

BACKYARD COTTAGE LUNCH & LEARN

Department of Planning & Development (DPD)
Report Summary

April 23, 2015

Program History – Seattle

ADU = Accessory Dwelling Unit

DADU = Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit aka “Backyard Cottage”

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- ❑ 1994 ADUs allowed citywide
- ❑ 2006 DADU demonstration ordinance (Southeast Seattle)
- ❑ 2010 DADUs allowed citywide
- ❑ Now:
 - ❑ Council Resolution 31547
ADU/DADUs and Density by Design
 - ❑ Mayor’s Housing
Affordability & Livability
Agenda



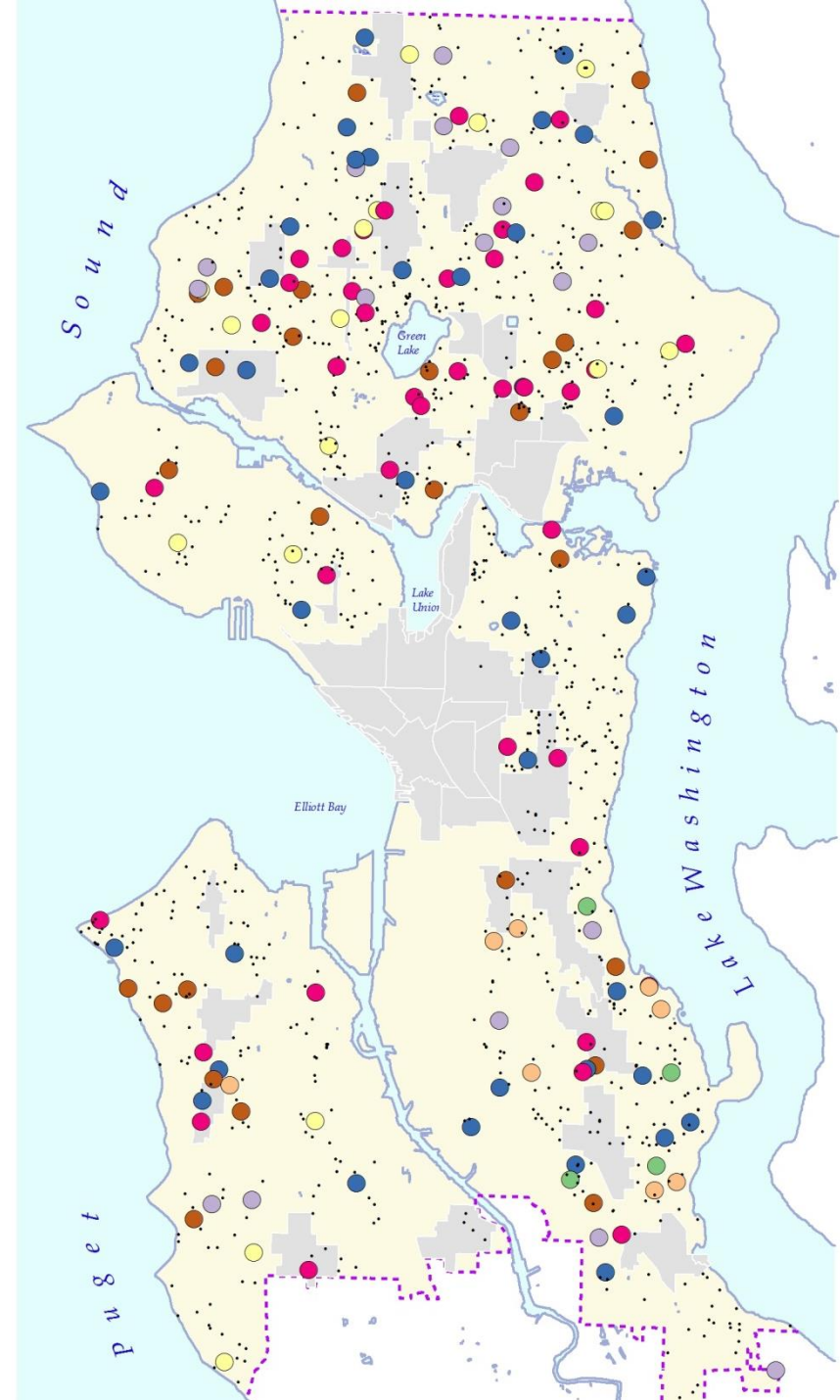
Backyard Cottage in

Production

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- ~1,200 ADUs since 1994
(small black dots)
- 159 DADUs with final permits
(through 12/14)
 - ▣ About 200 total including the pipeline

