

# *ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS*

BARBARA DIDRICHSEN



# *AGENDA*

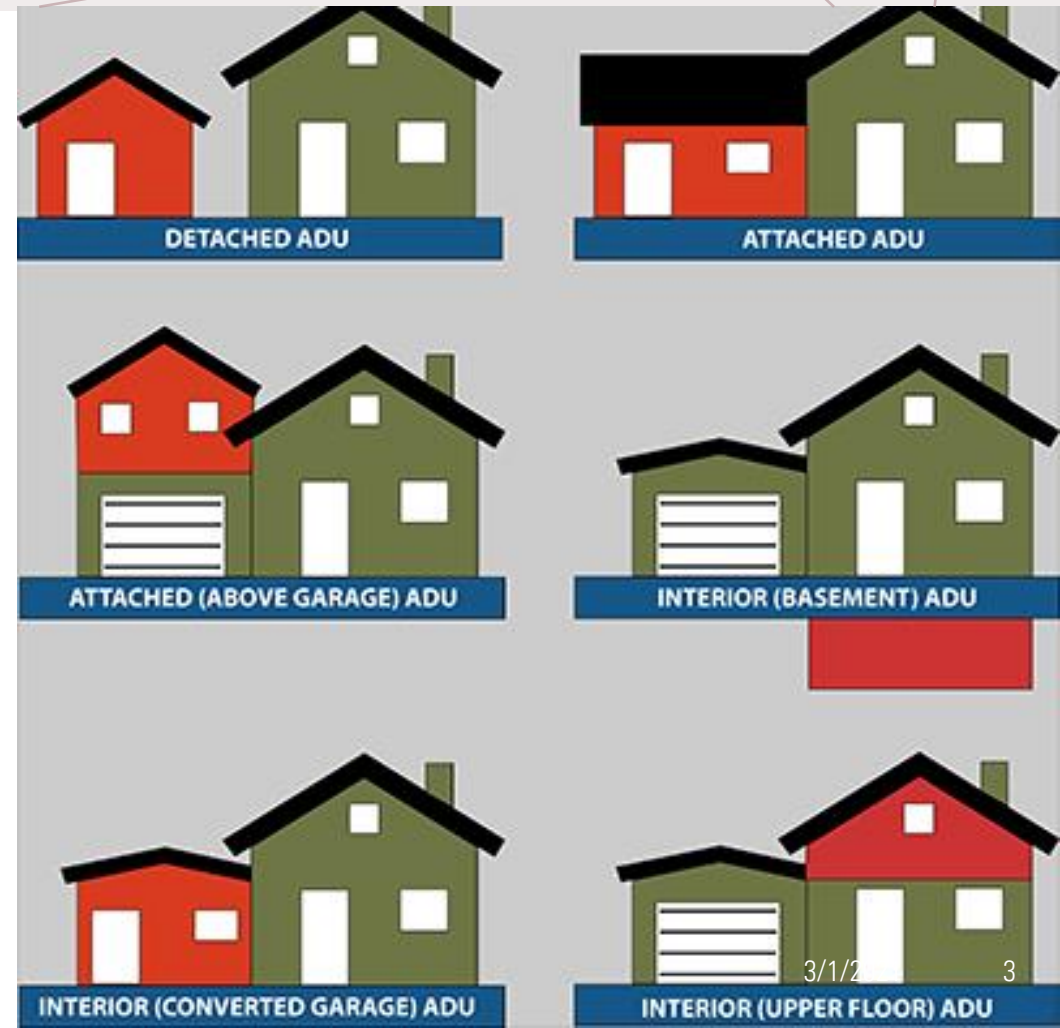
- What are ADUs?
- Benefits
- Challenges
- Resources





# *WHAT IS AN ADU?*

- A small residence that shares a single-family lot with a larger, primary dwelling
- An independent living space, self-contained, with its own kitchen or kitchenette, bathroom and sleeping area
- Can be located within, attached to or detached from the main residence
- Can be converted from an existing structure (such as a garage) or built anew
- Can be found in cities, suburbs and rural areas, yet are often invisible from view because they're positioned behind or are indistinct from the main house





