

# SUFFOLK COUNTY

# ADU

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# introduction.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) provide significant benefits to a community, property owners, and residents. ADUs expand housing options allowing seniors, service providers, teachers, civil servants, and vulnerable populations to live in the community they know and serve. For property owners, ADUs allow for multi-generational families to live close to and support each other as well as provide opportunities to build wealth. Residents have more affordable housing options that allow them to live near family and work.

Despite these benefits, some communities are unsure about the impact ADUs may have on their neighborhood and quality of life. To build public confidence in and support for the idea, designers and community leaders need to provide a full vision of how ADUs work – demonstrating the benefits while also addressing common concerns. When designed properly, ADUs can provide a positive living environment for residents and enhance the physical and social fabric of a neighborhood. This proposal attempts how the careful design of an ADU can do just that.

Regardless of the size, shape or type of housing, all of us want our home to support the way we live while providing a sense of delight and comfort. This proposal considers several design elements that meet the physical and emotional needs of residents.

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# barriers.

## Removing Barriers

Once a community embraces the idea of Accessory Dwelling Units there is still much to be done to facilitate their production. Many people that see the benefits of ADUs may not pursue building one because they fear a development process that they do not understand. The complexity of design, permitting, construction all can be a barrier to ADU production. A community, however, can provide the expertise and simplify the process to remove some of those barriers.

## Cost

Many people choose to build an ADU and rent it out as a source of income. This financial strategy may not be part of some people's life experience so they would never think about it as a means of generating wealth. A community can provide educational opportunities for residents that include simple financial tools that demonstrate how rental income can be generated.

Specific cost reduction suggestions include:

- When excess capacity is available, allow submeters for domestic water and electricity so that existing utilities can be extended to the ADU and avoid the cost of new utility services.
- Reduce construction permit fees and review time by allowing prequalified architects to self-certify that building plans comply with zoning and building codes.
- Eliminate construction permit fees and review time with automatic approval of prototype ADU designs created in conjunction with a licensed architect and the building code official.
- Reduce or eliminate parking off-site parking requirements for ADU units especially in locations within ¼ mile of a public transportation route.

Rough Cost Estimate for 400-530 Sf ADUs

Utility. 20,000

Site landscape. 2,000

Construction. 95,400

Permits. 3,000

Subtotal. 120,400

Contractor. 14,450

Total 134,850

**Expertise**

Another barrier to residents creating ADUs is the fear of the development process. For many people, the process of planning, permitting, bidding and building is an unknown that can be intimidating. Communities can minimize this barrier by simplifying some steps of the development process.

**Specific recommendations include:**

- Create a pool of pre-qualified architects and contractors that have the expertise, insurance, and bonding capacity that property owners can choose from with confidence.
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- Provide financial templates and education opportunities that demonstrate to property owners how to develop a project that will produce positive cash flow.
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- Develop realistic timelines and checklists for property owners to help them navigate the development process without missing key steps.
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- Create cohorts of property owners that can work through the development process together with guidance from municipal staff.

# design intention. + 6 principles.

- 1 Sustainability
- 2 Accessibility
- 3 Innovation
- 4 Compatibility with existing Community Character
- 5 Affordability
- 6 Design Standard

## privacy

Our home sometimes needs to be our refuge. A place where we can disconnect from our busy public life and be with the people and things that we value most. In a small dwelling, creating the privacy we need to focus on the important things can be a challenge. The ADU maintains privacy by providing access and daylight while screening views. The entry is pulled back from the perimeter and out of the direct view of neighbors. A small patio provides a threshold where the public and the private can interact without disrupting either.

## daylight

Regular exposure to daylight is essential for our physical and emotional well-being. In a small house with close neighbors providing access to daylight while maintaining privacy requires thoughtful planning. The ADU locates windows in the private areas of the house in a way to minimize the view in while allowing light to enter. The bedroom window is set back from the façade. The bathroom window is located high on the wall above regular sight lines. A skylight brings daylight into the center of the home creating a balance of light without harsh contrast.

