

## FAQ | Accessory Dwelling Units

### What are accessory dwelling units (ADUs)?

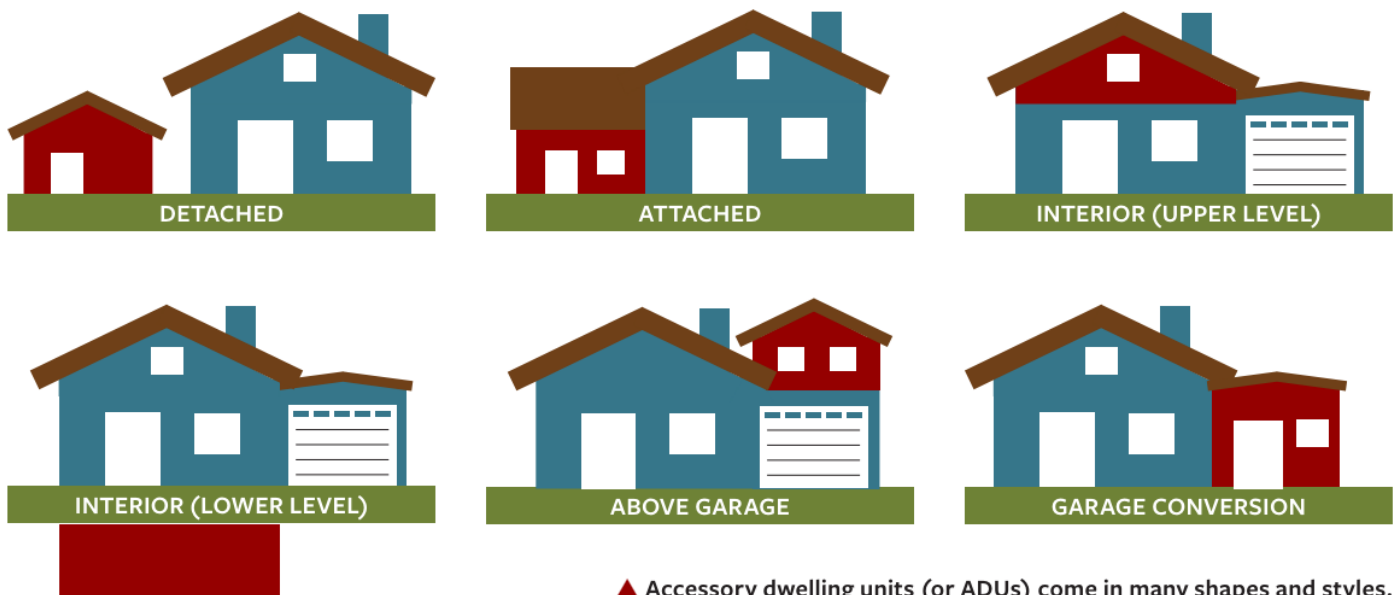
ADUs are small homes located on the same lot as a single family home. They are often called in-law apartments or granny flats, as they are often used to accommodate aging relatives – as such, the AARP is a major promoter of ADUs. There are many types of ADUs: they can be located inside the existing home (e.g., a converted basement) or a separate detached structure. Often, ADUs are converted from an existing structure, such as a carriage house or garage.

### Why are we talking about ADUs?

ADUs are an element of the Village’s land use and controlled by its zoning code. As part of its zoning code update, the Village is considering whether to allow ADUs and under what conditions. The Village’s recently adopted Comprehensive Plan has included ADUs as part of its goals, in particular **Goal 5.0: Provide Diverse Housing Choices**. Within this goal, **Sub-Goal 5.2** discusses allowing more flexibility for ADUs along with appropriate performance standards.

Even when located within the single family home, they are distinct from a traditional two-family home because they are *accessory* – they are smaller than the primary home and often have a number of restrictions that do not apply to the primary home.

*Diagram illustrating the variety of types of ADUs. A community has the ability to allow only certain types.*



### What are some of the benefits of ADUs?

The Comprehensive Plan contains a number of goals related to housing. ADUs can be one piece of that puzzle. See the FAQ | Housing for additional discussion.

ADUs can help some community members “age in place,” remaining in the Village even after they no longer want or need a full single family home. For relatives, they provide an opportunity to care for their loved ones on site. They can be an appealing option for some residents looking to downsize or as an affordable option for someone looking to set down roots in the Village. When done correctly, they are a way to modestly increase housing options in a way that does not affect the physical character of the community.

### What are some of the downsides to allowing ADUs and can they be mitigated?

Because they occur in what are typically single-family districts, ADUs often have a number of concerns. Some common concerns and the ways they can be managed, include:

*Won't people build two single family homes on a lot and call one an ADU?*

Zoning can ensure that ADUs are accessory to the primary home. One way is by limiting the size of an ADU either by limiting the square footage or by limiting size to a percentage of the primary home.

*I'm concerned about impacts, especially if people rent them out for short-term rentals (e.g., AirBnb).*

The code can expressly forbid or limit using ADUs for short-term rentals.

*I'm afraid an ADU won't look right in my neighborhood.*

The code can include design characteristics to ensure they fit in the context. This could also include only allowing conversion of existing structures (e.g., converting a garage) or only allowing ADUs within the existing home (e.g., an attic or basement conversion). New structures that are in effect stand-alone “tiny homes,” can be prohibited.

*Where would residents of ADUs park? What about open space?*

The regulations can include requirements that ensure parking needs are met. At the same time, they can include standards to ensure yards do not become giant parking lots. If these requirements cannot be met then an application for an ADU will be denied. Other design criteria and stipulations can be included, as well.

*I'm concerned ADUs could overwhelm our neighborhoods.*

A Development Impact Analysis completed in 2021 by Urban Advisors for the Fairport Office of Community and Economic Development found that it would be likely feasible for a *maximum* of 250 units to be built. This is less than 1% of the number of existing homes. But this analysis did not consider numerous factors and regulations that could be implemented to further reduce this number. And in fact, this would likely greatly overstate the number of ADUs that would be built as many homeowners would not undertake the costly renovations even if they had the option.



Examples of ADUs.



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