & Occupancy	Consistent

Upton

Worcester County · Pop. 8,000 · Town · Last reviewed: June 9, 2025

Bylaw source: Upton Zoning Bylaw (AG Decision Case #11658, June 9, 2025) · Last updated: 2025 (AG partially disapproved June 2025)

AG action: June 9, 2025 — 2 provisions disapproved

Permits: 5 submitted, 4 approved, 0 denied (80% approval rate)

Upton had 2 provisions disapproved by the AG in June 2025. The AG struck the limitation of by-right ADUs to residential districts only and the special permit requirement in non-residential districts. The incomplete ADU definition and special permit criteria bleed-through remain under review.

Provision	Category	Tier
ADUs By-Right Limited to Residential Districts Only	Use & Occupancy	AG Disapproved
Special Permit in Non-Residential Districts	Process & Administration	AG Disapproved
Incomplete ADU Definition	Use & Occupancy	Needs Review
Special Permit Criteria Bleed-Through	Process & Administration	Needs Review
By-Right in Named Residential Districts	Process & Administration	Consistent
Special Permit for Additional ADUs	Process & Administration	Consistent
Grandfathering Provision	Process & Administration	Consistent

Weston

Middlesex County · Pop. 11,851 · Town · Last reviewed: June 9, 2025

Bylaw source: Weston Zoning Bylaw (AG Decision Case #11649, June 9, 2025) · Last updated: 2025 (AG partially disapproved June 2025)

AG action: June 9, 2025 — 3 provisions disapproved

Permits: 0 submitted, 0 approved, 0 denied (0% approval rate)

Weston had 3 provisions disapproved by the AG in June 2025 — a 12-month minimum lease, a 4-year dwelling existence requirement, and a special permit for newer dwellings. Zero permits submitted suggests the restrictions may be deterring applicants.

Provision	Category	Tier
12-Month Minimum Lease	Use & Occupancy	AG Disapproved
4-Year Dwelling Existence Requirement	Use & Occupancy	AG Disapproved
Special Permit for Newer Dwellings	Process & Administration	AG Disapproved
Site Plan Review Standards	Process & Administration	Needs Review
Dimensional Requirements	Dimensional & Parking	Needs Review
ADUs in All Residential Districts	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Multiple ADUs by Special Permit	Process & Administration	Consistent
ADU Definition	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Short-Term Rental Restrictions	Use & Occupancy	Consistent

Wilbraham

Hampden County · Pop. 14,613 · Town · Last reviewed: December 19, 2025

Bylaw source: Wilbraham Zoning Bylaw (AG Decision Case #11778, December 19, 2025) · Last updated: 2025 (AG partially disapproved December 2025)

AG action: December 19, 2025 — 4 provisions disapproved

Permits: 4 submitted, 4 approved, 0 denied (100% approval rate)

Wilbraham had 4 provisions disapproved by the AG in December 2025 — single-family-only references, minimum lot area, blanket parking requirement, and special permit for nonconforming dwellings. The most disapprovals of any town reviewed so far.

Provision	Category	Tier
Single-Family-Only References	Use & Occupancy	AG Disapproved
Minimum Lot Area 15k-60k sqft	Dimensional & Parking	AG Disapproved
Blanket Parking Requirement	Dimensional & Parking	AG Disapproved
Special Permit for Nonconforming Dwellings	Process & Administration	AG Disapproved
Site Plan Denial Authority	Process & Administration	Needs Review
ADU Prohibited in Some Non-Residential Districts	Use & Occupancy	Needs Review
By-Right in Residential Districts	Process & Administration	Consistent
Updated ADU Definition	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Removed Prior Special Permit	Process & Administration	Consistent
New ADU Regulations Section	Process & Administration	Consistent

Worcester

Worcester County · Pop. 206,518 · City · Last reviewed: February 15, 2026

Bylaw source: Worcester Zoning Ordinance, ADU provisions (December 2023, amendments proposed May 2025) · Last updated: December 2023 (amendments proposed May 2025)

Permits: 31 submitted, 23 approved, 0 denied (74% approval rate)

Worcester's ordinance is mostly builder-friendly — no site plan review, no parking restrictions, by-right through building permit. The two issues are owner-occupancy (which the city council voted 9-2 to keep, per This Week in Worcester, December 2023) and the 2-bedroom cap (which mirrors a provision the AG struck down in Leicester).

