

From: [Wasniewski, Darrin](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: AARP comments in support of Legistar #81952
Date: Monday, April 15, 2024 9:00:12 AM
Attachments: [24.04 Madison ADU Council Comments final.pdf](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Attached please find AARP Wisconsin comments in support to the change in Madison's ADU ordinance, Legistar 81952.

In gratitude,

Darrin Wasniewski

AARP Wisconsin
Senior Associate State Director- Community Outreach
222 W. Washington Avenue #600
Madison, WI 53703
Office: (608) 286-6303 | E-mail: dwasniewski@arp.org

Want to meet? [Book time with Wasniewski, Darrin](#)



222 W. Washington Avenue, Suite 600 | Madison, WI 53701
608-286-6300 | aarp.org/wi | wistate@aarp.org
twitter: @aarpwi | [facebook.com/AARP Wisconsin](https://facebook.com/AARPWisconsin)

16 April 2024

AARP Wisconsin Comments in Support of the Amendments to Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance

Mayor Rhodes-Conway, Council President Currie and members of council:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments today in support of Legistar #81952, Amending Sections 28.151 and 28.211 of the Madison General Ordinances to allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) for properties with up to eight dwelling units and remove owner-occupancy requirement for ADUs.

AARP has been a long-standing supporter of ADUs as a tool to provide housing and caregiver options for older adults to successfully age in community. Research shows the positive impacts that remaining close to social connections has on older adults. We recognize that they can provide a universally-designed option to downsize from a larger home that no longer fits their life stage or an opportunity for a caretaker or family member to live close by when extra help may be needed; allowing the older adult to stay rooted in their community.

AARP released its first ADU model ordinance in 2000 as a guide for model legislation at the state and local level enabling the construction of ADUs. This guidance was updated in 2020 to encompass accumulated experience with ADU legislation and ordinances over the course of two decades. According to the AARP Home and Community Preferences Survey, people who would consider creating an ADU said they would do so in order to:

- Provide a home for a loved one in need of care (86%)
- Provide housing for relatives or friends (86%)
- Have a space for guests (82%)
- Create a place for a caregiver to stay (74%)
- Increase the value of their home (69%)
- Feel safer by having someone live nearby (67%)
- Earn extra income by renting to a tenant (63%)

We've often heard the claim that ADUs will change the character of the neighborhood and we believe that to be misplaced. ADUs, by design, are one of the least invasive approaches to adding housing density. They do not change the façade of the primary residence or the overall look of the neighborhood when walking down the street.

With respect to the two proposed changes to the existing sections, AARP supports both. Allowing ADUs to be constructed on lots currently built with up to eight dwelling units

provides options for a variety of homeowners and enhances Missing Middle Housing options. Support for construction in various residential zoning districts is found in the AARP Accessory Dwelling Units Model State Act and Local Ordinance publication. AARP's support for no owner-occupancy requirement falls within two camps: equal treatment and financing implications. Madison does not require the owners of the main house to live in it. If it is permissible for owners of a primary residence to rent out their home (and not live in it), then it is unfair and illogical to apply different rules to the ownership of ADUs. Either require all owners to occupy their own home or none, but it appears that creating different rules for ADUs, we are treating ADUs as an inferior form of real estate.

Owner-occupancy requirement could also have financing implications. Let's be frank, ADUs are not inexpensive to build, and most homeowners will have to finance the construction. When doing this, the security for the financing is the property itself. As a condition of the loan, the homeowner agrees that the financial institution can take possession of the property if the homeowner fails to make payments, also known as foreclosure. If the bank forecloses, it cannot "occupy" or reside in the property as the owner. For that reason, lending institutions will not provide financing if there is an owner occupancy requirement.

