

# THURSTON COUNTY RURAL ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

PLANNING COMMISSION – JUNE 3, 2020



# HISTORY

- This code amendment is included on the 2020-2021 Development Code Docket, and prioritized as number 3 of 15 development code items.
  - 2015 to 2019 - stakeholder group meetings and public outreach
  - June, 2020 - staff restarts the process with the Planning Commission to establish development code regulations for ADUs



## BACKGROUND

- RCW 43.63A.215 and RCW 36.70A.400, adopted as part of the 1993 Washington Housing Policy Act, encourages many Washington cities and counties to adopt ordinances allowing the development of accessory apartments or accessory dwelling units in single-family zones. Specifically, this legislation applies to:
  1. Cities with populations of over 20,000
  2. Counties with populations of over 125,000, and
  3. Counties/cities that plan under the Growth Management Act (GMA).

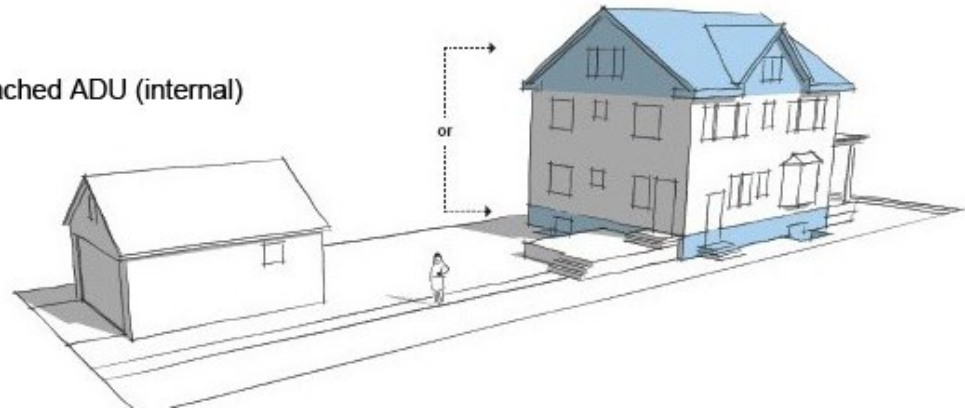


## WHAT IS AN ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT?

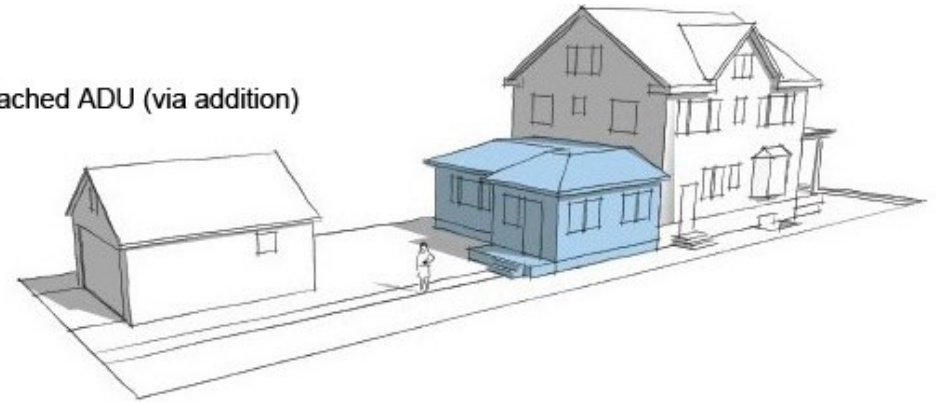
- An **Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)** is a small, separate living unit built on the same lot as a single-family home. ADUs have all basic facilities (kitchen, sleeping area, & bathroom) and can be:
  - addition to a single-family home,
  - conversion of a basement or attached garage,
  - or a freestanding “detached” structure.
- As the term "accessory" implies, ADUs are smaller in size, use and prominence than the main residence on the lot.

# TYPES OF ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

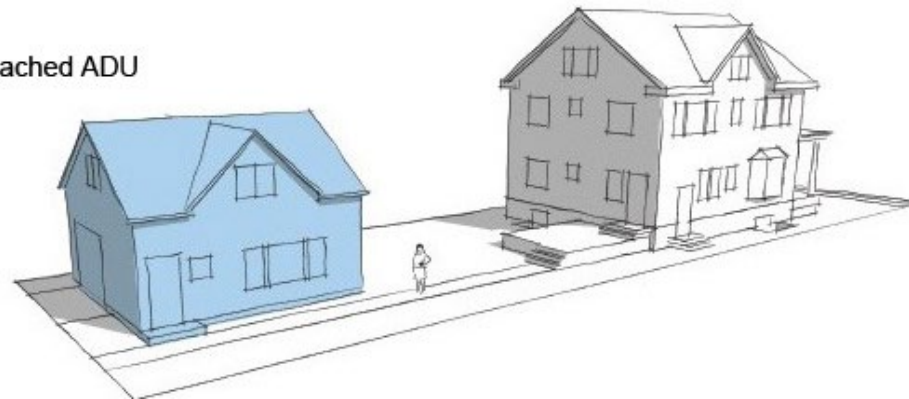
Attached ADU (internal)



Attached ADU (via addition)



Detached ADU





## WHAT DOES THURSTON COUNTY CURRENTLY PERMIT?

- Family Member Unit or FMU
  - One of the last counties left in the state that haven't transitioned codes to ADU
  - Temporary mobile/manufactured or modular home, for the purpose of housing a family member only
- Guest House
  - Floor area shall be limited to eight hundred square feet, or fifty percent of the primary dwelling unit whichever is less
  - Intended to be used for the occasional housing of guests



# GROWTH AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

## Thurston County Comprehensive Plan

“enough housing should be available to meet the housing needs of the existing and projected population of the county including rental and purchase opportunity for all income levels.”



## GROWTH AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONT.

- Thurston Regional Planning Council
  - 16,710 new people and 7,020 new housing by 2040
  - 38% low income
  - Household size getting smaller
  - Resident older than 65 doubles
- What does that mean for us?
  - Demand for smaller homes
  - Existing parcels and existing parcel facilities (well, septic, access etc.) may reduce overhead cost for development
  - ADUs may provide seniors the option to age in place



# LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR RURAL ADUS

- Growth Management Act (GMA)
- Growth Management Hearings Board (GMHB) Rulings
  - 1000 Friends of Washington v. Snohomish County





## LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR RURAL ADUS CONT.

Affidavits would likely be required for detached ADUs prohibiting future subdivision of the property, unless it conforms to subdivision requirements of the zone to ensure it remain subordinate in size.

- In the RRR 1/5 zone (1 dwelling unit per 5 acres), only a legal lot with 10 acres or more would meet the density requirement and therefore be eligible for a detached ADU.
- In the Residential LAMIRD RL 1/2 (one dwelling unit per two acres) a legal lot would need to have at least 4 acres in order to be eligible for a detached ADU.



# CONSISTENCY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- County Wide Affordable Housing Planning Policies
  - Increase housing choices
  - Accommodate low and moderate-income
  - Reduce costs
- Comprehensive Plan Chapter 4 - Housing



## WASHINGTON ADU COUNTY COMPARISON CHART

- All types of ADUs are generally permitted
- Owner occupancy requirement split between required and not
- Max square feet and or max size %
- Can connect to existing well and septic
- Detached building must remain subordinate



## TOPICS FOR PLANNING COMMISSION TO CONSIDER

- Overall ADU Requirements
- Building and Design Standards
- Site Design
- Utilities
- Permitting Process & Fees

# QUESTIONS?

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