



## Maryland DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

### ADU Policy Task Force Public Comments as of December 13, 2023

Submitted via [online public comment form](#)

*Names of commenters, Task Force members, and others redacted. Names of book authors preserved.*

As you probably know, Howard County has a draft revised general plan called HoCo by Design that would allow a DETACHED ADU up to 1500 square feet on any single-family zoned property. The objective is affordable housing, but many of the residents are concerned about harmful effects. This is a copy of the testimony I will present. I hope you will consider them in your deliberations and would be happy to explain further if you have questions:

Testimony before the County Council on HoCo by Design Amendments-Accessory Dwelling Units & Stormwater Management

You have heard from me in the past on the subject of ADUs, but since we do not have access to the amendments that have been proposed, I feel I must reiterate my concerns. ADUs could also cause physical damage to nearby property. Any decrease in green space is downright harmful in my neighborhood with our poor drainage and inadequate stormwater management. ADUs will significantly increase impermeable surfaces and runoff problems and flooding for nearby homes. A number of my neighbors have experienced stormwater damage to their homes in excess of \$50,000; often this happens after the county has allowed a single oversized lot to be subdivided or a neighbor builds a significant addition to their home. I would be happy to show you some examples. New construction is not required to take steps to prevent stormwater issues it creates. This is something you should put into effect for ALL new construction, not just ADUs.

Dunloggin is an established community, like many in our county; it has a character. Good land use protects the character of established neighborhoods. ADUs could lead to significant changes in the character of the neighborhood. Older neighborhoods lack dedicated open space. Our backyards are our open space, so ADUs could significantly reduce the open space we all enjoy, even when it is in a neighbors' yard.

It is not "age-friendly" to older adults to promote ADUs. ADUs are often called "age-friendly" because older adults could house caregivers or younger families could house their parents, but we can do both now within our current homes. Older adults want to age in place, not just in our homes but also our communities. We do not want them to change to higher densities and less green space. There is also mention that older people could rent out their ADU for extra income; the LAST thing an aging person needs are the problems of being a landlord!

Ultimately, everyone will sell their homes. What happens if we sell a house with an ADU? It may make the house harder to sell, because most people will not want a second house on the property. The property may be most likely to appeal to investors who will want to rent out both units with a conditional use. Nonresident landlords do not maintain the property the way a resident owner would. On the other hand, the seller may just ask to have the property divided and sell it to two buyers, and I would give you odds that the county would allow it. Hmmm, since the original property would still be zoned for single family, I wonder if they could then add a new ADU?

I truly understand the need for more affordable housing, but the cost per square foot to build a detached home in Howard County means detached ADUs will still be very expensive. ADUs are not a good answer to the affordable housing problem.

The board of my Saint John's Community Association has not held a specific vote on ADUs, but we did a survey in 2021. There were 134 responses, of which 106 were opposed, 23 in favor, and 5 uncertain. Please consider the needs and desires of existing residents; do not allow accessory dwelling units as a matter of right anywhere in the county.

I am a resident and homeowner of Prince George's County living in a neighborhood without an HOA. I am interested in the opportunity for ADUs to allow option for multigenerational living. I have aging in-laws that may benefit in the future from living closer to us for medical care (currently 45 min drive). In addition, my sister had to move out of state to Nebraska after our mother died due to unaffordable housing. She would be able to live in Maryland with our family we had an ADU on one of our properties. I believe there is a way we could make ADUs acceptable to neighbors by planting privacy screener plants and holding the ADUs to county code. We have plenty of space in our deep .34-acre lot.

Please allow as few barriers as possible to construction. The state has a strong interest in making sure that there are no odious mandates on who can live in an ADU vs not, it should not require as much parking as a normally sized home (in fact, mandating parking in many areas of construction would be a big mistake) and make approved designs easier to get through the permitting process quickly so people can make them easily and timely.

Subject: Offering Volunteer Support for ADU Task Force

Dear Maryland Task Force for ADU's,

I hope this message finds you well. I am the Founder of Byrd Houses, a Tiny House designer based here in the state of Maryland. I am reaching out to express my sincere interest in volunteering to assist the task force in its mission. My passion lies in creating innovative housing solutions, particularly in the realm of tiny houses. I believe that we can address the current housing crisis by shifting our mindset about space and necessity. The tiny house industry is experiencing significant growth, currently valued at \$17 billion, and projected to reach \$32 billion by 2033. This growth signifies a shift in how individuals perceive and prioritize their living spaces.

I am eager to contribute my expertise and insights to the task force's initiatives. Together, we can explore alternative housing options that are both sustainable and affordable, ensuring that all Maryland residents have access to safe and comfortable living spaces.

Please let me know how I can best support the task force in its crucial work. I look forward to the opportunity to collaborate and make a positive impact on our community's housing landscape.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

NIMBYism has been a special problem among MD legislators. Those who try to address the affordable housing crisis are told to "stay in your lane" or even booted out of office by their fellows. Too many legislators have real estate interests above and beyond their own homes.

I would love to be on the mailing list of this task force to be able to participate.

Belief that ADU 's offer a great opportunity to create much needed housing stock that can be affordable.

The State should be able to require an ADU policy. The policy would not have to be one size fits all, but there should be something mandated to relieve the housing crisis.

Joe Griffiths is completely wrong about "one-sized-fits-all". California and other states have legalized state-wide, and it has not been a problem. This is a housing crisis and it's incorrect to say that what Annapolis needs is different than what Bethesda needs. His assertion that each locality is somehow a unique and special snowflake is going to lead to NIMBYism that we already see on ADUs and housing. Localities love to exclude, and the state needs to do something about it.

It was brought up, and it is also true for Carroll County, our growth is limited by allowed effluent limitations in the growth areas.

National Low Income Housing Corporation can do an updated needs assessment study for you.

Should be easy enough to do a correlative study using NLIHC "OOR" report and state GDP. I know I looked at this myself and did see a correlation.

Carroll County's RFP for our upcoming Housing Study includes "6. Economic Development + Is there adequate housing stock to meet the future economic development needs of the county; evaluate housing supply and needs related to local and regional employment, industry growth, and wages." We are very interested in the connection.

I think this is bigger than an ADU in a backyard. What about the people who don't have a family member that already owns a home? Or doesn't have enough land to fit an ADU? This must go beyond allowing zoning for an ADU. We want to create affordable housing for all, not just people connected to homeowners already. Tiny House communities need to be created.

Transit-oriented AND wastewater-limited development wrt ADUs

Will ADUs be required to meet the APFO (Public School) and the impact fee?

Prince George's County recently completed an extensive study on affordable housing under the auspices of the County Council and the County Administration. The Task Force might look at the report and/or contact the individual who worked on it, who now works for the University of MD at College Park.