Madison is by far a leader in Wisconsin when it comes to its ADU ordinance. But, experience has shown that barriers still exist to construction. These two proposed changes will bring Madison's ordinance in line with a model ordinance that other communities can emulate.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Darrin Wasniewski
Senior Associate State Director- Community Outreach

From: [Katie Castern](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: Ordinance change for ADUs
Date: Monday, April 15, 2024 8:46:12 AM

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Hello,

I'm a homeowner in Madison and I support changing the ordinance for Accessory Dwelling Units to remove owner-occupancy restrictions and also allow them on more residential properties, not just single family homes and duplexes. We need to increase housing units and density to keep up with the demand for new housing.

Thank you,
Katie Castern
466 S Owen Drive
Madison, WI 53711

From: [Michael Friedman](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: Support ADU Ordinance - Legistar 81952
Date: Monday, April 15, 2024 9:36:13 PM

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Hello Alders,

My name is Michael Friedman, a resident of S. Hancock St (District 6). I am emailing to encourage you all to support the amendment of Sections 28.151 and 28.211 of the Madison General Ordinances to allow the development of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) on more properties, and to remove owner-occupancy restrictions. This is a great step in the right direction. I encourage all of you to keep moving forward with truly progressive housing policies including efforts to upzone the entirety of the city and allow greater density development by right.

As a renter, I am struggling to stay in this city due to the ever increasing cost of rent, which is on par with much larger cities like Chicago. The only way we can keep people of all socioeconomic statuses in the city is by building more housing, and increasing density.

Please support this amendment to allow more ADU development.

Thank you,
Michael Friedman
Resident of District 6

From: [Eric Hamilton](#)
To: [Rummel, Marsha](#); [All Alders](#)
Subject: Agenda item 81952: Remove owner occupancy requirements for ADUs
Date: Monday, April 15, 2024 9:32:33 AM

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Hello Alder Rummel and Council,

I support removing requirements for owner occupancy of ADUs. There seems to be little reason to impose this requirement, and it can only stifle the building of ADUs, which have the potential to provide a modest increase in housing and provide some rental income for homeowners who invest in their properties.

We have ourselves considered building an ADU, and this requirement seems to complicate how we would handle our property if we had to move, making us less likely to make this investment. All this requirement seems to do is to favor homeowners over renters, which isn't a value I think our city should adhere to.

Thank you,

Eric

From: [Jacob Idlas](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: Support for ADU amendment
Date: Monday, April 15, 2024 10:56:14 AM

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Hello Alders,

I write to support amending Sections 28.151 and 28.211 of the Madison General Ordinances to allow Accessory Dwelling Units for properties with up to eight dwelling units and remove owner-occupancy requirement for ADUs. Doing so will allow for denser development in the city, which in turn will provide the demand needed for walkable vibrant neighborhoods with frequent transit services. It will also provide needed housing supply without resorting to big box apartment buildings (though they too have their place), ensuring demand for housing can be met without ever rising prices. All of this will help to fight climate change by reducing dependency on commuting by car from distinct sprawl housing.

Thank you,
Jack Idlas
Vilas Neighborhood
1802 Jefferson St, Madison, WI 53711

Jacob A. Idlas

From: dmlittle=uwalumni.com@mg.gospringboard.io on behalf of [Darcy Little](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: Support Legistar item 81982
Date: Friday, April 12, 2024 12:46:15 PM

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Dear decision maker,

Everyone deserves to age in a home and community of their choosing. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are an ideal solution to keep families together — an economic alternative to the high cost of assisted living centers. ADUs help with aging-in-place and living in communities near loved ones. They provide an opportunity to house caregivers close by, in turn helping our loved ones who need caregiving.

That's why I'm asking you to ensure that homeowners have options when looking into suitable housing that fits their life stage by supporting Legistar Item 81952.

This proposal allows for a homeowner to meet the housing needs of their parents, adult children, grandchildren, or other loved ones while also providing an option to the homeowner to exercise their property rights to gain additional income by removing barriers to financing imposed through owner-occupant requirements. ADUs can also assist in providing appropriate housing to essential workers such as teachers, nurses, or first responders, who would like to live in the communities they serve.