Sustainability    Affordability



Innovation    Design Standard



# adaptability

Our dwellings need to adapt to the changing needs of a person or family. Our homes need to support us as we face changes in our physical mobility, how and where we earn our living, and even our hobbies and interests. The ADU provides this flexibility by including spaces of different sizes, orientation, and privacy. Small work areas are focused away from shared spaces creating a degree of both physical and perceived separation needed for focused work. A seat wall in the dining area can seat a few guests or a single person reading a book with a cup of coffee. The variety of space sizes and types allows the ADU to adapt to our changing needs.

# personalization

For the place we live to become a home, we need to see and feel that it is truly ours. We need to be embraced by the people and things that shape who we are. To support this connection the ADU includes several open screen walls that can hold images and objects. We can embed the things that make us happy, help us remember, or encourage us everywhere in the house – making it feel like it is our own.

Innovation

Compatibility with existing Community Character



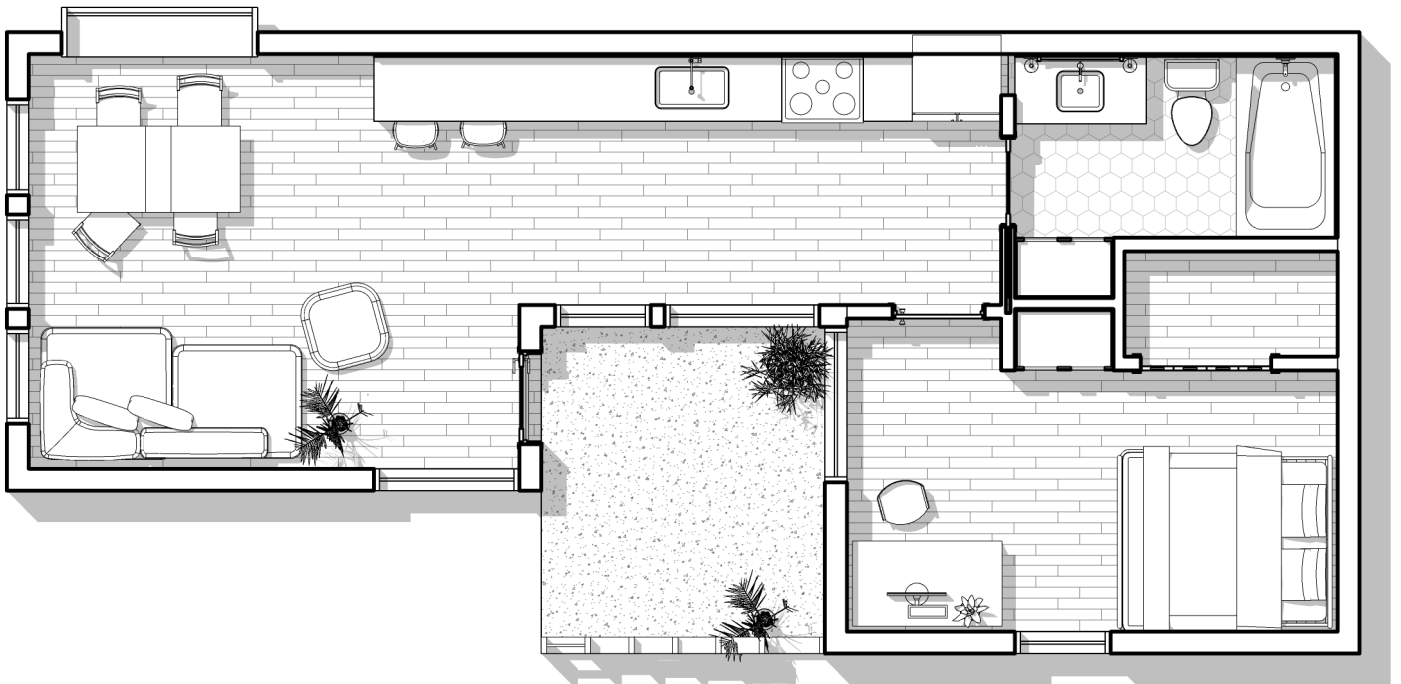
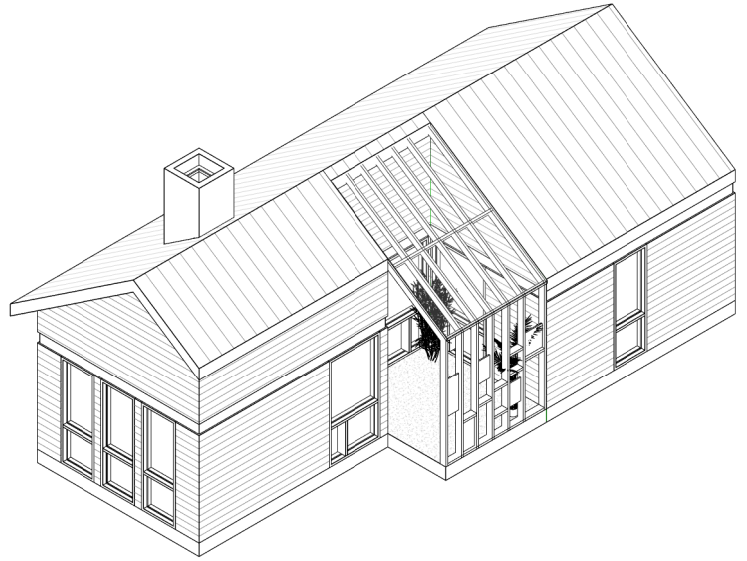
Innovation Accessibility Affordability