Family and owner occupancy requirements: How are these enforced in other states and what are the penalties?

In urban areas, how can we find a balance between bringing in new residents so long-term residents will not feel forced out? As one of the Task Force members said, many incorporated and unincorporated areas in Prince George's County cannot afford more density for several reasons, among them being parking, infrastructure, code violations, etc.

I saw another article about groundwater depletion being affected largely by data collection and AI companies - e.g. in Iowa

There might be 2020 Census data on ADU presence.

My colleague and I are happy to meet with the Task Force's staff to provide information and insight on the Commission's statutory limits on ADUs within the Critical Area's Resource Conservation Area if it would be of help. Thanks! This is an excellent meeting.

Has anyone on this Task Force experienced housing insecurity firsthand?

Multiple Taskforce Members have focused on the cost of meeting regulations, yet no one has mentioned that developer profits are at record highs. Is there going to be any discussion on the impact of price gouging on prospective tenants, and implementation of price protections?

Charles County's Affordable Housing Workgroup is actively looking into revising our ADU requirements to be less restrictive and give more flexibility in design.

How is ADU legislation considering aging populations and multi-generational housing to include affordability for elder housing within a family unit?

The AARP has also addressed ADU concerns: <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/housing/info-2019/accessory-dwelling-units-adus.html>  
<https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/livable-communities/housing/2022/The%20ABCs%20of%20ADUs-handout-082222.pdf>  
<https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/housing/info-2021/adu-model-state-act-and-local-ordinance.html> ..and potential legislative models (via AARP)

Infrastructure will continue to be a concern with or without ADUs. The key factor is to define the motivating premise for ADU legislation. Is it to prohibit or to make 'good neighbor policies to better accommodate ADUs?

Will there be any provisions/conversations about tiny house communities or developments? It seems this could be the solution to the issue one of the Task Force members brought up about parking and trash. This can also be a solution to the college housing problem that was also brought up in the comment session. Georgia did this in college park successfully. They put 29 tiny homes on 3 Acres in College Park, and it was a huge success.

Need to consider how you can craft your recommendations to meet your goals that does not result in creating another avenue for increasing revenue for predatory rental housing investors in communities already under strain from this phenomenon.

Would state legislation possibly preempt local farmland preservation regulations?

Can I get a copy of the meeting recording because I had a conflict at the beginning? Also, who can I follow up with if I have additional questions about ADUs as it relates to Bowie, MD?

I'm looking forward to identifying ways that we can break down silos and make a real impact across the state. We can see what some towns like Salisbury are saying and go from there, but we can't continue to wait and wait, while families are suffering, and homelessness and affordability are far too common in the conversation about individuals and sustainability.

It appears that there is no Baltimore City representation on the TF. If that is the actual case, it is surprising. Baltimore City is suffering from extreme population decline (particularly Black middle-class families), has the highest rent burden in the state, already has high levels of housing density, is trying to promote home ownership, has high number of out of state owners and absentee landlords, an underfunded and understaffed housing department, to name but a few of the many challenges facing the city. We also have a very high number of vacant houses, as well as a significant number of empty office buildings and hotels, which could be used imaginatively to address Baltimore's housing issues. My concern is that no one on the TF appears to have direct experience with the challenges facing the City, and that the resulting recommendations might not take them into consideration.

Since Baltimore has been the target of speculators and absentee landlords, and many of its neighborhoods are still recovering from the time when conversion of single-family to multi-family housing was a matter of right, I'm very glad to see the emphasis on owner-occupied ADUs.

However, I hope that the TF will take into serious consideration the cost of conversion or building a new ADU when looking at them as a source of affordable housing. An owner-occupier will incur those expenses, which can be extremely high when converting an older home and will need to set the rent at a sufficient level to recoup those costs, as well as the operational costs for the rental and a reasonable profit. This does not necessarily result in affordable housing for the lowest income renters who bear the



greatest rental burden.

And I agree with Mr. Gaston's suggestion that it would be wise to keep in mind the local governments' resources and infrastructure, and the impact ADUs would have on them. Baltimore City's housing department (which is in charge of building inspections) already has too few inspectors, and, frankly, the culture of inspection is far from robust. This is evidenced by the fact that the Director only recently had to remind the inspectors that it is impermissible to accept bribes at any level! If ADUs are to be seen as a viable source of quality housing, the local governments must have meaningful inspection programs. Similarly, concerns about parking and infrastructure are real and have a real impact on the quality of residents' life. Baltimore has an aging infrastructure; its main water lines, for example, are leaking and causing subsidence issues throughout the city. There needs to be sufficient flexibility in any state policy/legislation of ADUs to allow the local governments to take into consideration their own unique set of circumstances.

Also, there appears to be a real enthusiasm for ADUs at almost any cost among some members of the TF, which might raise questions about the neutrality referenced by the chair

Finally, I hope that in your focus groups you include people who have concerns about the ADUs or who have dealt directly with issues of high density neighborhoods. They are not all "NIMBYs" and have many legitimate concerns about the impact that ADUs can have on their towns and cities. In particular, I strongly recommend that you talk to leaders in historically black neighborhoods such as Coldstream-Homestead-Montebello or Howard Park about their experiences.

Having designed many ADUs in Montgomery County and even advising the Montgomery County Council on the ADU zoning amendment, I'd like to be more involved in helping this task force as an advisor if possible. There are many things about Montgomery County's recent ADU bill that need improving and I would like to help this task force avoid such pitfalls.

The city is very interested in ADU's; however, our primary concern, since we are a University town is to ensure that the ADU's don't turn into student rentals.

ADUs are fantastic way of providing more shelter to people especially those who can't afford or want to own a home. It costs the government nothing to legalize these, and it can also be of financial benefit to the current homeowner.

Here are two Essential and Foundational Readings to better inform and prepare yourselves about our housing segregation history that remains in effect today and most any common questions about ADUs in particular

Kol Peterson - "Backyard Revolution"  
Richard Rothstein - "Color of Law"

Please ask both the public and task force members to cite their sources when making broad statements such as "ADUs will increase school crowding and traffic or strain infrastructure or decrease our home values." The facts and data so far suggest otherwise and as a Task Force, you need to stick to documented facts and data not hearsay or fear or unfounded beliefs.

Lastly Task Forces have a reputation of creating lots of work for the members yet ending up on bookshelves -Ask me how I know! Challenge yourselves, staff, and legislators to truly make Maryland a leader in this effort. That means going beyond just permitting ADUs but PROMOTING THEM often and loudly with recommendations for significant grants and low or no-interest loans, an ADU navigators' office to cut red tape, and helping owners access funding and plans that are pre-approved. Make sure to add Junior ADUs and Tiny Movable Homes as ADUs as many areas are now doing. Make ADU creation a By-Right ministerial approval process - No hearings, no lengthy or complex process.