# *BENEFITS*

- Provide rental income to homeowners and an affordable way for renters to live in single-family neighborhoods
- Enable family members to live on the same property while having their own living spaces — or provide housing for a hired caregiver
- Unlike tiny houses, ADUs are compact but not teeny, so they're a more practical option for individuals, couples and families seeking small, affordable housing
- For homeowners looking to downsize, an ADU can be a more appealing option than moving into an apartment or, if older, an age-restricted community
- ADUs can help older residents remain in their community and "age in place" or provide supplemental income via short-term rentals





# *DRAWBACKS*

- Property taxes may increase
- Possible issues with renters and maintenance
- May create or exacerbate parking problems
- Diminishes privacy
- Prone to NIMBYism

# RESOURCES

- [American Planning Association ACU Guide](#). Lots of great resources, case studies, briefing papers and blog posts
- [The ABCs of ADUs](#). Good AARP guide on ADUs and how they contribute to increased housing opportunities and aging in place.
- [The Promise and Pitfalls of ADUs as an Affordable Housing Panacea](#). From on the ground realities to zoning codes, ADUs are not a perfect solution to affordable housing.
- [ACUs for Business](#). As COVID changes the way people work, ADUs can be adapted for commercial purposes.
- [Three Cheers for Lexington's ADU ordinance](#). Cincinnati can learn from our near neighbor, who recently enacted a model ADU policy.
- [Homelessness & Housing Toolkit for Cities](#). Washington State guide; info on ADUs included (page 28).
- [Why Granny Flats are the Housing Solution Everyone Can Love](#).
- [The Ins and Outs of ADUs](#). They can be more than utilitarian repurposed storage units.
- [California Dept of Housing & Development ADU guide](#). Lots of good, recent info on ADUs, including research.
- [Round-up of \*Strong Towns\* stories on ADUs](#)

# RESOURCES

- [Short-term rentals can actually make neighborhoods stronger.](#) Puts forward some good arguments about how short term rentals (ADUs or otherwise) are a return to more traditional ways of building communities and help neighborhoods.
- [We need small homes.](#) How many vacant lots does the city own? How many are already served by sewer and water? Why not use some of them for small homes?
- [Five Ways to create more affordable housing.](#) Localize; end parking requirements; think small; change outdated housing policies; choose affordable cities.
- [Bungalow Courts Make the Best Neighbors.](#) Small homes grouped around a shared yard used to be common in LA. Zoning regulations over the last several decades have made this style of affordable housing increasingly rare.
- [Learning from a Non-Conforming Neighborhood.](#) “Many of our best neighborhoods would be illegal to build today.” This single sentence offers powerful insight into the challenge facing American cities, exposing, in one breath, the perverse restrictions involved in conventional zoning and subdivision regulation..

# RESOURCES

- [Age-Friendly housing will be smaller, shared and flexible.](#) Many aging Americans want to stay in their homes. Most neighborhoods...don't allow a range of home options that would work better for adults living alone, young couples starting out, older adults who want to downsize, single parents and their children, or adults living together in shared housing.
- [Why Granny Flats are the Housing Solution Everyone Can Love.](#) It's a grassroots option for creating affordable housing that increases density without destroying the historic character and community of established neighborhoods.
- [Affordability/homelessness.](#) Interest-free loans to people willing to build ADUs to help affordably house those otherwise closed out of neighborhoods is one consideration in the Oregon governor's race.
- [The Duplex Next Door is Normal. The One Not Built is a Threat.](#) The current status quo—monocultural neighborhoods of orderly rows of homes, all at about the same price point, which don't evolve into anything else over time—is not some state of nature or neutral condition. It's actually a pretty recent and radical experiment, in the grand scheme of things.



# *RESOURCES*

- [The Ins and Outs of ADUs.](#)  
ADUs are an important solution that can impact homelessness, raise property values, accommodate guests, or create more (and separate) space for the homeowner.