Exploring Community Attitudes Towards Secondary Dwelling Units In Eugene's University Area Neighborhood

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Abstract

Eugene's vibrant neighborhoods are a main contributor to the attractiveness of this city; however, many residents around the University of Oregon feel that the historic charm of their neighborhoods are being threatened by increased density in the form of secondary dwelling units (SDUs), specifically because of student renters. Through a series of interviews, this project seeks to form a comprehensive understanding of the quality of life issues related to increased density in the form of SDUs around the university. After conducting twenty interviews, it is evident that increased density in the form of SDUs does create quality of life issues as a direct result of the student population concentrated in these neighborhoods. While many residents are not opposed to density per se, they are opposed to the additional noise, privacy, and congestion issues in their own backyards, as well as changes to their neighborhood character as a result of SDUs. This report paints a holistic picture of the quality of life issues related to SDUs, and their implications for Eugene's most historic neighborhoods.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Through a series of interviews, it became apparent that there are two important issues that are at odds with one another around the University of Oregon. The first, density in the form of secondary dwelling units (SDUs) is good because it promotes a walkable environment, it reduces the need to expand the urban growth boundary, and it maximizes capacity of the existing infrastructure and land. Density is good at ALL costs.

The second, density, particularly in the form of SDUs is good, but it's more of a NIMBY (not in my backyard) scenario. With an increased number of SDUs, particularly when rented out by students, come quality of life issues like noise, congestion, privacy, and an overall decline of neighborhood stability, which can be attributed to absentee landlords. This report explores the underlying issues by including multiple perspectives to fully understand the issues that act as barriers to an increased production of SDUs.

Brief Understanding of Secondary Dwelling Units

Secondary dwelling units (SDUs), more commonly known elsewhere as accessory dwelling units (ADUs), granny flats, in-law units, or backyard cottages are an attached or detached form of supplemental housing. A key component of SDUs is that they are required to have a separate entrance from the primary dwelling. This type of housing is generally ideal for renters, or family members who want to live nearby, but not in the same house.

In addition, SDUs can provide supplemental income for homeowners, and usually, a more affordable housing option for renters. Briefly, the issues for and against SDUs revolve around increased density, providing flexible housing options, maintaining the character of the neighborhood, and an environmental outlook. These themes, which emerged from the interviews, along with others found in the current literature will be discussed in greater depth in the subsequent chapters.

As a result of the popularity of SDUs, cities across the country are being forced to more closely examine their ordinances relating to SDUs. While some cities are revisiting these ordinances to limit the number of SDUs for a variety of reasons, the majority of cities are looking for ways to make it easier to develop them. It will become evident throughout Chapter 2 that there are many benefits to SDUs, including filling an affordable housing gap and lessening the environmental footprint. Additionally, as cities work to ease restrictions like parking, or make the administrative process easier to follow, they will also need to be weary of quality of life issues for existing residents, and how these concerns will play a role in shaping new policies around SDUs in their community.

Why Eugene's University Area Neighborhood?

There is little-to-no research that tackles the issue of secondary dwelling units (SDUs) as they relate to neighborhoods surrounding universities.

This project examines the Amazon, Fairmount, and South University neighborhoods, which, for the purposes of this report will be referred to as the University Area Neighborhood, rather than listing out all three neighborhoods each time (see Appendix A). These neighborhoods are dominated by single-family residential housing and primarily serve families, but also provide a variety of rental options to students whether it be in the form of SDUs or single family dwelling rentals.

Demand for housing is high in these neighborhoods due to proximity to the University of Oregon and downtown Eugene. The three neighborhoods, Amazon, Fairmount, and South University, are an ideal location for those seeking to live somewhere central. As demand for housing goes up, homeowners may consider supplementing their income through rental housing. This could take the form of rental houses, and more specifically, SDUs, as their small size makes them ideal for lots with extra space in the backyard, or dwellings with a large attic or basement.

Not every resident of the neighborhood supports the increased density that many favor. With increased density comes quality of life issues around noise, privacy, congestion, and a changed neighborhood compatibility and character that compromise the traits that draw residents to these three neighborhoods in the first place. The Amazon, Fairmount, and South University neighborhoods in particular are all too familiar with the quality of life issues mentioned above caused by increased density through SDUs. These three neighborhoods serve as exemplary case studies and a basis to form a complete picture around the issues of this type of housing because they recognize that SDUs have changed their neighborhoods, and have worked hard to resist changes.

In particular, these neighborhoods have fought for more strict regulations on SDU development, in the form of interim protection measures. These measure are meant to mitigate alterations in the neighborhood character and are developed with more input from the neighborhood associations themselves.

Additionally, Eugene's University Area Neighborhood was chosen as the study area because of the qualitative nature of this research project. As the goal for the project was to complete 20 interviews with relevant stakeholders, this process was best completed in person rather than over the phone. In-person interviews would not be possible in any other location due to time and financial constraints.

