



Maryland DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

Environmental Organizations Survey Closed on April 5, 2024

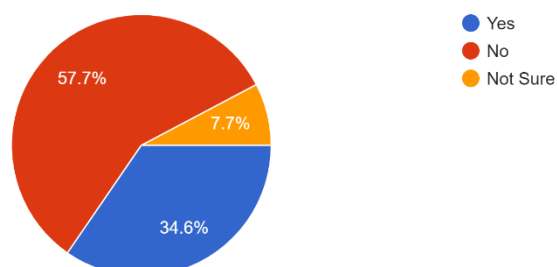
Respondent Information

1. Twenty-six respondents provided feedback on our survey.
2. The responses came from individuals that described themselves or their organization's primary environmental focus on:
 - Stormwater/Watershed Management/Water Quality
 - Land Cover/Low Impact Development
 - Land, Ecological, Agricultural Preservation, Forest Preservation
 - Sustainable Redevelopment, Design, Green Infrastructure
 - Chesapeake Bay Restoration/Climate Resiliency
 - Environmental Justice/Education
3. All respondents conduct their work in Maryland. Seven (7) of the respondents indicated that they also do work in the DMV, and PA. Two (2) respondents indicated additional work in areas beyond these states. Responses are organized below by survey question numbers.

ADU Experience

4. Nearly 33% of respondents said they had worked on a project that included an ADU. (8 responses). Nearly 62.5% of respondents said they had not worked on a project that included an ADU (15 responses). Two (2) respondents answered, Not Sure. (26 responses)

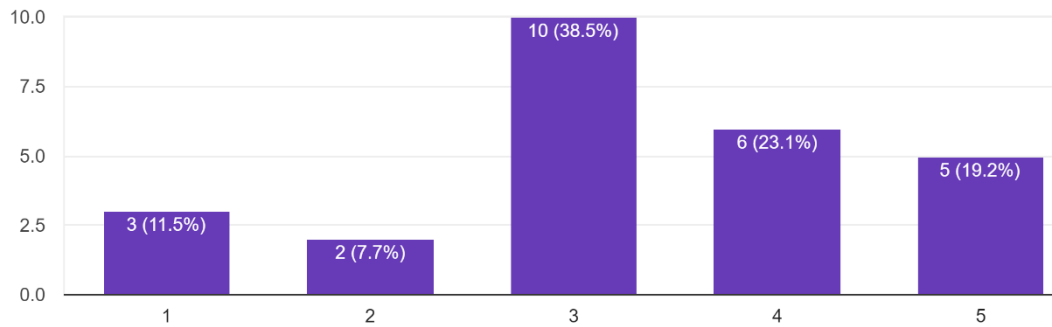
4. Has your organization worked on a project of any type that included ADUs, ADU planning, or ADU policies?
26 responses



5. Respondents rated themselves as being familiar with ADU development and construction. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being not familiar and 5 being very familiar. 81% rated themselves at three (3) or higher. 19% rated themselves as slightly familiar or not familiar, lower than three (3.) By individual rating category, 19% rated their familiarity of ADUs at the highest rating of five (5); while 23% rated their knowledge at four (4); 38% rated their knowledge at three (3); 8% rated at two (2); and 11% rated at one (1). (26 responses)

5. How would you rate your organization's familiarity with ADU development and associated environmental impacts?

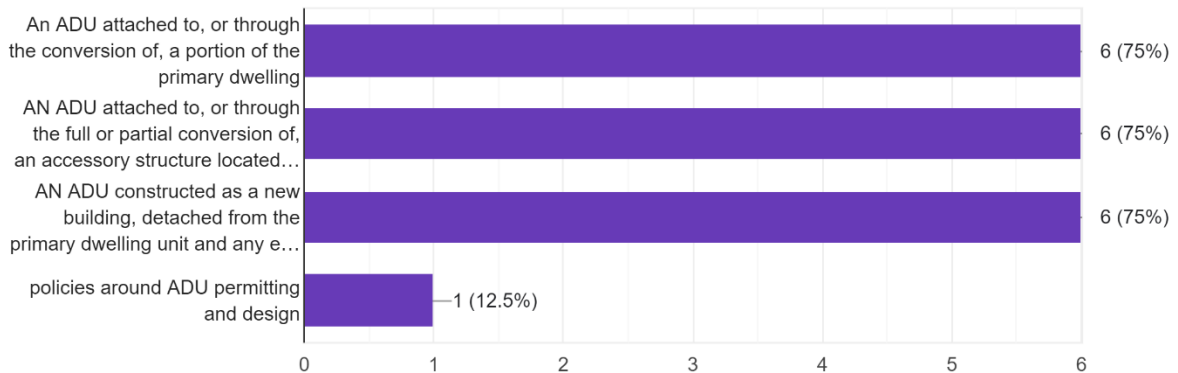
26 responses



6. The eight (8) respondents who answered this question indicated they had worked on a variety of ADU types, as reflected below:

