



**Hiddenbrooke Property Owners
Association, Inc.
850 Hiddenbrooke Parkway
Vallejo, CA 94591**

www.HiddenbrookeOnline.org

August 28, 2018

Mayor Bob Sampayan
City of Vallejo
555 Santa Clara Street
Vallejo, CA 94590

RE: ADU Ordinance - Owner Occupancy Requirement

Dear Mayor,

The Hiddenbrooke Property Owners Association (HPOA) is adamantly opposed to the current ADU Ordinance that will be placed on the Consent Calendar for your September 25, 2018 meeting. As currently written, this Ordinance would not require Owner-Occupancy of a home with an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) nor require a Deed Restriction to run with the property to require Owner-Occupancy in perpetuity. This policy would be bad for Vallejo and bad for any homeowner association in Vallejo, of which there are many.

The Council proposes to create a two-year "test" period to see whether concerns that there would be a flood of ADU applications for homes that are not owner-occupied are credible. The test should be the other way. Require owner-occupancy for two years and then see if that policy in any way stifles the creation of ADUs. The Council should be siding with the community on this, not the investment and money making institutions. It's a fairly clear choice.

The reasons for HOA and neighborhood concerns with the policy espoused in the proposed Ordinance should be obvious. Owners in HOAs, and for that matter in any neighborhood in Vallejo, want owners who live in their community and care about their community, owners who maintain their homes in a good state of repair because that is what is expected, owners who adhere to the CC&Rs, owners who have a stake in the improvement of the community, and owners who participate in the social life of the community. These are not the characteristics of remote owners. HOAs typically find it much more difficult to deal with any maintenance or nuisance issues when owners do not live in their community. Any problems that arise with rented homes are amplified when nearby neighbors know that the owners are not residents of the community.

After the 2008 housing crisis home prices dipped sharply, and a number of homes in Hiddenbrooke were bought as investments. This will only continue if the current



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Ordinance is passed making it easy for investors to see profit in purchasing relatively affordable Hiddenbrooke homes and renting out the homes twice, once for the main residence and once for the ADU. State law requires that the main home and ADU not be sold separately for very good reasons. The same reasoning should apply here --that the home and ADU should not be able to be rented separately.

To summarize, Owner-Occupancy should be required; deed restrictions to that effect should be required. Allowing homes with ADUs not to be owner-occupied is a recipe for disaster and has potential to do great harm to the social structure of any community in Vallejo, particularly those that are currently relatively tight-knit.

The correct "test" should be to require owner-occupancy for two years and see what happens. Should the Council wish to consider other ideas, a possible hybrid test would be to require owners to live in their ADU home for two years and then allow owners to rent both the home and ADU after that. This would be a three year test, but would provide quantifiable information as to how many ADU owners would choose to remain as an occupant of their home versus how many who would decide to rent out both the main house and ADU.

Please make the best choice for the community on this one. It's vitally important.

Sincerely,

HPOA President
Chris Brittle