Eliminate any parking or special setback requirements - We are housing people not cars and unless you

wish to add parking requirements to all homes it's a red herring. Act and make recommendations as if our earth is on fire and people are becoming homeless because they are every single day that we delay this action.

Make sure you are not just listening to older homeowners - Ask younger people, low-income seniors, the disabled, and those renting. They are the ones who desperately need ADUs. In short - Take bold action on ADUs and ask those who oppose them to justify their opposition with research and data.

Hello, I am currently working on a prototype for a DIY, net zero resource, natural (biogenic) building material ADU and have two residential clients hoping to start construction this fall. I would like to offer an environmental perspective on ADU construction - one that does not tax resources and can make infrastructure costs more affordable. It is critical to the health of the planet and people that we design any new home or addition to be all-electric, net zero, and use healthy materials! Doing this in a small ADU is so very easy. It is very concerning to see people using big-box sheds, or un-insulated, plastic and foam filled pre-fab tiny homes. I would love to see some incentive or requirement for keeping the environmental footprint of these units as low as possible. Secondly, running into an issue in Baltimore City and County with a 15' height limit - this makes loft design very, very difficult. Thirdly, requiring the occupant of the ADU to be immediate family seems unnecessary and limits the possibility of low-income residents being able to create an additional income stream to increase generational wealth. Lastly, the 2-year reapplication is also too much effort for homeowners. I would be happy to serve on a committee or provide additional resources to the group. I am very grateful to know that you all are working on this very important aspect

The Task Force should not compromise on making the most innovative and permissive ADU recommendation. Any requirement for owner occupancy, minimum lot size, parking, and setbacks will kill ADU development. Instead, we need low and no-interest loans, grants, and a navigator office. We needed tens of thousands of ADUs yesterday as we are in a Housing Emergency where hundreds of thousands are silently suffering in their ability to pay rent or mortgages Look at this short report on Denver's tepid but correct effort for inspiration (more to come): -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MGIcpGNEcVAgagesui>

I would like to be involved as much as possible, I was involved with AA county

In many of our rural communities, there is plenty of underdeveloped land for ADUs in our 1970s +80s single-family detached housing developments with 1200 sf homes on 1/3 acre lots. But without reliable public transit, our land is being eaten up by parking requirements and in many cases prevents this type of incremental development. If the state helped rural counties and regions in expanding local and regional transit, our communities could waive parking requirements and even offer incentives for residents not to own a car. This would open the market for more housing development along existing infrastructure and in areas that are more walkable.

Dear ADU Task Force:

I don't know if you have heard of the "Yes In God's Backyard" movement  
It's another wonderful concept in using surplus land including parking lots on religious institution holdings. California has just passed several bills making it a reality. It was expanded to include Schools doing the same as many have often underused parking lots or land but are held back by the need to rezone and therefore bringing out the worst in NIMBYS

Imagine lower-income students and teachers being able to live on campus or nearby on religious grounds - Imagine the symbiotic relationships of some religious ongoing' charity work expanding into housing - providing the institutions with new (and often badly needed) income and residents with affordable housing.

I've been approached several times by religious and higher education leaders in Maryland wondering if they could create ADU's. tiny home villages or apartments. Generally, the answer is NO .... or yes but ....

your school or congregation needs to be prepared for the controversy and costs of an expensive, exhausting and contentious NIMBY battle.

In Baltimore, my longtime partner nonprofit housing group, GEDCO (Govens Economic Development Corp.), has achieved extraordinary results in using excess religious land and buildings including my favorite, a converted convent (an actual ADU) called Marion House, for homeless women and children and the well-known Stadium Place for affordable senior housing development on the old Memorial Stadium land. They now act as consultants to others wishing to do the same.

Another wonderful partner, Episcopal Housing Corp has for years also provided project management and consulting to religious and nonprofits in housing development - Dan McCarthy and Shannon Snow are my longtime colleagues there

Let's add YIGBY to our YIMBY ADU housing quivers to create additional and desperately needed housing options. I'd be happy to introduce the leaders of those two nonprofits to you and those working on our housing crisis frontlines.

Again, thanks so, so much for what you are doing. You are the real leaders doing real and meaningful work for our less privileged.

HUD is now recognizing the critical need for ADU's: restrictions "[HUD/FHA] published new policy allowing borrowers to use a portion of the rental income from an ADU to be added to the borrower's income for purposes of qualifying for an FHA-insured mortgage."

This is huge, and it's critical we legalize ADUs as a By-Right opportunity for ALL homeowners now, not later, with little or no restrictions that will hold them back. NIMBY fears are proven unfounded by studies and the data - They are just that, fear.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/10/16/white-house-announces-new-actions-on-homeownership/>

Example of State ADU Leadership in Action:

"California legislators, again, worked on easing construction of ADUs. These backyard homes have become a demonstration of how state laws that override local restrictions can lead to a building boom. Nearly 45,000 ADUs have been completed since 2018, when ADU streamlining laws began taking effect. Bills signed into law this year will bar local jurisdictions from requiring that property owners live on the property of their ADUs and will allow cities to decide whether ADUs can be sold separately from the main house, which could result in more entry-level homes on the market."

<https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2023-10-13/california-housing-crisis-2023-bills>

I have a 2bdrm/1bath 825 sq ft house. Most of my neighbors' homes are >2000 square feet. I'd like to characterize my existing home as the ADU and to build a new >2000 square foot home on my single-family lot. This works particularly well on my particular lot, which has street frontage at both the front and back of the property. The result is the same as if my 2000 sq foot neighbor were to build a new 825 sq foot ADU.

The wording of SB382 would need to be slightly tweaked to accommodate this scenario. Substituting the word "separate" for the word "new" in the following sentence would make clear that an ADU does not need to be new construction in order to be allowable.

(iii) as a [insert: separate] [delete: new] building, detached from the primary dwelling unit and any existing accessory structure.

Where does Baltimore City fit into the scheme of things as it relates to all the older vacant properties built with asbestos and lead pipes. When I currently see developers who have come into the city bought

properties, improperly have been renovating those properties without EPA trained and registered construction workers doing the work (thou required per the Law) , a well-known fact-no City trained housing Inspection Department of Community Housing & Urban Development (just rubber stamping inspections), City Land and deeds department has not sought to change deeds causing large parts of city deeds still to be stored in Annapolis on micro films that are in need of legislation changes because of the land covenant restrictions that dictates the codes for the land those buildings are constructed on... This City is ALL STUDIED OUT and Looking for ANSWERS where Baltimore fit into THESE PLANS FOR LOW AND MODERATE HOME OWNERSHIP AND VERY LOW RENTAL HOUSING FOR ELDERLY AND DISABLED...

