

# ADUs in the East Bay: Potential & Impact

Accessory Dwelling Unit Factsheet: 2 of 3

## The Potential of ADUs as an Infill Development Strategy

The Center for Community Innovation (CCI) at UC-Berkeley's Institute for Urban & Regional Development is studying the potential to add accessory dwelling units (ADUs) on single-family lots in Berkeley and other East Bay cities as a way to moderately increase density, provide homeowners with extra income, and create affordable rental units – all while preserving the character of existing neighborhoods. Based solely on lot size requirements and the square footage of existing structures, CCI estimates that about 4,000 single-family properties in Berkeley could accommodate detached ADUs in their backyards (there are currently 43,636 housing units in the city).

*The Bay Area is projected to add over 330,000 new residents by 2015. To meet its fair share of the regional housing need, Berkeley needs to produce about 2,400 housing units over the next five years. About 4,000 single-family properties in Berkeley could potentially accommodate detached ADUs in their yards. However, current parking requirements make it difficult or impossible to build ADUs on many properties.*

In order to build an ADU under current zoning regulations, however, a property must have space for two parking spots – one for the existing single-family home, and another for the ADU. The majority of Berkeley homes were built on small lots before 1940, and many of these are not configured to accommodate two legal parking spaces.

CCI is studying ways to relax these off-street parking requirements without contributing to neighborhood parking problems. In neighborhoods near BART stations, residents may not need to own a car, particularly if a car sharing is available. Car sharing services like Zipcar and City CarShare allow members to access a car whenever they need one, without the hassle of owning – and parking – their own individual vehicles. By finding ways to integrate ADU development with transit ridership and car sharing, CCI hopes to facilitate the development of sustainable, affordable housing options in Berkeley's neighborhoods. The study will be available by fall, 2011.



<http://www.panoramio.com/photo/1945499>

*Car sharing at the North Berkeley BART Station. ADUs near transit and car share pods may require fewer parking*



CENTER FOR COMMUNITY INNOVATION  
at the Institute of Urban and Regional Development

# The Economic Impact of ADUs

Construction of an ADU impacts the local economy by creating three types of jobs: direct jobs, through the purchase of design and construction services and retail goods; indirect jobs, as design and construction firms, as well as retailers, purchase their own inputs; and induced jobs, as the workers holding the direct and indirect jobs consume goods and services.

- An ADU costing \$101,000 (\$98,000 construction plus \$3,000 for furnishings) generates an additional \$80,000 of indirect and induced spending in the economy, for a total of \$181,000 local spending – and 1.7 jobs (for one year).
- For the Delaware Cottage, 87% of purchases were made locally (within the eight cities of the East Bay Green Corridor Partnership), resulting in the creation of one year-long local job. Construction of 4,000 ADUs locally would mean 4,000 local jobs.

In addition, each net-zero energy ADU creates energy savings that impact the local economy. The Cottage's



insulation keeps monthly energy bills to \$25 a month. This cost is offset by the 1.67 KW solar energy system, which provides all the electricity needed for both the main house and the ADU. Spent in the local economy, the \$25 monthly savings will generate an additional \$13 of spending per month, for a total of \$460 per year. Construction of 4,000 ADUs could thus mean an additional \$1.8 million spent on local goods and services each year.

## Zoning for ADUs in Berkeley

### **Where Permitted**

- All residential zones

### **Minimum Lot Size**

- 4,500 sq. ft.

### **ADU Size**

- Minimum of 300 sq. ft.
- Maximum of 25% of gross floor area of primary unit, up to 640 sq. ft.

### **Maximum ADU Height**

- 12 ft., on average

### **ADUs Created through Addition to Primary Unit or Conversion of Existing Floor Space**

- ADUs must have a separate entrance, which may not be located in the front of the existing building.
- Additions involving more than 500 sq. ft. require an Administrative Use Permit (AUP).

### **Owner Occupancy & Sale of Unit**

- The owner must occupy either the primary unit or ADU.
- An ADU may not be sold separately from the primary unit.

### **Required Off-Street Parking Spaces**

- One off-street space is required for an ADU, in addition to the off-street space required for the existing single-family home.
- Parking may be arranged in tandem (one space directly behind the other) with an AUP.

### **Required Setbacks**

- Must conform with setback requirements applicable to the zoning district to be allowed by right.
- A reduction of the setbacks may be approved with an AUP, but the setback from the side and rear lot lines may not be reduced below 4 ft. The setback from the front lot line may not be reduced below 10-20 ft., depending on the zone.

### **Review Procedure**

- An ADU is allowed by right if conforms with all applicable standards.
- An AUP is required for ADU projects that involve tandem parking arrangements, parking space waivers, reduced setbacks, or major residential additions.
- A public hearing not typically required.

Source: Berkeley Municipal Code, Sub-Title 23D. This handout is informational only and was compiled by the Center for Community Innovation.