



ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

WHAT THEY ARE AND WHERE YOU CAN BUILD THEM.

Over the past decade, new housing development has not kept pace with job or population growth, resulting in housing costs that have increased at a much faster rate than income levels. With a growing population and a county median home price rising, more and more families are finding it increasingly difficult to find an affordable place to live in California. Additionally, many economic analysts have reported that the single greatest threat to our region's economy is the high cost of local housing.

Aside from the traditional market-rate construction, there are alternative housing models that contribute to addressing home supply and affordability such as accessory dwelling units, also referred to as companion units, granny flats and second units. The Municipal Code refers to Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as Companion Units (CUs). These units can be integrated into existing single-family or multi-family properties designed in a variety of ways, including converting a portion of an existing house, adding to the existing house, converting an existing garage, or constructing a new detached structure.

To encourage development of ADUs, Governor Jerry Brown, Jr. signed into law three bills (SB 1069, 2299 and AB 2406,) that went into effect on January 1, 2017. These bills provide homeowner's the opportunity to construct CUs on their residential property with reduced requirements to parking, zoning setbacks, fire sprinklers, public utilities and fees. AB 2406, referred to as "Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JUs)," is an optional bill that local governments have the option of adopting as an ordinance.

Before building an ADU please consider all legal, design and financial implications. Please check your local City and County laws and requirements and with a tax attorney.

References:

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160SB1069

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160AB2299

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160AB2406

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