6. If you answered yes to question 4, which type(s) of ADUs were involved? Please select all that apply.

8 responses



In summary, six of the eight respondents said they had experience with ADUs that were detached from the primary residential structure or as an addition to an existing residential structure. That was followed by one (1) response with ADU policy, and one (1) response as a construction of a new detached ADU.

ADU Insight and Analysis

7. When asked in which ways do ADUs impact the environment or neighborhood livability, the top six (6) ranked responses were:

- Supports Intergenerational Housing (92%)
- Increases Housing Affordability (65%)
- Diversifies Neighborhood Demographics (61%)
- Increases Impervious Surfaces (53%)
- Reduces Carbon Footprint (46%)
- Strain the transportation system/parking availability (26%)
- Increase housing energy efficiency values (26%)

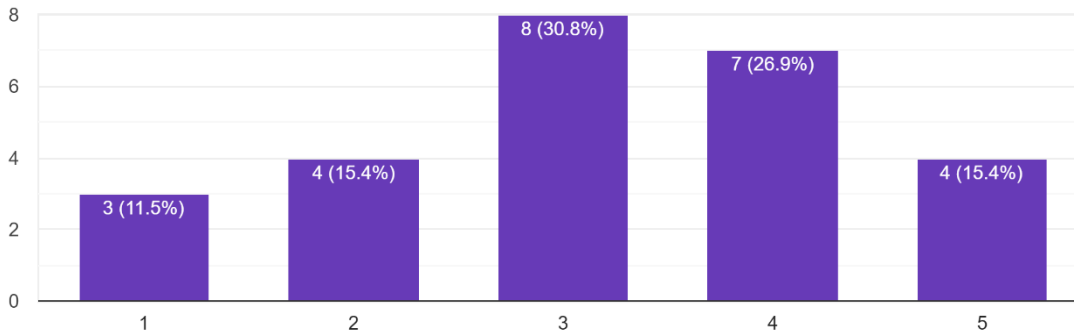
8. All twenty-six respondents provided written responses on other impacts on the environment and neighborhood livability. Here is a sampling of the responses.

- Reduces urban sprawl and decreases pressure to develop undeveloped lands
- Allows people to live closer to work and potentially retain young talent
- ADU mostly use existing structures, but new residential structures should use International Green Building Standards
- Helps address significant housing shortage
- Potential incomes for primary landowner or small farmer

9. On a one (1) lowest to five (5) highest scale of the impact of ADUs on environmental issues and neighborhood livability, about 30% of the respondents rated the impact as a three (3). 41% a four (4) and five (5), and 25% as a one (1) or (2).

9. How would you rate the impact of ADUs on environmental issues and neighborhood livability in the regions/communities in which you work?

26 responses



10. When asked to identify the top five (5) primary barriers, related to environmental issues or neighborhood livability, to constructing ADUs, the top six (6) answers were: (26 respondents)

- Local neighborhood opposition (57%)
- Residential density limitations (57%)
- Lot coverage or open space (46%)
- Septic reserve areas or private wells (42%)
- Stormwater management requirements (26%)
- Drinking water and sewer capacity (19%)

11. When asked to list the top three (3) best ways to permit or design ADUs or ADU lots to minimize negative environmental and neighborhood livability impacts, the top six (6) answers are as follows: (26 respondents)

- Require stormwater and quantity/quality control for additional impervious area (69%)
- Only permit ADUs on properties served by public water and sewer (50%)
- If attached or detached ADUs are permitted, require them to be small (42%)
- Incentivize green features, such as green roofs (34%)
- Limit lot coverage to that permitted in the zoning district for primary structures (26%)
- Require energy efficiency above that required by building code (19%)
- Only permit internal ADUs that do not expand the lot's building footprint (19%)