Excluding driveways and other yard surfaces covered by permeable pavers from the calculation of impermeable lot coverage will encourage environmentally friendly construction practices while also supporting the viability of ADU construction. 30% lot coverage is a difficult target to meet when attempting to also accommodate off-street parking. Keeping the 30% but excluding permeable surfaces from that % may be a reasonable way to strike the balance.

I have lived in the community of Dunloggin in Ellicott City since 1967 and have been active in promoting good land use since soon after I moved in. To me, accessory dwelling units are one of the most dangerous land use innovations I can remember for a number of reasons.

Dunloggin is an established community, like many in our county; it has a character. Good land use protects the character of established neighborhoods. ADUs could lead to significant changes in the character of the neighborhood.

Unlike many newer communities like Columbia, older neighborhoods lack dedicated open space. Our backyards are our open space, so ADUs could significantly reduce the open space we all enjoy, even when it is in a neighbors' yard. This open space has benefits beyond our enjoyment. It provides opportunities for us to support pollinators and small wildlife like our Dunloggin foxes.

In addition, our communities were not designed for parking on the street. We do not and will not have significant public transit in most of our communities, and most families own multiple cars. We do not have space to accommodate an increase in parking on existing lots or the streets.

ADUs could cause serious physical damage to nearby property in many neighborhoods through the significant decrease in impermeable surface. Any decrease in green space is downright harmful in Dunloggin with our poor drainage and inadequate stormwater management. We are not in the Historic District renowned for its serious flooding, but much of Ellicott City has heavy clay soil full of rocks. ADUs and related parking areas will significantly increase impermeable surfaces and already existing runoff problems and flooding for nearby homes. A number of my neighbors have experienced stormwater damage to their homes in excess of \$50,000; often this happens after the county has allowed a single oversized lot to be subdivided uphill or a neighbor has built a significant addition to their home. I would be happy to show you some examples. New construction is not required to take steps to prevent stormwater issues it creates. For my neighborhood and others in Howard County this is a serious problem.

I spent seven years on the Howard County Commission on Aging. Contrary to many claims, it is not "age-friendly" to older adults to promote ADUs. They say older adults could house caregivers or younger families could house parents, but we can do both now within our current homes in our county, and most people do not consider them to be ADUs. In addition, older adults (like me) want to age in place, not just in our homes but also our communities. We do not want them to change to higher density and less green space. There is also mention that older people could rent out their ADUs for extra income; the LAST thing an aging person needs are the problems of being a landlord!

What happens if we sell a house with an ADU? Most people will not want a second house on the property. The property may be most likely to appeal to investors who will want to rent out both units with a conditional use. Nonresident landlords do not maintain the property the way a resident owner would. On the other hand, the seller may just ask to have the property divided and sell it to two buyers, and I



would give you odds that the county would allow it. Hmmm, since the original property would still be zoned for single family, I wonder if they could then add a new ADU?

I truly understand the need for more affordable housing, but the cost per square foot to build a detached home in Howard County means detached ADUs will still be very expensive. ADUs are not a good answer to the affordable housing problem for our county, and I suspect this is true for many counties in Maryland. The board of my community association has not held a specific vote on ADUs, but we did a survey in 2021. There were 134 responses, of which 106 were opposed, 23 in favor, and 5 uncertain. Please consider the needs and desires of existing residents and give recognition to the harmful effects as well as the benefits of ADUs.

Accessory Housing Units permit family members, both elderly or college age youngsters to live independently on family property. The unit has all needed facilities such as a kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, and living room that will not require entering the main house for daily life functions. Grandparents can still maintain the desired family closeness but will have privacy and can hire outside help if more assistance is needed, without relying on family members. Accessory Dwelling units prevent some of the suburban sprawl by providing more affordable living options without leaving the property and can be located near transit. Only one extra car is permitted, encouraging the use of nearby transit. No longer will occupants need to travel long distances to visit family. Adult sons and daughters will not have to move to the outskirts of the county or outside it to find lodging, which is small in size. The lack of housing in the county, especially small units, can be overcome by expanding the number of residents that can live on a single property. New properties will be required to maintain the attractiveness of the home and surrounding neighborhood, a common complaint of adding ADU's. Property owners will likely investigate future occupants if they are not family members since they will be living on their property. We can make Montgomery County an inclusive, family-oriented county that resists sprawl and combats climate change by encouraging compact living arrangements, while providing added income for homeowners.

Our concern in Howard County is the potential ADUs have to further overcrowd our schools. We need to be able to reliably predict student populations in the different planning areas when combined with new residential construction projects, so that school construction can match increases in school population.

Will the TF also explore changes to the property valuations/assessment calculation when an ADU (either interior or exterior to the primary dwelling) is permitted? This question addresses taxation issues arising from an ADU addition.

There's an apparent focus on required parking for ADUs. In many scenarios the ADU occupant will be an elderly familial person w/o a car and the primary dwelling owner cares for and transports that elderly person. So pls allow the required parking discussion to incl a way to easily waive that requirement. Said differently, if a daughter (primary owner) wants her elderly Mom to come live in an ADU ... and Mom no longer drives ... then don't require the daughter to construct 2 unnecessary parking spaces.

If the law is set up for owner-occupied units or other occupant/owner criteria, it will be extremely difficult for the local government to administer ensuring the program goals are still met for subsequent owners and ADU occupants.

It will be difficult to get ADUs into single-family homes in newer subdivisions due to HOA document restrictions on adding density to the development.

The cost to create the ADU will pretty much ensure that the rent will not be what you might consider to be affordable or be something the aging in place owner could not afford to create.

Would it be possible to build the ADU on a lot and be able to sell the ADU itself while remaining accessory like a land trust might be? Also, could an ADU be age-restricted? Permitted?

Allowing for new development could bypass the "changing the neighborhood" idea

In the context of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), there is a complex and multifaceted relationship between racism and political consequences. Racism can affect housing policies and zoning regulations, with historical examples of these regulations being used to segregate communities and limit housing

opportunities for people of color. ADU regulations can intersect with racism, resulting in political consequences at the local level. How local governments address these issues can significantly impact housing equity, neighborhood dynamics, and the local political landscape.