As this is an exploratory research project, understanding all of the barriers, benefits, and drawbacks to SDUs are key in generating a complete understanding of this form of housing. When exploring which neighborhoods would likely have the highest quality of

life concerns around SDUs, the University Area Neighborhood was chosen for its tie with students and student housing. Other neighborhoods in Eugene, such as the Whiteaker, are more likely to support SDUs and are far enough away from campus that less university students venture to that neighborhood for housing. The University Area Neighborhood is a prime location for building an understanding of all of the major concerns around SDUs, whereas other neighborhoods might not face as many of the same issues. Furthermore, many feel that the character and charm that make these neighborhoods are being threatened by an increase of SDUs rented by students. This project explores if this is the case and why.

Research Questions

This research project seeks to answer the following questions:

What are the social barriers that exist and impede density in the form of secondary dwelling units in Eugene, Oregon's University Area Neighborhood?

1. What is it about Eugene's regulations that act as barriers to an increase in secondary dwelling units In Eugene's University Area Neighborhood?

2. What is the link between social aspects of the University Area Neighborhood and the feasibility for increased secondary dwelling unit development?

3. To what extent are the barriers to secondary dwelling unit development in the University Area Neighborhood linked to the presence of the University of Oregon and the student population?

This research project takes a qualitative approach to answer the above questions. Twenty interviews were scheduled and the interviewees consisted of planners, policy makers, local neighborhood leaders, secondary dwelling unit owners, occupants, and neighbors, architects, and developers.

Interviews were semi-structured and questions were tailored for each interviewee. Upon completion of the interviews, key themes were synthesized and analyzed in order to understand how they addressed the above research questions.

Overview of Process
This research project was an iterative process. Figure 1 displays the general steps taken to complete this project. It is important to note that revisiting the research question and synthesizing key themes were completed after each interview (rather than only one time), but the general process remains the same.

