

Dear Ashland City Council,

I'm very much in support of the proposed Accessory Residential Unit (ARU) amendments allowing small attached residential units to be an "over the counter permit" in the various zones stated in the Council's Communication. Ashland obviously needs smaller housing units, regardless of type, to meet its current and projected demands. It's my contention the proposed ordinance will provide needed housing for individuals and small families and at the same time provide additional revenue for homeowners dealing with Ashland's ever increasing housing costs. Hopefully, the proposed amendment is so successful the Council one day considers allowing "detached" ARUs as an over the counter permit as well.

My only request to the City Council is to ask the City staff to promote the adoption of the ordinance, beyond typical noticing requirements, in order to penetrate those homeowners who currently have an illegal unit(s). There are numerous cases in Ashland where illegal rental units exist, in large part because of regulation and permit costs. Often these illegal units are in substandard and dangerous condition due to "bootlegged" structural, electrical or plumbing modifications. Thus, the proposed ordinance should be heavily advertised as an opportunity to "legalize" these units and entice homeowners to come forward and correct these deficiencies through the Ashland Building Department in order to make for safer living conditions.

Sincerely,

Mark Knox
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