Provision	Category	Tier
Owner-Occupancy Requirement	Use & Occupancy	Appears Inconsistent
2-Bedroom Cap	Dimensional & Parking	Appears Inconsistent
3-Unrelated-Person Occupancy Limit	Use & Occupancy	Needs Review
Front Yard Prohibition	Dimensional & Parking	Needs Review
No Site Plan Review Required	Process & Administration	Consistent
By-Right Permitting	Process & Administration	Consistent
No Parking Restrictions	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
ADU Size Limits	Dimensional & Parking	Consistent
STR Restriction	Use & Occupancy	Consistent
Detached ADU Allowance	Use & Occupancy	Consistent

Permit Data Correlation

The following table shows permit application and approval data alongside compliance status for all profiled municipalities. This allows comparison of regulatory posture with actual permitting outcomes.

Municipality	Applications	Approved	Rate	Inconsistent	AG Actions
Boston	69	44	64%	3	—
Plymouth	42	34	81%	3	—
Newton	40	18	45%	0	—
Somerville	40	24	60%	0	—
Barnstable	31	6	19%	0	—
Worcester	31	23	74%	2	—
Nantucket	27	27	100%	4	—
Milton	25	24	96%	3	—
Quincy	17	6	35%	3	—
Revere	17	9	53%	4	—
Falmouth	12	12	100%	0	—
Andover	10	9	90%	0	—
Salem	9	9	100%	1	—
East Bridgewater	8	8	100%	2	2
New Bedford	6	2	33%	0	—
Brookline	5	2	40%	2	2
Upton	5	4	80%	2	2
Needham	4	4	100%	4	—
Wilbraham	4	4	100%	4	4
Hanson	3	2	67%	1	1
Duxbury	3	2	67%	3	—
Sudbury	3	3	100%	4	3
Leicester	2	2	100%	3	3
Canton	2	1	50%	1	1
Southborough	2	0	0%	1	1
Weston	0	0	0%	3	3

Special Cases (Narrative Profiles)

Three additional cities are tracked as narrative special cases — they do not have provision-by-provision analysis but exhibit notable ADU policy patterns.

City	Status	Applications	Approved	Rate
Fall River	Passive Resistance	25	13	52%
Lowell	No Local Ordinance	26	26	100%
Medford	Stalled	22	19	86%

Appendix: Sources

State Law and Regulatory Sources

- **Chapter 150 of the Acts of 2024 — full session law**
<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2024/Chapter150>
- **Sections 7 & 8 of Chapter 150 — clean HTML on mass.gov**
<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/chapter-150-section-7-and-8-of-the-acts-of-2024-adus>
- **760 CMR 71.00 — EOHLC ADU Regulations (final version PDF)**
<https://www.mass.gov/doc/760-cmr-7100-protected-use-adus-final-version/download>
- **EOHLC ADU landing page**
<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/accessory-dwelling-units>
- **EOHLC ADU FAQ**
<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/accessory-dwelling-unit-adu-faqs>
- **MGL c.40A §1A — Definitions (ADU definition)**
<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleVII/Chapter40A/Section1A>
- **MGL c.40A §3 — Zoning Act, Dover Amendment (as amended)**
<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleVII/Chapter40A/Section3>

Attorney General Decisions

- **Brookline AG Decision — Fall TM 2024, June 2025**
https://www.brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/57994/FALL-TM-2024-AGO-Decision_ADU-June-2025
- **Canton AG Decision — 6/4/2025 (referenced in EOHLC FAQ)**
<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/accessory-dwelling-unit-adu-faqs>
- **East Bridgewater AG Decision — Case #11579, April 14, 2025**
<https://massago.onbaseonline.com/Massago/1700PublicAccess/MLU.htm>
- **Hanson AG Decision — Article 22, 2025**
<https://www.hanson-ma.gov/planning-boarddepartment/files/adu-bylaw-approved-attorney-general-2025>
- **Leicester AG Decision — Article 9, 5/27/2025**
<https://www.leicesterma.org/DocumentCenter/View/3522/Attorney-General-Decision--Article-9-ADU-Bylaw-5-27-2025>
- **AG MLU Decision Lookup**
<https://massago.onbaseonline.com/Massago/1700PublicAccess/MLU.htm>
- **Upton AG Decision — Case #11658, June 9, 2025**
<https://massago.onbaseonline.com/Massago/1700PublicAccess/MLU.htm>
- **Weston AG Decision — Case #11649, June 9, 2025**
<https://massago.onbaseonline.com/Massago/1700PublicAccess/MLU.htm>
- **Wilbraham AG Decision — Case #11778, December 19, 2025**
<https://massago.onbaseonline.com/Massago/1700PublicAccess/MLU.htm>
- **My Southborough — AG partial disapproval of ADU bylaw, February 2026**
<https://www.mysouthborough.com/2026/02/17/ags-office-partially-approves-towns-adu-bylaw/>
- **Sudbury AG Decision — STM May 2025, Article 28**
<https://www.mass.gov/doc/sudbury-special-town-meeting-may-5-2025-article-28/download>

