



Tiny House Permitting in San Luis Obispo

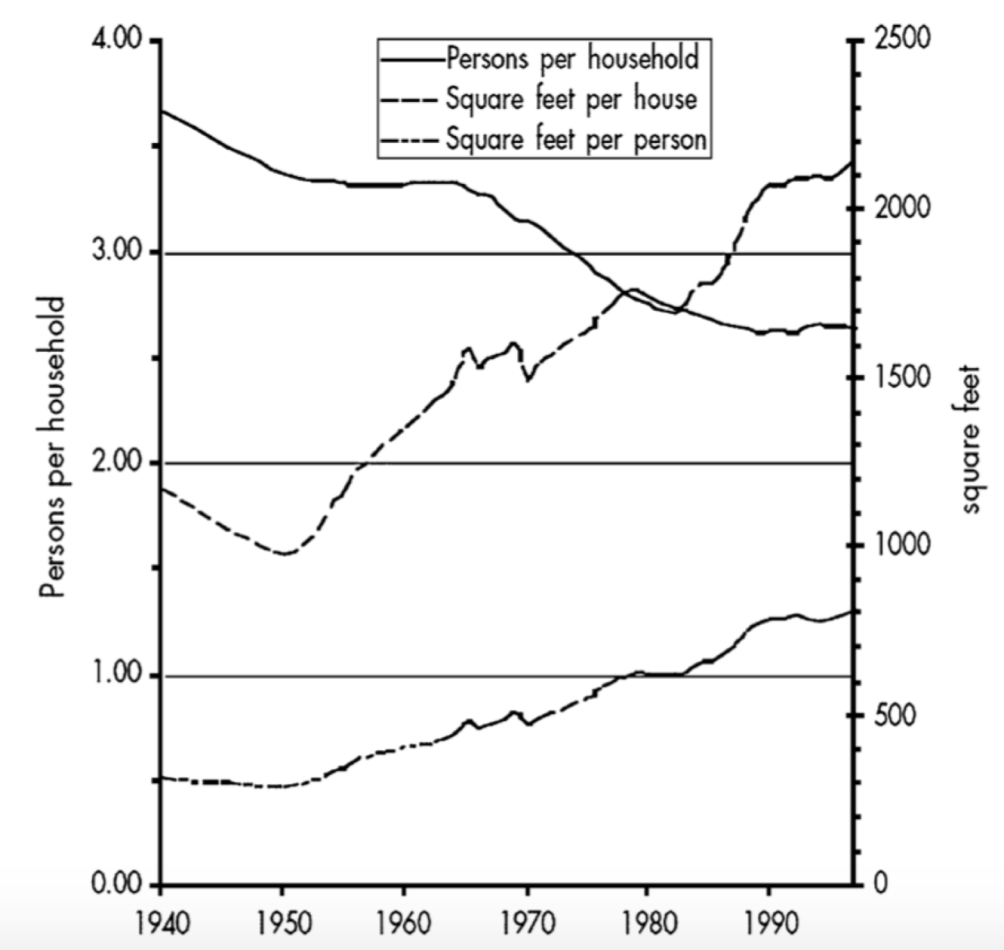
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BACKGROUND

American homes have steadily increased in size over the past several decades, and tiny houses play a part in reversing that trend. The key benefits of tiny houses are:

- **Affordability**
- **Sustainability**
- **Efficiency**
- **Mobility**
- **Accessibility**

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs): Pictured below, an ADU is a separate living space that can sit on the back lot of a single family home.



In **San Luis Obispo:**

- ADUs are permitted at an affordable cost
- New legislation allows tiny houses on wheels (THOWs) to sit on back lots as well
- Not more than one THOW is permitted on a single lot

OBJECTIVES

1. Determine best practices
2. Expose flaws
3. Investigate alternatives
4. Provide a recommendation

ABSTRACT

Tiny houses are a rising trend in housing that provide affordable, environmentally friendly dwellings for those inclined to a minimalist lifestyle. Across the United States, municipalities have begun creating special provisions for tiny houses, but there remain many barriers to building and permitting tiny houses affordably. There has been much progress in the acceptance of ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units), specifically in the state of California. Legislation on ADUs leads the way for the community integration of tiny houses. This study investigates the current state of legislation and permitting for tiny houses in San Luis Obispo, California. An interview was conducted with a local authority on tiny house legislation, and three mini case studies were conducted on model practices in other municipalities. Information from the interview and the case studies was synthesized into a recommendation for the City of San Luis Obispo on how to alter their current legislation model.



Pictured above: Examples of tiny houses in different styles

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Community involvement and integration**
- **Relaxed re-zoning**
- **Pocket neighborhoods**
- **Unique codes, regulations, permits**

RESULTS

Interview with Associate Planner for the San Luis Obispo Community Development Department :

- Community pushback is a main barrier
- Lack of separate regulations for tiny houses vs. single-family homes
- Unreasonable permitting costs per square foot
- Lack of “best practice”

Mini Case Studies:

Rockledge, Florida

Walsenburg, Colorado

Quixote Village, Olympia, Washington



CONCLUSIONS/FUTURE RESEARCH

- Tiny houses have social utility for San Luis Obispo
- Solution must preserve single-family home values
- Economic analysis is necessary
- Local residents, developers must be gauged