What is an Accessory Dwelling Unit?

An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is an independent housing unit with its own kitchen, bathroom, living and sleeping space. These units are typically under 1,000 square feet and are accessory to a primary residence.

Types of Accessory Dwelling Units

Image Source: The ABCs of ADUs: A guide to Accessory Dwelling Units and how they expand housing options for people of all ages (AARP)

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Benefits of ADUs

- Increase the supply of affordable rental housing
- Encourage flexible housing options for seniors who wish to age in place
- Support multi-generational households
- Provide supplemental income to landowners and promote neighborhood stability
- Support climate-resilient and sustainable infill development
- Retain neighborhood character while adding more housing options
Policy Background

- **Housing Study**
  - Analysis of existing housing market and gaps in market – presented to Commission at last meeting
  - Identified needs for more affordable and workforce housing

- **Climate Emergency Declaration – September 2020**
  - Supports energy-efficient housing options and infill

- **Age Friendly Tucson Action Plan – May 2019**
  - Goals include providing affordable housing options for older adults and to facilitate older adults and people with disabilities aging in place
Many jurisdictions allow and promote ADUs

Looked at cities including Flagstaff, Tempe, Portland, Minneapolis as case studies

Some entire states have legalized ADUs including California, New Hampshire, Oregon

Areas that are regulated include number of units, maximum unit size, parking, occupancy and more

Some cities, like Portland, have updated code over time to allow greater flexibility

Cities in California, such as Stockton, have developed model plans that are available for use by community members
Current Regulations

Accessory Dwelling Unit is not a defined term in the Unified Development Code (UDC)

The standards for accessory buildings and structures specifically state that an accessory building shall not be a dwelling unit

Density limits and other regulations in most residential districts restrict where ADUs can be built
Code Amendment

Initiated by Mayor and Council November 2020 with direction to:
Define ADU as an allowed residential use
Determine appropriate zones for this use
Develop use-specific standards
Issues to be Addressed

ADU type and size
Density and lot size requirements
Dimensional standards including height, lot coverage and setbacks
Parking requirements
Alignment with building and fire codes
Alignment with existing standards regarding group dwellings, home occupations, and historic districts
Amnesty for existing, unpermitted ADUs
Community Engagement

**Stakeholder Group**
40 members representing affordable housing advocates, real estate professionals and neighborhoods

**Public Meetings**
Held series of public meetings in February – over 200 community members attended

**Online Survey**
Over 60 responses submitted online
What we are Hearing

“Any ADU regs must have long term city oversite (sp) procedures”

“ADUs are an important way of creating affordable housing and fostering aging-in-place opportunities.”

“I think this is an innovative way to create more housing options in Tucson. As an older adult who will be taking care of an elderly parent soon, I would absolutely take advantage of this option.”

“I think that promoting ADU's as affordable housing is disingenuous. The cost of building a new unit or renovating an existing unit makes renting it unaffordable to rent except to a relative.”

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R1: 800 sq ft 1-Story Detached ADU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R1: 800 sq ft 1-Story ADU</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lot Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit Areas*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Main Building</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADU</td>
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<td>Bedrooms</td>
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<td>Main Building</td>
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<td>ADU</td>
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<td>Parking Spaces</td>
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<td>Garage</td>
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<td>Surface</td>
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<td>* Habitability sq ft</td>
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Zoning is not the only barrier to ADU development
If code amendment successful, other technical assistance is needed to promote this option in our community
This includes:

- Lending Programs
- Model Plans
- Assistance with permitting and review process
Affordable ADUs

Challenge

• A survey conducted by Freddie Mac reported the median cost to build an ADU is $100K to $150K

Goal

• ADUs that are:
  • Affordable to homeowners
  • Affordable to renters
Cities looked at as Case Studies

- Austin, TX - Ally Flats Initiative
- Los Angeles, CA – Backyard Homes
- Denver, CO - West Denver Single Family Plus pilot program
- Clovis, CA – Cottage Home Program
- San Francisco, CA
- Boston, MA
- Portland, OR
- Santa Cruz County, CA
• Many of these cities offered some level of support beyond just simply permitting ADUs to encourage affordability.

• Cities partnered with community organizations to establish a targeted program offering a suite of services to assist homeowners in developing, from concept to construction, of an ADU in exchange for affordable rental unit commitment.

• Financial assistance tailored to the construction and rental of affordable ADU's was a common strategy.
Cities partnered with **community organizations** to establish a **targeted** program offering a **suite of services** to assist homeowners in developing, from concept to construction, of an ADU in exchange for **affordable rental unit** commitment.

**Community Organizations:**
- Financial institutions
- Community development organizations
- Design professionals

**Targeted:**
- Homeowners
- Specific neighborhoods
- Income level
- Demographic

**Suite of Services:**
- Financial Assistance
- Technical Assistance
- Educational Information
- Development Fee Waivers
- Model Plans

**Affordability Commitment:**
- CC&R’s
- Compliance reporting
- Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher

City of Tucson Planning and Development Services
Financial assistance tailored to the construction and rental of affordable ADU's was a common strategy.

- **Federal Funding**
  - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
  - HOME Investment Partnership Program
  - Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers

- **Partnerships**
  - Community Development Corporations
  - Non-profits
  - Community Land Trusts
Lessons Learned

Problems

- California - the majority of ADU production takes place in areas with high home values and incomes
- Portland - 80% of ADUs rent for market rates, or a slight premium, compared to apartments of similar size and location
- Portland - Survey demonstrated that paying for construction, design costs, and permitting fees were identified as the top three obstacles to building an ADU

Solutions

- Austin - Made changes to their zoning code's to design standards including allowing larger ADUs (up to 1,100 sf) and reduce minimum lot size and reducing other requirements paved the way for permit requests to rise nearly tenfold.
- Portland - After waiving development fees for ADUs, annual ADU volume increased from just 24 (2009) to 615 (2016) when it waived, saving homeowners $8k - $12k per unit

City of Tucson Planning and Development Services
Thank you!

Please feel free to contact me:

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