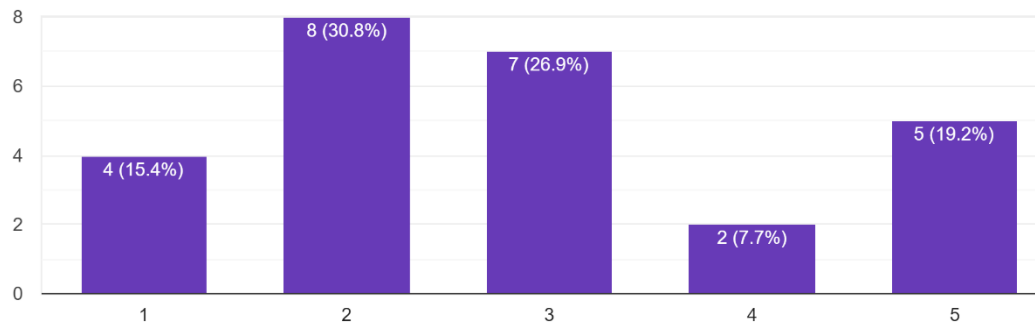
12. When asked to provide examples of other methods to minimize negative environmental and neighborhood livability impacts, there were sixteen (16) responses. Here is a sampling of the responses.

- ADUs should be less than 800 sq ft, use same access as primary dwelling, be located within the same area of lot disturbance (within 100 feet of primary dwelling)
- Only allow on owner-occupied property
- Eliminate ability for ADUs to be used as short-term rentals
- Charged separately for trash and storm water services
- Do not permit in wetland, stream buffer, forested area or Critical Area

13. This question asked respondents to compare housing market demand and the impact of state and local policy on the proliferation of ADUs. (26 respondents)

13. In comparison to housing market pressures and demand, how would you rate the impact of state and local environmental policy and regulation on the proliferation of ADUs?

26 responses



14. This question asked respondents to describe the impacts that state and local environmental legislation have on the proliferation of ADUs. A sample of responses summarized below. (14 responses)

- Critical Areas limit density but allow ADUs in RCAs notwithstanding density limitations
- Reduces suburban sprawl and commute distances by car
- Conservation and environmental protections in no way limit needed housing
- Build ADUs in backyards, do not cut trees, address stormwater
- Zoning restricts development, not environmental regulations
- Towns are afraid to allow them due to local opposition
- Critical Areas and rural areas are already struggling with failing septic tanks and aging shallow wells

ADU Accommodations

15. Respondents were asked to rank environmental and neighborhood livability concerns ADU policy, regulatory or permitting requirements should hold paramount. Seven (7) topics ranked higher than 50%. The top eight (8) responses are listed below. (26 responses)

- Stormwater management (76%)
- Septic requirements (61%)
- Maryland Critical Areas (57%) tied
- Air quality (57%) tied
- Steep slopes (53%)
- Impervious cover (50%) tied
- Open space preservation and requirements (50%) tied
- Drinking water and sewer connection (46%)

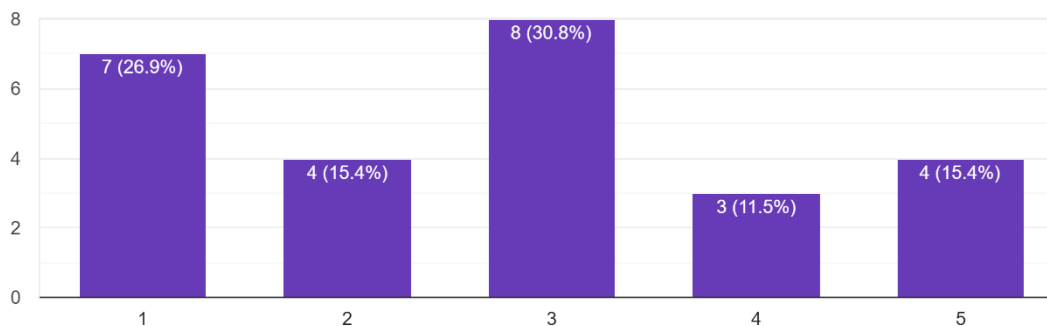
16. Respondents were asked to provide examples of any other environmental or neighborhood livability concerns not listed in Question 14. There were eight (8) responses, summarized below.:

- Building ADUs do not come at the cost of the environment
- Public safety/access for emergency vehicles is non-negotiable
- Only permit where they do not increase density, owner-occupied, non-conveyed
- Single-family sprawl has been incentivized, destroying forests and habitat
- There should be rent controls for affordability and allowed to be subdivided for sale
- Do not build in the floodplain
- ADUs should not have to meet higher building standards than single-family homes
- Ensure adequate park facilities and amenities for higher neighborhood density