Year	Number of DADUs
2007	4
2008	6
2009	8
2010	17
2011	27
2012	40
2013	39
2014	18
Total	159



DADU Data

2012 – 2014 reporting period

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- Average DADU size: 632 sf
- Range of DADU sizes: 138 – 800 sf
- Average lot size: 6,770 sf
- Average structure height: 18 ¼ ft
- Parking waivers requested: 1
- With alley access: 42%
- Structure conversion or over garage: 34%
- Average construction cost: \$55,000
- Average building permit cost: \$1,950
 - 3.5% of construction cost.
- General permit timeline: 1 day – 3 mo.



Backyard Cottage near Bitter Lake

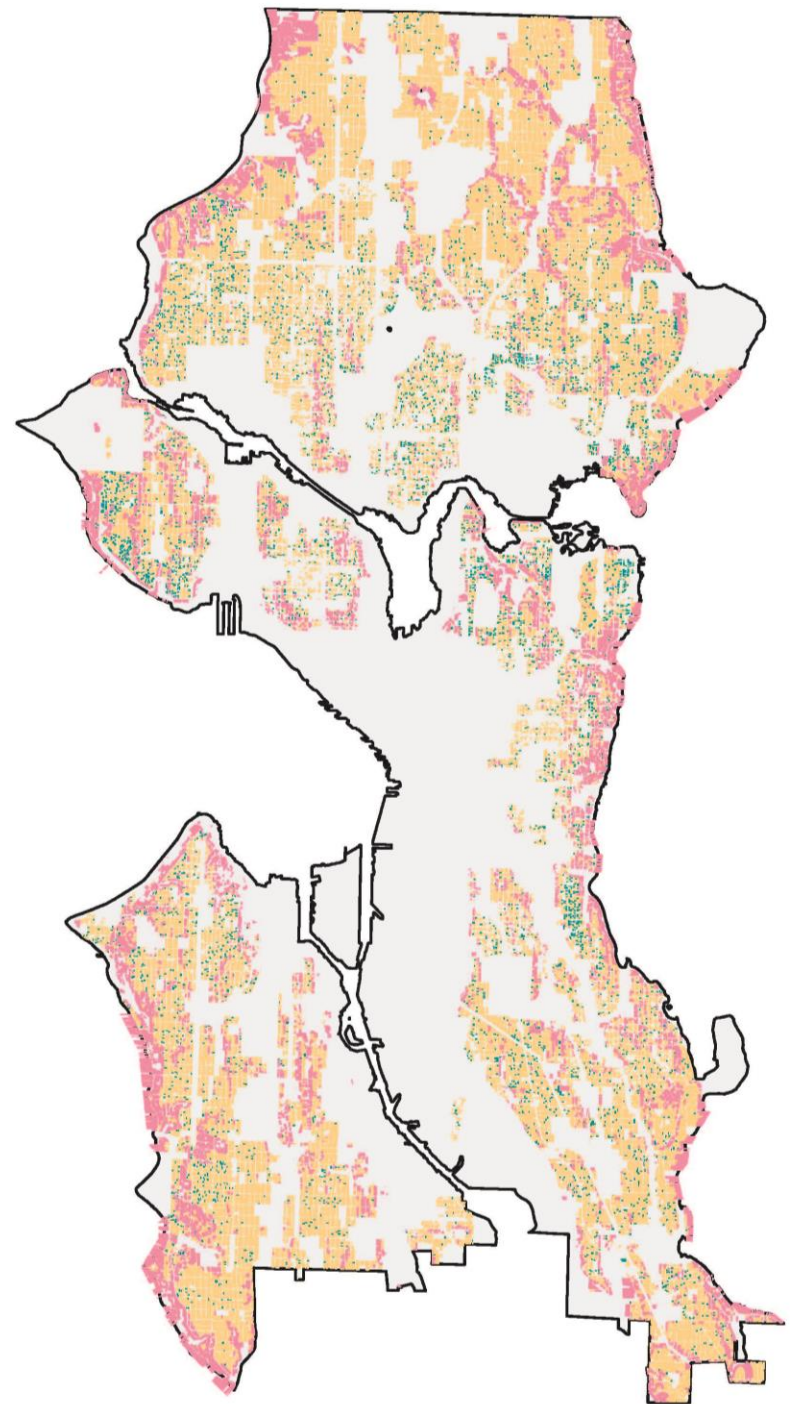
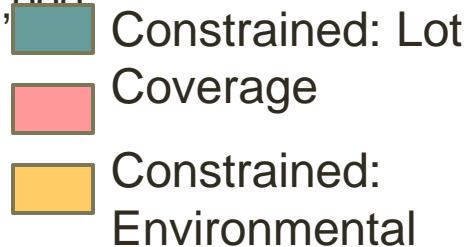
Scale of the Opportunity