Few questions on the bill -- SB 382

- What are the limitations and entitlements for members of the Task Force, according to the bill?
- What specific tasks is the Task Force assigned to complete, and how do these tasks relate to the creation and operation of ADUs on single-family residential land?
- How is the Task Force expected to address issues related to local housing markets, neighborhood livability, and other policies and projects concerning ADUs?
- When is the Task Force required to submit its reports to the Governor and the General Assembly, and what information should these reports include?
- What is the effective date of this Act, and how long will it remain in effect before being abrogated?
- What is the significance of the abrogation clause in this Act, and what will happen to the Act after June 30, 2025?

California just jumped ahead of us in Maryland again on ADUs by allowing through Assembly Bill 1033 for ADUs to be sold as Mini-Condos.

For starters, it could increase gentle density in many cities. Unlike high density (e.g., mid- and high-rise residential buildings), gentle density refers to the development of single-family type units (e.g., ADUs, duplexes, etc.) within single-family zoned neighborhoods. Gentle density helps maintain the residential façade and aura of neighborhoods while offsetting the growing housing crisis.

The passing of AB 1033 could also provide more affordable housing opportunities for low-mid income first-time homeowners.

It's no secret that California has astronomically high housing prices right now. To give you a better idea, the average home price in California currently falls between \$700k – \$1M. This price range is simply unattainable for many working families. Maryland is closing in on that horror.

But remember, AB 1033 would allow ADUs to be sold independently from the primary residence. This would open up a reservoir of reasonably priced homes for first-time homebuyers.

After all, ADUs are a much more affordable housing option than a 2,500+ sq ft home. Household sizes have shrunk to all-time lows since the 60s when a lot of these homes were built. A lot of families just don't have a need for three, four or five-bedroom houses anymore.

AB 1033 would also be advantageous to current homeowners who could use the sale of an ADU to help finance its construction. It also allows homeowners who do not want to be landlords to simply build the ADU for sale. This would allow more families a chance at homeownership.

With an outrageous median house price in Seattle of \$1.2M, a growing number of ADUs have been built in recent years to offset their own housing crisis.

In fact, almost 1,000 ADUs were permitted in 2021, which is an increase of 250% from the previous year!

According to The Seattle Times, approximately 1/3 of new ADUs are being permitted as condos. This is all part of a heightened effort on Seattle's part since 2019 to loosen ADU regulations. This will provide a wider, more financially accessible array of housing opportunities.

So there you have it - Mini-Condo ADUs should be on our Task Force's radar screen if we are to even begin to catch up with our West Coast leaders in California and Washington

When will the Second Meetings audio be available to listen to.. I only see the first

I would recommend that the Task Force recommend an audit of Critical Area Resource Conservation Area legislation and policy. Increase in land to lie fallow for such purpose drives up the cost of housing.

I would love to be involved in these discussions. Hoping to either be able to put on accessory dwelling unit in my backyard on a foundation or at least build a tiny house on wheels that I have the ability to put in close proximity to Prince George's county like Howard, Montgomery, or even Anne Arundel Counties

Hello, I am a local architect that has helped champion legislation to allow ADUs here in MoCo, and have designed dozens of them since its passage. I've found many issues within our own legislation that has made it very expensive and slow to build ADUs here, and I'd like to make sure this task force avoids this pitfall. 1. There should be a minimum size allowed for an ADU on any lot. California allows 800 sf min. I'd like to see a number at least 600 sf here. 2. Waive the requirement to provide fire sprinklers on a detached ADU. This drives the costs up significantly, by as much as 20%. A large addition on a home and basement apartment aren't required to have fire sprinklers. 3. Provide a tax break for offering ADUS that meet Aging in Place standards. Most ADUs I have designed are for aging seniors and it would be helpful for homeowners to include these types of modifications so that all renters are welcome in these unit types. Thank you for your time.

Please be sure to add key opportunities for even more housing than just an ADU: -

Consider recommending Junior ADU as part of your report

Make sure to also include tiny homes on wheels (movable tiny homes) as bonafide ADUs  
Many locales in California now not only allow but encourage Junior ADUs and Movable Tiny Homes as ADU.

Nothing is more sustainable, affordable, and flexible than a Junior ADU or a movable tiny home that can be owned by the renter, or one that the homeowner can own as a rental.

Without these key recommendations, you will also need to add heavy subsidies or grants as New York, Vermont, and California have (from \$25,000 to over \$200,000 a unit in grant money) if we are to see any uptake by lower-income homeowners -

Otherwise, only well-financed wealthier homeowners will create ADUs

From what I have seen, with the exception of being free or low rent for known/related tenants, ADUs are not inherently affordable. The market determines affordability. It is not the cost of building the ADU that determines affordability, however, being cost prohibitive can lead to ADUs not being built at all.

Please see attached comments from SGCP in PDF format. A hard copy to follow by mail.  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1otpKQiqNhPHzh4PWxhkCWl98yrYiMXp9/view?usp=sharing>

I live on a 1-acre property in Cecil County. I looked into building an "in-law suite" for my Mother who is suffering from dementia. Here is the pertinent regulation that I was given from the County: Zoning: The property has RR zoning with setbacks of 40 feet from the front and rear property lines and 10 feet from the side property lines. An in-law suite can only be occupied by an immediate family member and the owner of the residential dwelling must occupy a dwelling unit on the same property. The minimum floor area for an accessory apartment within a principal dwelling shall be three hundred (300) square feet but in no case shall it exceed thirty percent (30%) of the gross floor area of the dwelling in which it is located. For accessory apartments located in accessory buildings, the minimum floor area shall also be three hundred (300) square feet, there shall be no more than two (2) bedrooms in the apartment and the apartment shall not occupy more than 50% of the accessory structure. If an accessory apartment is located in the principal dwelling building, the entry to such unit and its design shall be such that, to the degree reasonably feasible, the appearance of the building will remain as a single-family residential structure and that no external entrance that faces a road or street will be added.

My issue with this is the statement that the ADU can only be occupied by an immediate family member and the owner of the property must live on site. While this is my current situation, dementia is sadly, ultimately fatal. What do I do when my Mother passes with the very expensive ADU that I've built? It

must be mothballed? Also, what if we have a job transfer and I want someone else to live in my house in the meantime. An adult child or my brother? To require the determination of family relationships in the zoning code is overly intrusive.

This is a bad idea given the way people obey present laws. I think wastewater will become a problem and electrical hook-ups will be haphazard and dangerous. Unless the state and count can ensure all permits are acquired and passed, they are a bad idea.

Hello there, I recently moved to DC from Oregon (where I did a lot of middle housing and ADU code updates to comply with State law) and I noticed that the overview of ADU legislation includes HB2001, which refined previous legislation; the original legislation is part of SB 1051, which establishes the main framework but doesn't clearly address off-street parking or owner occupancy requirements. A good overview is here: [https://www.oregon.gov/lcd/Publications/ADU\\_Guidance\\_updatedSept2019.pdf](https://www.oregon.gov/lcd/Publications/ADU_Guidance_updatedSept2019.pdf). There is also a model code for ADUs which many jurisdictions adopted.