Municipal and News Sources

- **Andover ADU page**
<https://andoverma.gov/1507/Accessory-Dwelling-Units>

- **Andover 2025 Town Meeting recap**

<https://andoverma.gov/1532/2025-Annual-Town-Meeting-Recap>

- **Barnstable ADU meeting page**

<https://barnstable.gov/departments/planninganddevelopment/projects/ADU-Meeting.asp>

- **Barnstable ADU ordinance update**

<https://tobweb.town.barnstable.ma.us/TownCouncilCommunications/2025-05-15%20AGENDA%20ITEM%202025-060%20Accessory%20Dwelling%20Unit%20Update%20overview.pdf>

- **Boston ADU program page**

<https://search.boston.gov/departments/housing/addition-dwelling-units/adu-program>

- **Boston BPDA ADU zoning**

https://www.bostonplans.org/adu_zoning

- **Duxbury ADU news**

<https://www.duxburyclipper.com/articles/new-accessory-dwelling-unit-law-considered/>

- **Duxbury STM zoning article**

https://www.town.duxbury.ma.us/sites/g/files/vyhlf10506/f/uploads/article_1_-_mbta_zoning_06.16.2025.pdf

- **Commonwealth Beacon — Fall River ADU opposition, February 2025**

<https://commonwealthbeacon.org/government/behind-the-scenes-of-the-fight-over-accessory-dwelling-units/>

- **Fall River Reporter — ZBA "no ADU" conditions, August 2025**

<https://fallriverreporter.com/fall-river-zoning-board-of-appeals-grants-zoning-variances-and-special-permits-for-several-projects-that-would-generate-new-housing-units/>

- **Falmouth ADU page**

<https://www.falmouthma.gov/1087/Accessory-Dwelling-Units>

- **Falmouth zoning bylaw**

<https://ecode360.com/14216444>

- **Lowell Sun — Council defeats ADU ordinance 7-4, October 2023**

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- **City of Medford — Council withdraws ADU proposal, December 2025**

<https://www.medfordma.org/departments/planning-development-sustainability/zoning>

- **Milton ADU info**

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- **Milton ADU bylaw article**

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- **Needham ADU page**

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- **Green Needham — 12 ADUs in 3+ years, April 2023**

<https://www.greenneedham.org/blog/2023/04/a-needed-amendment-to-the-accessory-dwelling-unit-bylaw/>

- **Needham ADU planning presentation 2025**

<https://www.needhamma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/27812/ADU-Presentation-2025>

- **Newton ADU zoning page**

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- **Newton ADU ordinance update (Fig City News)**

<https://figcitynews.com/2025/04/city-council-revises-rules-for-accessory-dwelling-units/>

- **Quincy ADU Guidelines (Feb 28, 2025)**

https://www.quincyma.gov/government/planning___community_development/accessory_dwelling_units.php

- **Revere ADU Ordinance — Title 17, Chapter 17.25**

<https://www.revere.org/departments/planning-development/accessory-dwelling-units>

- **Revere Home Rule Petition — March 2025**

<https://www.revere.org/departments/city-council>

- **Revere Journal — Home Rule Petition coverage, March 2025**

<https://reverejournal.com/2025/03/18/councillors-look-for-relief-from-mandated-state-adu-ordinance/>

- **Salem ADU Ordinance**

<https://www.salem.com/planning-and-community-development/pages/accessory-dwelling-units>

- **Somerville ADU rules (YourMaADU)**

<https://www.yourmaadu.com/local-adu-rules-ma/adu-in-somerville-ma>

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<https://somerillema.legistar.com/View.ashx?GUID=684A11FC-7B75-49E2-9364-7C4D3769530F&ID;=15180327&M;=F>

- **Sudbury ADU planning page**

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- **Worcester ADU planning page**

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