17. Respondents were asked to rank whether state and local ADU policy regulations should prioritize environmental and neighborhood livability concerns (1), balance ADU construction and environmental and neighborhood livability concerns, or (5), prioritize ADU construction. Approximately 30% responded with three (3), a balanced ADU construction and environmental livability concerns. 42% ranked a priority towards environmental and neighborhood livability concerns. 25% ranked a priority towards ADU construction. (26 respondents)

17. Starting from a position that both environmental preservation and addressing the housing crisis are important and compatible goals, should state an...concerns (3), or prioritize ADU construction (5)?

26 responses



18. Respondents were asked to describe any other state or local policies or regulations that should be changed to support ADU construction and development. There were thirteen responses, summarized below:

- Allow ADUs by right in incorporated areas with residential zoning
- ADUs should be added in an environmentally sensitive way to make neighborhoods more livable
- Strict sewer relation, address parking and owner-occupancy, no short-term
- Eliminate neighborhood covenants
- Restrict use of natural gas or propane. Use all electric
- The state should ensure a smooth local process for ADU permitting

19. Six respondents provided any other practical issues about ADU impacts on neighborhood livability. There were thirteen responses, summarized below:

- The state should offer tax abatements to households that use low flow appliances or greywater to help offset impacts to sewer systems
- Incentives for energy efficiency design
- The environmental costs with not making it easier to build ADUs
- Permit ADUs for immediate family members in Priority Preservation Areas

20. Eleven responded provided the following summary input on any additional comments for the ADU Task Force.

- Our zoning is too restrictive and stems from a history of racism and segregation. ADUs should be permitted as well as commercial in residential neighborhoods to allow more mixed-use walkable communities that are affordable and livable. This needs to be mandated by the state. Our towns and counties have had decades and generations to do the right thing and they have proven they are not capable due to pressure from wealthier homeowners who do not want to see their neighborhoods change out of fear of losing property value and fear of minorities and lower-income families moving into their neighborhoods. Our environment has suffered from the current land use policies that do not allow ADUs. It will benefit from them
- Critical Area staff are happy to discuss.
- The environmental costs of not making it easier to build in close-in places!!!!
- How can we continue to participate. Rural areas need separate consideration.
- The impacts of conversion of already built space to an ADU is very different than new construction, particularly a detached ADU. I therefore had trouble answering some of the questions because of the significant difference in impacts between these two types of ADUs.
- I would be very happy to advise on the intersection of expanding ADUs and land preservation/growth management. In addition to serving as Executive Director of Harford Land Trust I am the Chair of Harford County's Planning Advisory Board.
- Maryland must make it easier, cheaper & faster to build on previously developed areas. All of the state's affordable housing needs can be met on existing building footprints with lots of room to spare. Infrastructure already exists in most of these places and access to necessary services is closer, cheaper & more accessible to residents. All this makes previously developed communities more comprehensively affordable, even if the 'sticker price' & property taxes are a few \$ grand higher. Questions in this survey lead one to believe that you are more focused on exurban or 'virgin' construction for ADUs and that is entirely counterintuitive to the realities of truly affordable housing development. Developers have skewed priorities that align more closely with their own profit maximization than meeting the public need for more AH, don't buy into their false-choice argument of housing at the expense of environment.
- Eliminate neighborhood covenants like those in Rock Creek Hills that forbid accessory dwelling units.
- Other infrastructure that comes with increased housing, transportation, shops, schools, community service access, access to parks and open space

- We need open space agricultural land natural habitat above all
- Parking, NIMBYs, School overcrowding
- Medium sized and mature trees should not be sacrificed for ADUs. Communities should be evaluated and certified for tree canopy, flood risk, stormwater runoff and access to public transportation before being permitted to have more than a minimal number of ADUs. Priority should go to retrofitting and adding to existing structures for ADUs.
- We should not permit ownership of residential properties by investors/companies/speculators. Housing should belong to families; it should not be a business.
- Audubon Mid-Atlantic supports the appropriate siting and development of ADUs in Maryland, and the needed policy changes to accelerate ADU development. ADUs will help the state address housing affordability, habitat conservation and our ambitious climate goals - all while leading to an improved quality of life for Maryland Communities.