# design A

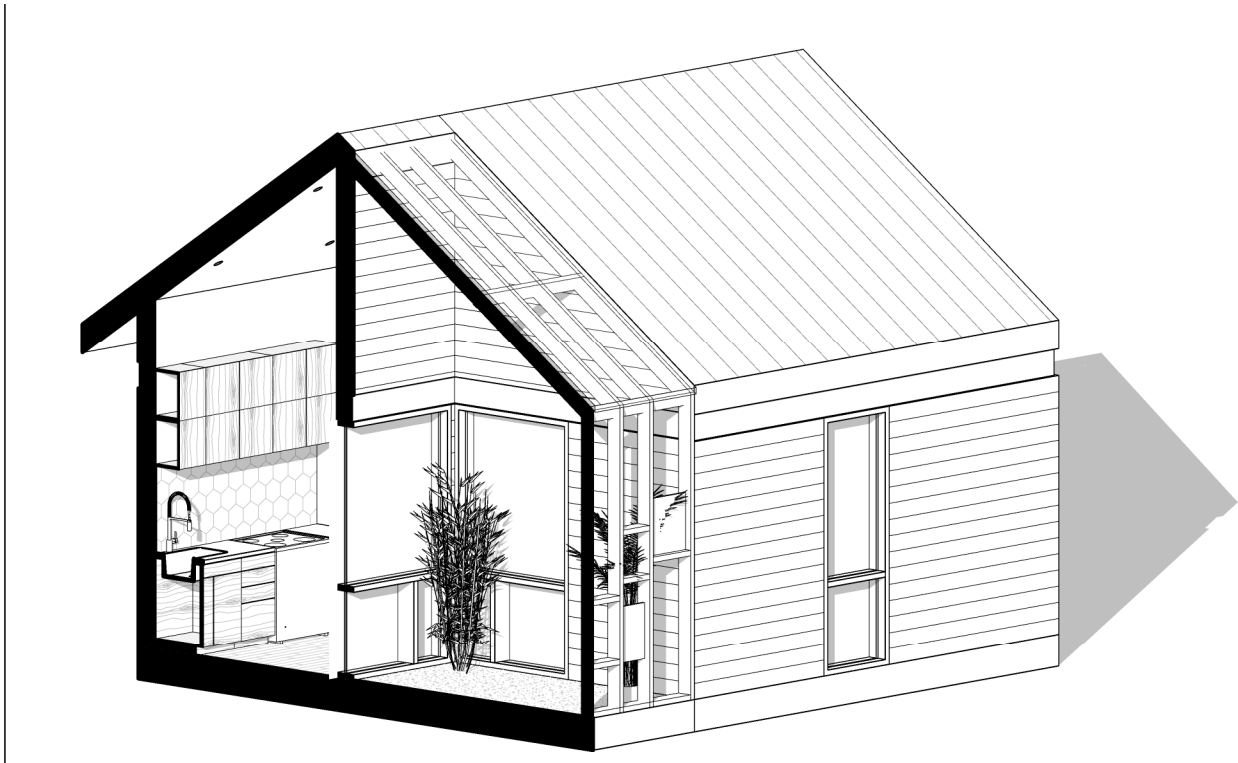
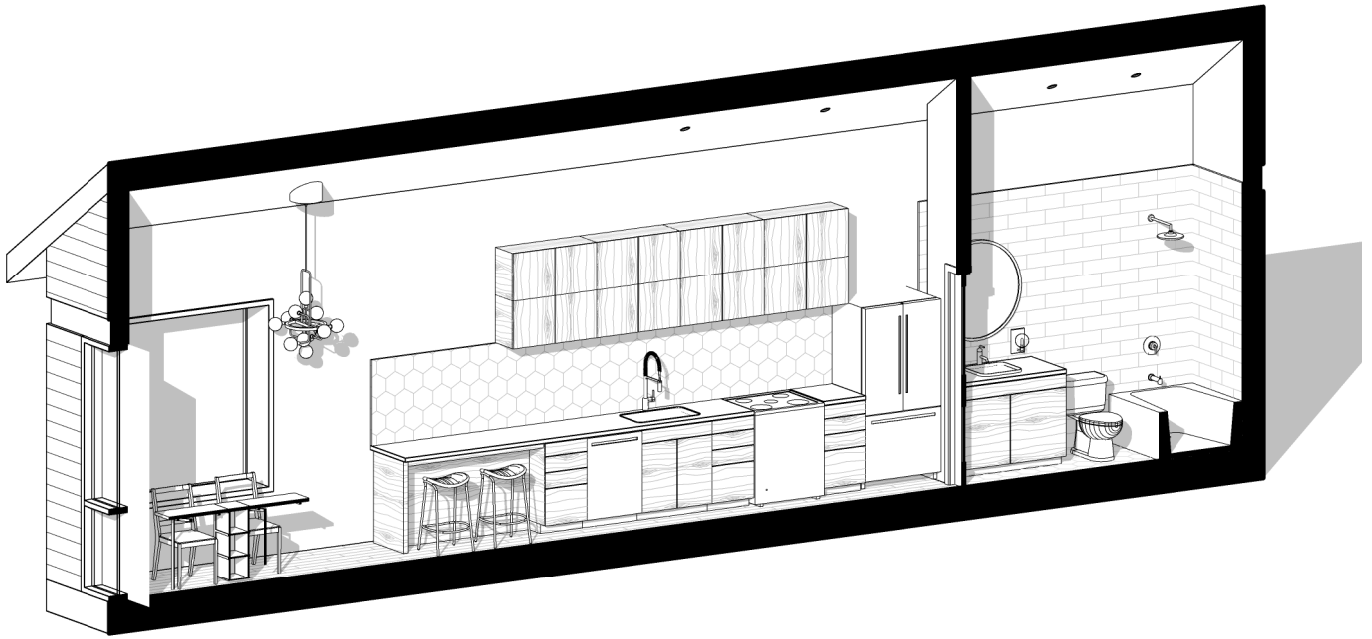
## 530 sf ADU

### Multi-Generational Prototype

This prototype supports a tenant that is related to the property owner. The longer proportion of this prototype allows for it to be set back from the existing house to create a shared outdoor space. The patio becomes a meeting place for the two generations to gather.











# design D

## 400 sf ADU

### Garage Prototype

The garage prototype places the ADU on top of an existing or new garage. On a parcel with a small back yard, this option allows for the unit to be constructed while keeping the windows of the existing house to remain clear. The garage prototype also provides an addition option that minimizes the disruption to daily life in the main house.