I am interested to understand a possible long-term plan for me to construct an ADU on my property in Potomac, Maryland, which is zoned for 2 Acres. This committee is working at a different level. I didn't realize it was a Statewide focus. Listening to the November meeting for over an hour, I must report that I am impressed with the incredible professionalism, listening, and communication quality of interactions. My appreciation to ALL of the participants, especially the chair and committee members. I wish you great success!!!

I recommend the recently published book, Excluded How Snob Zoning, NIMBYism, and Class Bias Build the Walls We Don't See by Richard D. Kahlenberg. It provides a lot of insight that has guided me on my thinking on this topic.

A lot of the existing zoning concepts were created as a work-around to accomplish racist objectives, with a focus instead upon class as a proxy. Quality schools are available to everyone that can afford to buy a house for \$500k+. If you can't, stay over there so you won't be a drain our beloved ability to spread out and keep our local property tax base to ourselves.

Building more dense houses that are higher priced is still a great thing b/c it allows move-up buyers to make their existing, more affordable houses available for sale to the next buyer.

Please seek to establish rules with bright lines that do not require a homeowner to hire an architect to ask for variances for building characteristics that are intended to be allowed. Requiring special permission makes the planning phase much more risky and expensive.

As it may be inevitable that the first attempt at updated zoning provisions won't be perfect, please consider building in a plan to revisiting whether any new laws were effective to achieve the goal of more and better housing opportunities for all.

Many existing houses are small and could be appropriately characterized as an ADU. Please do not limit the ADU provisions to new buildings. Please allow a new structure to be the primary structure.



SPARKS-GLENCOE  
COMMUNITY  
PLANNING COUNCIL

SGCPC

December 1, 2023

RECEIVED

DEC - 6 2023

PLANNING SERVICES

Secretary Rebecca L. Flora  
Maryland Department of Planning  
301 W. Preston St. Ste 1101  
Baltimore, MD 21201

Re: Accessory Dwelling Unit Task Force

Dear Secretary Flora,

The Sparks-Glencoe Community Planning Council is an active nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the natural resources and rural character of northern Baltimore County. While recognizing the need for housing, we are concerned about the potential impact of increasing the number of accessory dwelling units in our rural area, which relies on private wells and septic systems. Doing so would be inconsistent with Smart Growth initiatives and efforts to combat pollution of the Chesapeake Bay.

Baltimore County recently loosened restrictions on accessory dwelling units, in a three-year trial phase. It seems untimely to make additional changes until that phase has concluded and been evaluated. Our comments are attached, for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Cc: Joseph Griffiths





SPARKS-GLENCOE  
COMMUNITY  
PLANNING COUNCIL

SGCPC

SPARKS-GLENCOE COMMUNITY PLANNING COUNCIL  
Comments submitted to the Accessory Dwelling Unit Task Force

The Sparks-Glencoe Community Planning Council is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and protecting the rural character and natural resources of northern Baltimore County. We are submitting comments today to provide perspective on the issue of Accessory Dwelling Units in our rural area.

The Task Force has assembled representatives from a broad array of businesses and governmental organizations, but it is not clear whether the environmental community is included. If the result of the Task Force study of Accessory Dwelling Units is to increase the density allowed in an area, there will be an environmental impact, which should be taken into account. It is important to ensure that the effort to expand housing does not set back statewide initiatives to safeguard and improve water quality and promote smart growth.

The area of northern Baltimore County represented by Sparks-Glencoe lies outside of the Urban/Rural Demarcation Line (URDL). This means that there is no public water or sewer service; all houses rely on private wells and septic systems. Increasing the load on those systems will cause a predictable decline in water quality.

The majority of our area is within the Loch Raven Watershed, which collects water in the Loch Raven Reservoir, to be delivered to the 1.7 million people served by the Baltimore metropolitan area water system. All of northern Baltimore County is within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. So the quality of water in our local aquifers is reflected both in the quality of public drinking water and in the quality of the water in the Chesapeake Bay.

Even well-functioning private septic systems leach waste water into the surrounding aquifers. While it is hoped that most of the waste is trapped, the design of septic systems is to allow effluent to flow out of the septic tank and into underground soils and aquifers, which flow into streams and rivers, on their way to one of the reservoirs in our area, and ultimately to the Chesapeake Bay. Of course, many septic systems fail, and/or are poorly maintained, causing even more sewage to flow into Maryland's rivers and streams, contributing to the degradation of those waterways and the Chesapeake

Bay. Surely the effort to find more housing opportunities would not intend to impede statewide progress towards a healthier Chesapeake Bay.

The majority of land in our area of northern Baltimore County is zoned for rural conservation, with the intention of protecting natural resources, including rivers and streams, from the effects of development. Consider the statutory intent of the RC4 (Watershed Protection) zone:

**The County Council finds that major, high-quality sources of water supply for the entire Baltimore Metropolitan Area and for other neighboring jurisdictions lie within Baltimore County and that continuing development in the critical watersheds of those water supply sources is causing increased pollution and sedimentation in the impoundments, resulting in increasing water treatment costs and decreasing water storage capacity. The RC 4 zoning classification and its regulations are established to provide for the protection of the water supplies of metropolitan Baltimore and neighboring jurisdictions by preventing contamination through unsuitable types of levels of development in their watersheds.**

RC 4 regulations include a provision that a house cannot be built in this zone if it would endanger the potable water supply, endanger the reservoirs, or create a health or environmental nuisance for neighboring properties.

The legislative statement of findings preceding the enactment of another Rural Conservation zone (RC5), states that in some cases lot sizes are inadequate to assure long-term adequacy of on-lot sewer and water systems. Lot sizes are intended to ensure that there is sufficient groundwater to supply a household, and sufficient land size to accommodate the septic system, including drain fields, for a single family. Adding residents would put more stress on local aquifers and more sewerage into a piece of land that was deemed adequate to support a single household.

