



# COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

## Legislation Text

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**To:** Board of Supervisors

**From:** Planning and Building Department

**Agenda Section:** Departmental

**SUBJECT:**

Report on Launch of the Humboldt Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) website: HumboldtADU.org  
(Case # PLN-2021-17314)

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

The Board of Supervisors:

1. Accept the report on the launch of the HumboldtADU.org website

**SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

State-Small Grants (514060), Senate Bill (SB) 2 Planning Grant

**DISCUSSION:**

This is an informational report to the Board of Supervisors regarding a new website (HumboldtADU.org) recently launched by the Planning and Building Department funded with SB 9 grants to assist the public in developing Accessory Dwelling Units. On Aug. 20, 2019, the Board of Supervisors approved submittal of an application to the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The county received an award in the amount of \$310,000 from HCD. One of the projects identified in the application was a new dedicated and interactive website. The website provides a comprehensive and accessible view of the ADU construction process from earliest design development, assembling a team and acquiring permits, all the way through finding tenants. The website explains the planning and building process, letting the public know what to expect at every stage of the process. The website features tools and resources to help prospective builders to define their project with the best available information. This includes exercises that are specific to the regulatory landscape of Humboldt County. The site also hosts a downloadable guidebook and a comprehensive guide to building an ADU. The website and the guidebook feature three community profiles, spotlighting people who have built ADUs in Humboldt County, creating housing for an aging parent, for a child with special needs, and for local workforce.

The website hosts an ADU calculator which was launched in coordination with the cities of Eureka, Arcata, Ferndale, Blue Lake and Trinidad. The tool provides landowners with the ability to easily grasp

important variables that determine the financial viability of a project. Members of the public can toggle many variables including: 1) what town or community the ADU would be in, 2) new construction versus conversion of existing space, 3) square footage, 4) number of bedrooms, and many other variables. The calculator takes these inputs and then provides a rough estimate of total costs, monthly costs, and monthly rents. Soon the website will feature a Geographic Information System (GIS) tool that lets a landowner know instantly whether their ADU construction project requires a planning permit or only a building permit. The site will also direct community members to a library of pre-approved ADU plans, available to be used by anybody free of charge.

On April 13, 2022, the Planning and Building Department hosted a ADU workshop on Zoom, highlighting the resources of the HumboldtADU.org website. The workshop was attended by 94 members of the community. The recording of the workshop was uploaded onto the County of Humboldt's Youtube channel and has been viewed 80 times. The Planning and Building Department recently printed 200 copies of the guidebook which have been distributed between the Planning and Building office, and in several of the local library branches.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The SB 2 Planning Grant provided \$81,250 for the ADU website and related materials which was included in the Advance Planning budget for FY 2021-22 (Budget Unit 1100-282-401). Consultant costs supporting this program totaled \$60,660, and staff costs totaled \$20,590.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

This action supports your Board's Strategic Framework by fostering transparent, accessible, welcoming and user friendly services.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

CA Department of Housing and Community Development

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Informational only, no action required

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1 Variety of Screenshots of HumboldtADU.org Attachment 2 Humboldt ADU Guidebook

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: 19-80

Meeting of: August 20, 2019