

Accessory Dwelling Units

Facts:

What is an ADU?

- a second small dwelling on the same grounds (or attached to) your regular single-family house
- self-contained living units that typically have their own kitchen, bedroom(s), and bathroom space
- Examples:
 - Apartment over the garage
 - Backyard cottage
 - Basement apartment
- Also commonly referred to as: granny flats, elder cottage housing opportunities (ECHO), mother-daughter residences, or secondary dwelling unit
- PowerPoint: [Accessory Dwelling Units \(ADU\): Advanced](#) (Massachusetts Smart Growth/Smart Energy Comprehensive Planning)

Benefits of an ADU: AccessoryDwellings.org

- Economic:
 - Generates jobs during construction. Approximately half of the cost of new construction will go towards labor, while half will go towards materials. Labor is inherently a local job, so when you construct, you are keeping money circulating in your community.
 - Enhances property tax base for the city. New residences generate more tax revenue and more taxable income for a city.
 - Creates housing near employment centers and near public transportation, where there is demand for housing.
- Environmental
 - Building small is building green: the smaller the building, the less energy, material, and waste will be used in the construction, residence, and maintenance of the lifespan of the building.
 - Buildings are responsible for approximately 49% of the energy used in the United States. The smaller the spaces in which we dwell, the less energy we'll use.
 - ADUs are built where there is a market demand for housing. These locations are also the locations where residents are able to walk, bike or ride to work. Transportation (including commuting), is responsible for 33% of the energy used in the United States.
 - Providing more habitable, flexible dwelling options in a pre-existing urban core, utilizes existing governmental infrastructure (eg. roads, sewers, schools), and

reduces the demand for expanding infrastructure in far lying reaches of a metropolitan area.

- Societal:
 - Housing stock is not matching demographic trends. More and more people are seeking smaller, urban residences. This trend includes “baby-boomers”, generation X-ers, and non-nuclear family partners.
 - Comfortable, affordable, and practical housing for multi-generational households
 - ADUs can provide a means for adult children to give care for their aging parents in a semi-independent living arrangement. Can provide elderly people with sense of personal security and companionship
 - Alternatively, it can provide young adults (with children or other responsibilities) with an affordable urban dwelling adjacent to their parents.
 - Provides organic opportunities for groups and individuals to live and share socially with one another but to have their own living space.
 - Provides more affordable housing options in a neighborhood without changing neighborhood character
- [Presentation on benefits](#) by accessorydwellings.org

Trends:

- Although a number of communities still restrict development of accessory dwelling units, there is a growing awareness and acceptance of ADUs as an inexpensive way to increase the affordable housing supply and address illegal units already in existence ([HUD Case Study](#))
- Multigenerational living trends
 - [Video by USA Today](#)
 - [News article:](#)
 - Significant spike in multigenerational living
 - Elderly parents are moving in with their kids
 - Cash-strapped college grads are settling back in with mom and dad
 - [PewResearch:](#)
 - Boomerang generation – college grads living with mom and dad
 - Multi-generational household appears to lift Americans out of poverty
 - Large numbers of Americans enacted their own anti-poverty program in the depths of the Great Recession: They moved in with relatives

Examples of ADUs:

- Barnstable, Massachusetts – [Accessory Affordable Apartment Program](#)
- Austin, Texas – [Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance](#)
- Wellfleet, Massachusetts – [Accessory Apartment Bylaws](#)
- Los Angeles, California – [Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance](#)

- Portland, Oregon – [ADU Information](#)
- Boulder, Colorado – [ADU Administrative Review Application](#)
- Minneapolis, Minnesota – [Accessory Dwelling Units Text Amendment](#)
- Montgomery County, Maryland – [News Article on Improved ADU Regs](#)
- [Accessory Dwelling Unit Zoning Codes](#) – West coast examples

Resources:

- Model Bylaws:
 - [Massachusetts Model for ADUs](#)
 - [AARP Model Ordinance](#)
- Case Studies:
 - [HUD Case Study](#) – June 2008
 - This case study explores how the adoption of ordinances, with reduced regulatory restrictions to encourage ADUs, can be advantageous for communities
 - It also provides examples of municipalities with successful ADU legislation and programs including ordinances in the appendices
 - Massachusetts Case Studies:
 - [Suburban](#)
 - [Urban](#)
 - [Rural](#)