

# ■ Portsmouth Zoning Changes – At a Glance

Date: September 15, 2025

## Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

State law now requires towns to allow one ADU by right on any single-family lot. Portsmouth's update keeps ADUs capped at 750 sq. ft. and still requires owner occupancy.

- Easier for homeowners to add a small apartment or backyard cottage.

## Apartments in Commercial Zones

New law requires towns to allow apartments in commercial districts where water, sewer, and roads can support them. Adaptive reuse of old buildings for housing must be allowed.

- Expect old offices and shops converted into apartments.

## Parking Rules

Cities can't require more than one parking space per housing unit.

- Reduces costs and makes smaller units easier to build.

## Occupancy Rules

Towns can't restrict occupancy to fewer than two people per bedroom.

- More flexibility for renters, roommates, and families.

## Solar & Sustainability

Simpler rules for adding solar panels on roofs, carports, and parking lots.

- Easier clean energy options with fewer zoning headaches.

## Bottom Line

Most changes are mandated by Concord. The biggest shift is ADUs: one per single-family lot, by right. Expect more apartments above shops, adaptive reuse of empty buildings, and fewer parking rules slowing projects down.

- Step toward more affordable and workforce housing in Portsmouth.