Housing options are necessary to address the needs of people of all ages and abilities.

Again, I'm urging you to support Legistar item 81952. Thank you for helping to make Madison a true age-friendly community.

Thank you.

Darcy Little
42 Waunona Woods Ct
Address 2
MADISON WI, 53713-1724

From: [Emma McAleavy](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: Writing in support of Legistar 81952
Date: Sunday, April 14, 2024 9:35:13 PM

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Hello,

I am a homeowner in Midvale Heights, and I wanted to reach out to let all of the Madison Alders know that I *strongly* support Legistar 81952.

It is completely impossible for me or any of my neighbors to get the necessary financing to build ADUs on our property with the owner-occupancy requirement.

Getting rid of the owner-occupancy requirement will help homeowners *and* it will help create more much-needed housing to benefit all Madisonians.

Thank you!
Emma

From: [Melinda Morang](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: Support for accessory dwelling units
Date: Sunday, April 14, 2024 10:08:19 PM

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Hello Madison alders.

I understand that the council will be voting on an ordinance change on Tuesday regarding Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). ADUs are an important way to increase the density of housing without substantially changing the character of a neighborhood and provide a good variety of housing options for tenants and property owners. I fully support making it easier for people in Madison to build ADUs.

Thank you!

Melinda Morang
District 6

From: [Benjamin Noffke](#)
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: ADU Support
Date: Sunday, April 14, 2024 9:50:49 PM

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Hello alders,

I'm writing in support of item 81952 on the upcoming common council agenda. Madison has only had 32 ADUs permitted since they've been allowed, which indicates the barriers to access this option are too high for many property owners. Removing the owner-occupier requirement makes it much easier to secure lending, opening the option for many more people.

I support efforts that enable incremental housing. ADUs are on way to introduce density to a neighborhood in an organic fashion.

Thanks for your consideration,
Ben Noffke

From: bnovinska@protonmail.com
To: [All Alders](#)
Subject: Support More Housing in Madison (Agenda Item 81952)
Date: Monday, April 15, 2024 9:22:55 AM

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Hello,

I hope this email finds you well.

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the proposed ordinance change aimed at making it easier to build Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) within our city limits.

ADUs present a fantastic opportunity to address housing shortages, promote multigenerational living arrangements, and foster community inclusivity. By streamlining the process for ADU construction, we can unlock numerous benefits for our city and its residents.

First and foremost, easing restrictions on ADUs will help alleviate the pressing issue of housing affordability. As housing costs continue to rise, many members of our community struggle to find suitable living arrangements within their budget. ADUs offer a practical solution by providing additional housing options without the need for large-scale development projects. This can be particularly beneficial for young professionals, seniors looking to downsize, or individuals with limited incomes.

Moreover, ADUs have the potential to promote intergenerational living arrangements, allowing families to stay connected while maintaining independence and privacy. For instance, elderly parents can reside in a separate ADU while remaining close to their children and grandchildren, fostering a sense of familial support and cohesion. Additionally, ADUs can serve as a source of supplemental income for homeowners, helping them offset mortgage costs or save for future expenses.

Furthermore, the promotion of ADUs aligns with our city's goals of sustainable urban development and responsible land use. By utilizing existing residential properties more efficiently, we can minimize urban sprawl, preserve green spaces, and reduce the environmental footprint associated with new construction. Additionally, ADUs encourage the use of public transportation and promote walkable neighborhoods, contributing to a more sustainable and livable cityscape.

In conclusion, I urge the City Council to wholeheartedly support the proposed ordinance change facilitating the construction of ADUs. By doing so, we can take significant strides towards addressing housing affordability, promoting intergenerational living, and advancing sustainable urban development. Thank you for considering my input on this crucial matter.

Best regards,

Briant Novinska-Lois
Urban & Regional Planner

1432 Williamson Street #1, Madison, WI, 53703