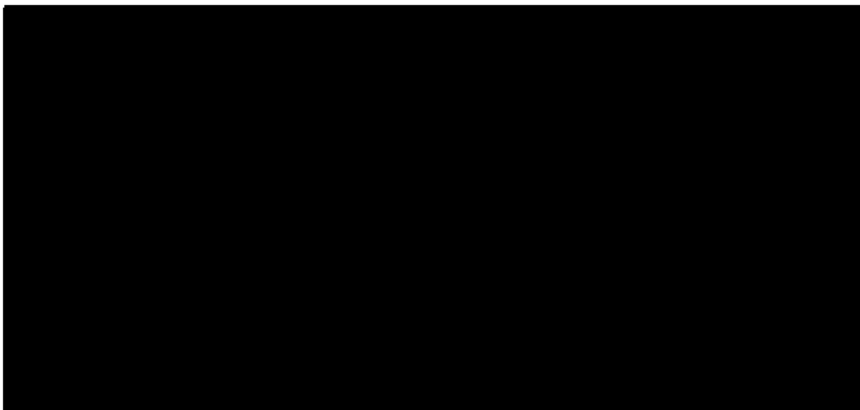
Adding growth in our area of northern Baltimore County is also not consistent with Smart Growth policies, which would direct population growth to areas served by existing infrastructure. In addition to public water and sewer, that includes public transportation, stores, schools, hospitals, and employment locations. Residents would not find it easy to access these services. Adding to the population in this area would be inconvenient for the residents and harmful to the environment. We recommend that Accessory Dwelling unit regulations not be relaxed in the area outside of the Urban/Rural Demarcation Line.

Baltimore County recently passed a law broadening the list of those allowed to occupy Accessory Dwelling Units, from immediate family only to those related by blood, marriage, or adoption. The law also removed the prohibition against charging rent. At the same time, the Baltimore County Council established a requirement to report the number of new Accessory Dwelling Units in what it labeled a preliminary implementation phase of the next three years. This new system should be allowed to unfold and be evaluated before any further expansion is considered.

If the Task Force nonetheless decides to recommend allowing additional residents in the rural area, there are measures that could be taken to reduce the environmental harm:

- Limit the number of occupants allowed in an Accessory Dwelling Unit;
- Require an inspection of the septic system that would service the Accessory Dwelling Unit;
- Require a septic system with the Best Available Technology prior to allowing additional residents;
- Maintain the maximum square footage of Accessory Dwelling Units currently allowed by zoning regulations;
- Restrict increases in impervious surfaces in order to minimize the added runoff flowing into local waterways;
- Ensure that private wells in the area have sufficient supply to support the additional population.

Thank you for considering these comments.





Joseph Griffiths -MDP- &lt;joseph.griffiths@maryland.gov&gt;

## ADU Task Force - 11/28 Meeting - Comments

Kathleen Maher kmaher@hagerstownmd.org

Tue, Nov 28, 2023 at 12 20 PM

To: Joseph Griffiths -MDP- &lt;joseph.griffiths@maryland.gov&gt;, Chuck Boyd -MDP- &lt;chuck.boyd@maryland.gov&gt;

Cc: Scott Nicewarner &lt;SNicewarner@hagerstownmd.org&gt;

Hi, Joe and Chuck

I could not access that public comment form wasn't clickable for me So, I thought I'd send you an email with my comments for today

I have some concerns about State legislation that would say a local government has to allow one ADU in any single-family dwelling, for a variety of reasons. Here are 8 off the top of my head:

1. Our pre-1900 platted neighborhoods have lots with either undersized square footage or undersized lot-width, so the neighborhoods are very densely developed already. Most have the house at the sidewalk with either no side separation or maybe only a pedway on one side.
2. The pre-1920 platted neighborhoods were not designed for vehicle storage, so neighborhoods that already have a lot of subdivided houses struggle with over-parking problems on the street which makes the homes not attractive for home-ownership or by discretionary renters. Many have alley access, but do not have parking back there due to old garages (not used for parking) plugging up the alley access.
3. We have a lot of subdivided duplexes that are now considered single-family attached homes and they are usually on very small, narrow lots. I would hope subdivided duplexes would not be considered single-family dwellings for any ADU legislation.
4. In our RMED district we used to allow the homes to be subdivided into apartments, so the older RMED neighborhoods already have many singles that had other units added. These neighborhoods have very high renter-occupancy levels and are not desirable for home-ownership.
5. The dwellings in our city are already 61% renter-occupied with some "single-family" neighborhoods at greater than 75% renter-occupied. Further subdivision of the homes in those neighborhoods would make them even less desirable for home-ownership.
6. Our investor community is very aggressive and out-compete potential home-owners for desirable product, because they can present the seller with cash without having to chase down financing. Investors in our market would snap up these singles with ADU's and then rent both units. To me the house is 2 apartments at that point and not a house with an ADU.
7. If the code said ADU's are only permitted in owner-occupied singles, I would agree that this would then truly be an ADU. The challenge is what happens when the property is sold to an investor for a rental investment? If we discover it, we would then have to tell the new owner you have to remove that ADU which will be contentious and likely be snuck back in even if it is "removed."
8. Our Rental Facilities licensing ordinance exempts "owner plus one" so we do not track this phenomenon. If an owner-occupied unit added an ADU, it would be "owner plus one." We then do not have a way to monitor the next ownership situation owner-occupied with ADU or two rented units? We would just have to monitor Zillo and hope we caught them.

Perhaps the task force could consider exempting municipalities if they have a preponderance of the above issues, or if they already have flexible codes for adding units to existing properties. They may not be ADU's but they are new units or re-occupied units in expired non-conforming properties. For example, in Hagerstown:

1. We allow non-conforming multi-unit residential properties to be used indefinitely, unless the entire property is vacant for 2 years. Then it would be expired and have to be converted to a zoning-approved use. This almost never happens, because the properties are too valuable to investors.
2. We allow a single-family house to be converted to a two-family in any residential district if the lot is large enough.
3. We allow expired non-conforming duplexes to be re-occupied if they were originally built as a two-family.

- 4. We allow expired non-conforming triplexes to be re-occupied if they were originally built as a triplex.
- 5. We allow "mansion houses" to add apartments in the RMED and RO zone if the house is over a certain square footage.
- 6. We allow "mansion house towns" to add over-under flats in the RMED and RO zone if the house is over a certain square footage.

Something for the Task Force to consider is that the Building Code requires any newly created unit to meet code, which includes adding sprinklers to the new unit. This very issue came up here the week before Thanksgiving. In our older neighborhoods, no house has sprinklers so this would be a big expense just to add an ADU.