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- 127,312 total single family lots
- 104,463 lots > 4,000 sf (min. lot size)
- 19,584 Constrained lots: environmental
- 7,644 Constrained lots: coverage

- **78,318 Estimated DADU 'Eligible' Lots**

- ¼ of 1% with a DADU today
- An increase to 5% of eligible lots would create nearly 4,000 units



'Eligible'

Backyard Cottage Owner Survey – Cottage Use

How important was the following in your decision to build a backyard cottage?	Weighted Score	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Housing for family members or extended family members.	52	48%	29%	24%
Accommodation for occasional house guests or visitors.	50	45%	23%	32%
Additional useable space such as studio, office, or activity space.	47	43%	20%	36%
Rental income, long term lease (6 month or more).	44	38%	22%	40%
Rental income, short term lease (such as Airbnb or VRBO).	25	17%	26%	57%
Housing for live-in service provider such as childcare provider, assisted living professional, or property caretaker.	18	9%	23%	67%

Backyard Cottage Owner Survey - Barriers

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The following factor is a barrier to creating a backyard cottage...	Weighted Score	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Development regulations such as setbacks, height limits, and lot coverage limits.	37	35%	35%	14%	14%	2%
The basic cost of construction (aside from permits, and design fees).	35	29%	36%	26%	10%	0%
The requirement of an on-site parking space.	23	26%	26%	26%	19%	2%
The cost of utility connections.	21	21%	33%	23%	21%	2%
The cost, time or complexity of obtaining permits.	17	23%	23%	23%	30%	0%
The cost of design and engineering fees.	15	9%	37%	33%	21%	0%

Backyard Cottage Owner Survey - Barriers

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Continued from previous slide.

The following factor is a barrier to creating a backyard cottage...	Weighted Score	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The occupancy requirement (owner must reside in either the cottage or principal unit).	15	36%	12%	12%	33%	7%
Lack of access to financing (loans).	12	14%	29%	33%	19%	5%
Concerns about impacting a neighbor.	6	12%	24%	33%	29%	2%

Surveys were sent to all 159 owners of backyard cottages that have completed construction. 48 surveys or 37% of owners responded.

Exploring Next Steps for Seattle

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- Remove remaining code barriers
 - ▣ Parking requirement
 - ▣ Ownership requirement – could enable unit lot subdivision
 - ▣ Either / or limitation
 - ▣ Modify development standards
- Pre-approved permits and plans
 - ▣ A call to architects for great designs
- Clemency program
- Outreach and publicity to homeowners

Backyard Cottage Stories*

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“ My backyard cottage is for my Mom, who at 80 years old needs to be close but is not ready for assisted living.”

** Please note - story and cottage example are not from the same location*



Backyard Cottage
in Georgetown

Backyard Cottage Stories*

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“My neighbors really like the cottage and often stop by to say so, or ask how they might build one... One reason it worked well for me is that I already have a very small house (650sf) and adding the cottage does not overwhelm the space.”

** Please note story and cottage example are not from the same location*



Backyard Cottage
in Central District

Backyard Cottage Stories*

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“Our original intent was a glorified garage with electrical and plumbing, as a short-term place for friends to stay. The permitting process forced us to expand the project into a more traditional living space. Now that it is a full blown space (kitchen with range, washer/dryer, loft etc.) we love the rental (long-term tenant) income.”

** Please note story and cottage example are not from the same location*



Backyard Cottage Stories*

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“I was looking for two houses on one lot when I bought this house. I needed the second income as a single woman.”

** Please note story and cottage example are not from the same location*



Backyard Cottage
in Madison Park

Backyard Cottage Stories

“Hey everyone I wanted to share a quick video of our DADU being delivered on Monday. My parents are thrilled. We’re doing our part for urban density complete with solar panels, a heat pump and a rain garden eventually!”

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Pre-fabricated Backyard Cottage in Crown Hill

Thank You!

Seattle Department of Planning & Development
(DPD)

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