Kathy



[Redacted]

[Redacted]

1 East Franklin Street  
Hagerstown, MD 21740

[www.hagerstownmd.org](http://www.hagerstownmd.org)



[Redacted]





Joseph Griffiths -MDP- &lt;joseph.griffiths@maryland.gov&gt;

## Re: Comments, 11/28/23 Accessory Dwelling Unit Policy Task Force Meeting

1 message

Mon, Dec 11, 2023 at 3:51 PM

[REDACTED]  
 To: Joseph Griffiths -MDP- <joseph.griffiths@maryland.gov>

Hi, Joe:

Thank you for contacting me again. Here are a couple answers to your questions:

- When I was a member of NLIHC, I had a gap analysis done by them for free. You can find the Maryland membership of the NLIHC on its [website](#). The [Maryland Affordable Housing Coalition](#) may include Baltimore County govt (DHCD?) as a member. I saw BaltCo on a list of members several years ago, but I am not sure it is there now. If not, I see that there are a few other MD counties listed under public sector housing members. The study I did on Owing Mill took less than two days (IIRC) using the Census Bureau data and a modification of the NLIHC model for computation.
- It may be that an annual county count of ADUs since permissive legislation was passed in the relevant counties could get you the ADU specificity you are looking for. (Perhaps the county DHCD would assist there.) The count for 2023 could be compared with the 2023 affordable housing gap analysis for that county could also be helpful. ADU occupation rate may also be indicative. Also, I seem to recall that at the last meeting someone offered a 0.15% figure for the proportion of ADU in California compared to its need for affordable housing (I didn't record the particulars, but I am sure your record of the meeting will have that. IIRC, the context was to show that legislation will not necessarily flood the AH market with ADUs.)

Hope that helped. "See" you Thursday. (Also, could you be sure that the chat function works for non Task Force members? At the last meeting, I did not have that,

On Mon, Dec 11, 2023 at 1:36 PM Joseph Griffiths -MDP- <joseph.griffiths@maryland.gov> wrote:

Hello Again [REDACTED]

I am reviewing the resources you shared in this email and will briefly discuss them during next Tuesday's ADU TF meeting. They do an excellent job of quantifying the need for affordable rental housing nationally, in Maryland, and in Owings Mills. Regarding a quantitative market analysis for the Task Force's assumption, we are most interested in one that demonstrates the market for ADUs specifically and/or can quantify how local and state policies and regulation have contributed to the construction and proliferation of ADUs. I agree that a demand for more rental housing generally can be partially met by ADUs, and therefore that demand by extension can highlight a demand for ADUs, but I think the Task Force is yearning for something specifically targeting ADUs as *the* housing product. Do you know if any such study or analysis exists?

If I am missing or overlooking something in the resources you sent me, please let me know.

Also, you stated that NLIHC could potentially complete a study for BaltCo by April. Would that study be free of charge? The General Assembly did not assign any funding to this Task Force and we do not have a budget to depend on.

Thank you so much for your engagement and the next Task Force meeting is [next Tuesday \(12/19\) from 9 - noon.](#)



**Joe Griffith , AICP**  
**Local Assistance and Training Manager**  
**Maryland Department of Planning**  
 301 W. Preston St., Suite 1101  
 Baltimore, MD 21201  
 (410) 767-4553  
[joseph.griffiths@maryland.gov](mailto:joseph.griffiths@maryland.gov)

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On Fri, Dec 1, 2023 at 10:47 AM Joseph Griffiths -MDP- <[joseph.griffiths@maryland.gov](mailto:joseph.griffiths@maryland.gov)> wrote:

Good Morning [REDACTED]

Thank you for sharing the resource and I have already added them to the Task Force' shared research folder. This is great information which we will review and pass on to staff, or hopefully an intern early next year to analyze. As you are aware, the Task Force did not receive any funding to complete its work and we are doing our best to address this important topic within the bounds of our state agency and partner capacities. I will send an email to Task Force members letting them know these resources, as well as your suggestions, are available in the shared folder.

Have a nice weekend



**Joe Griffiths, AICP**  
**Local Assistance and Training Manager**  
**Maryland Department of Planning**  
 301 W. Preston St., Suite 1101  
 Baltimore, MD 21201  
 (410) 767 4553  
[joseph.griffiths@maryland.gov](mailto:joseph.griffiths@maryland.gov)

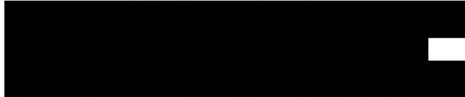
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On Thu, Nov 30, 2023 at 8:59 AM John Coleman -MDP- <johng.coleman@maryland.gov> wrote:

----- Forwarded message -----



Dwelling Unit Policy Task Force Meeting

To: <johng.coleman@maryland.gov>

A Market Analy i The planned qualitative analy i really need to be supplemented with quantitative data a follow

- The 2023 NLIHC Out of Reach Report (attached), which indicates the size of the market for ADUs. Note that MD has the 8th highest housing wage in the country.
- A MD-specific NLIHC GAP Analysis. ([Here](#) is its national GAP analysis for 2023.) I have attached one I did for Owings Mills in Baltimore County in 2022, using the NLIHC sources. I think that BaltCo is a member of the NLIHC and I am sure that NLIHC can develop a study at least for BaltCo by April.
- It would be useful to have a map of capacities overlaid by the State zoning map.. (The URDL map would be a good place to start)
  - Road - DOT already has this done
  - Water/Sewer - see the URDL map
  - Other Utilities
- It would be useful to have a map of current housing densities on the zoning map.

Most of these items are already in existence. The others won't take too much time or expense to develop. It's just a matter of gathering the studies that are already done..

B. Parking: One relatively easy solution would be to require a number of parking spaces **as needed**. So, if someone moves into the ADU with a car, a parking space is required. This could be handled by permit. The home-owner could decide when (s)he builds the ADU whether (s)he will rent to someone with a car; living near transit would make the necessity for a parking space nil. The police than would hand out tickets to cars parked "illegally", as is their function

C. Why could we not limit the use of ADUs for short term leases, by putting the required minimum length of the lease in the definition of ADU?

D I applaud the tate that preempt ADU policie My favorite i the rule that all juri diction mu t have a policy that i no more re trictive than the State policy. This would go a long way to countering the NIMBY problem.



*You cannot stop the waves, but you can learn to surf* - Jon Kabat-Zinn





December 14, 2023

Accessory Dwelling Unit Task Force  
301 W. Preston Street, Suite 1101  
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Secretary Flora and Members of the ADU Task Force,

Eastern Shore Land Conservancy sees tremendous value in the wider adoption of accessory dwelling units in our rural communities on the Eastern Shore. We think ADUs can be a powerful tool that can help Maryland mitigate the current housing crisis, budget cuts in transportation funding, and climate change by getting more production out of existing housing developments and infrastructure.

From a conservation standpoint, ADUs allow incremental growth of housing that is more affordable on land that is already developed. This will help protect our farmland, forests, and native habitats by redirecting growth to existing neighborhoods. This means less impervious surface that harms our streams, rivers, and the bay. This would also mean more property tax revenue contributing to local budgets for the future maintenance of infrastructure like streets and roads.

If Maryland can better utilize already developed land with ADUs it would allow local governments to get more use out of existing infrastructure and increase financing for future maintenance while helping to protect our changing environment.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment,