Figure 1. Overview of Process


```
                    Conduct
                   Literature
                     Review

   Synthesize                      Develop
   Key Themes                     Research
                                  Question and
                                  Sub
                                  Questions


   Conduct 20                     Identify
   Interviews                     Interviewees

                    Contact
                   Interviewees
                   and Develop
                    Research
                    Questions
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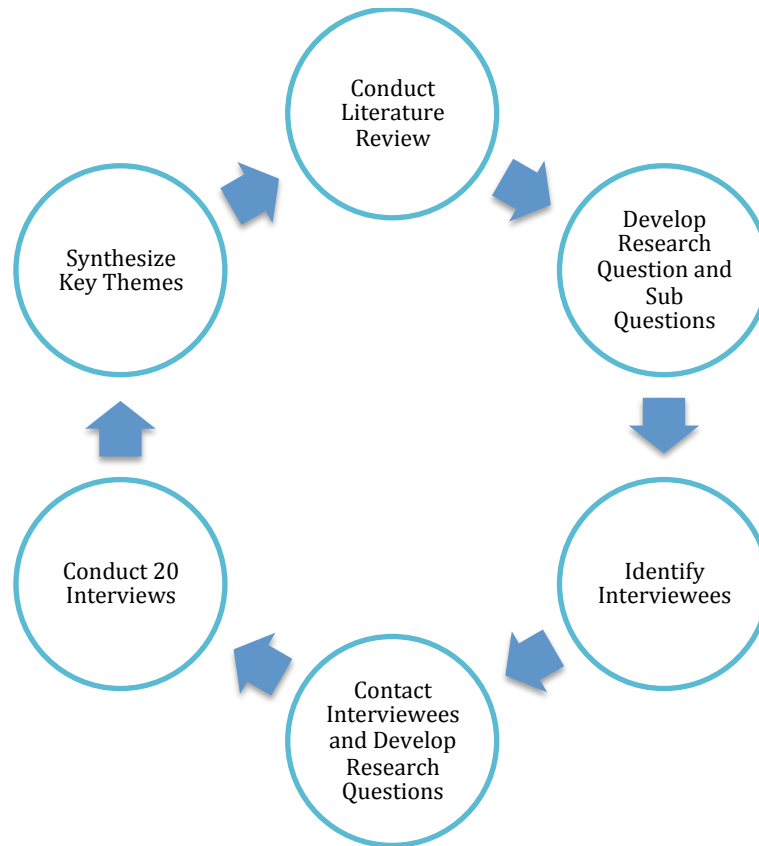
Goals of this project

This project is an exploratory research project. Since there is little research about SDUs and even less on SDUs near universities, this project seeks to achieve the goals listed below in order to develop a complete picture of SDUs around Eugene's University Area Neighborhood.

1. Fill gaps in current literature by researching secondary dwelling units from a qualitative perspective.
2. Understand the underlying social barriers related to secondary dwelling units around universities.
3. Explore to what extent students contribute to the desire to have more or less secondary dwelling units around the University of Oregon.
4. Create a complete picture of barriers, benefits, and drawbacks regarding secondary dwelling units in Eugene's University Area Neighborhood.
5. Develop an understanding as to how the built environment interacts with the University Area Neighborhood.

Organization of this report

Chapter 2 of this report will define secondary dwelling units, including a more detailed understanding of what they are, their uses, and potential benefits and drawbacks. An overview of current literature surrounding secondary dwelling units will be presented as well as a more detailed rationale for studying Eugene's University Neighborhood.

Chapter 3 provides an understanding of the methods used in this project. This section will include information about how interviewees were contacted, the structure of interviews, the interview questions, and how the results were synthesized and analyzed.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the interviews. This section includes an understanding of the key themes that became evident through the interview process. In addition, the answers to the main research question and three sub-questions will be discussed in Chapter 4.

Chapter 5 discusses the implications of the findings. Specifically, an understanding of the importance of this project as it relates to Eugene and other university neighborhoods around the country will become evident in the discussion of the implications. Recommendations based on the implications will also be provided in this chapter.

Chapter 6 provides concluding remarks that reiterate how this project answers the main research question. An understanding of future research based on the results and key takeaways for cities will also be incorporated into this chapter.

Chapter 2: Background

This chapter presents a more detailed understanding of secondary dwelling units (SDUs). Section 1 will provide an overview of current literature surrounding this type of housing. In addition, the benefits, drawbacks, and controversial issues that arise out of increased SDUs will be explored in more depth. Section 2 will cover the background related to the context of Eugene's University Area Neighborhood and its relationship with SDUs. Section 3 discusses the need for this project and provides a rationale of the gaps in the research that this project will fill.

Section 1: Secondary Dwelling Unit Background

Secondary dwelling units (SDUs) also known as accessory dwelling units (ADUs), granny flats, in-law units, or backyard cottages are an attached or detached form of supplemental housing. While on one lot, SDUs are a separate dwelling, meaning they have to have a separate entrance than the primary dwelling, but can be an attic, basement, or any attached or detached structure anywhere from 300-1,000 square feet in size (Macht, 2015). While considered a separate dwelling, in most places, the owner of the property must live on-site whether

Source: Menard, 2014

in the primary dwelling or the SDU. The SDU can be rented, but cannot be sold separately from the primary dwelling (these are the rules, but there are exceptions).

Many homeowners choose to build this type of housing to use the space on their property efficiently and rent out the extra dwelling as a way to supplement monthly income. In addition, SDUs might be built to allow one's parents to move close to their family while still maintaining a sense of independence (Palmeri, 2014). This report will not focus on the aging in place movement, but SDUs can play a pivotal role in this movement where people seek to age in the same communities in which they have spent the majority of their lives. If built, SDUs allow one to remain in the communities they consider home, without having to maintain all of the space a traditional dwelling might offer. Other times, a family might build an SDU as a guesthouse or for children moving back home after college (Brown, 2015).

The majority of the research related to the topic of SDUs focuses on the pros and cons of infill development, and how SDUs play a role in infill. It is important to note that many cities have different policies and regulations in regards to SDUs, though many of the same problems described in current research arise despite the variety of regulations in place.

Most of the research published around SDUs has come out of Portland and the Bay Area. While the articles provide important insight into the feasibility of SDUs, many of the issues facing places like the Bay Area or Portland might not be generalizable to jurisdictions with a smaller population. In addition, none of the articles provide insight into the direct link between SDUs and areas surrounding a university. This is important to research because many residents around the University of Oregon are unhappy with the SDUs in their neighborhood. Through interviews, it became evident that there are quality of life issues created by students in particular, that threaten the overall stability of the University Area Neighborhood. This research focuses on understanding what these issues are in order to make future changes that reflect the neighborhood values.

The research that has come out of the Bay Area focuses on the feasibility of SDUs, particularly in the context of SB 375, The Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (Chapple, Dentel-Post, Nemirow, & Wegmann, 2011). SB 375 puts pressure on communities to support affordable housing. In addition, the authors express a need for infill and affordable housing as the Bay Area is expected to grow by 2 million new residents by 2035. SDUs are relevant as a way to address this need in the Bay Area because they utilize existing land for housing, rather than expanding onto undeveloped land. Not only can SDUs provide additional housing on unused space on single-family residential lots, but also they have the potential to provide more affordable housing.

There are multiple opinions as to whether or not SDUs provide affordable housing or just cheaper housing than the alternatives. In Santa Cruz, the median home value is $746,000, and only 6.9% of the residents could easily afford this price (U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2008, p. 3). In response, the City of Santa Cruz created a program that focused on SDUs as a way of providing affordable housing.

When the city relaxed restrictions for SDUs and examined the number of lots that could include one, there were over 18,000 opportunities for SDUs to be built (City of Santa Cruz, 2015). That's not to say that 18,000 SDUs would be built, or built specifically for affordable housing, but it did present a tremendous opportunity for Santa Cruz to address affordable housing while working in the constraints of its developable land. The SDU program that Santa Cruz created focuses on removing parking restrictions; community outreach; the creation of a design and prototype manual with pre-approved models; technical assistance in the form of consultations and financial assistance such as low interest loans (David, 2004; Stege, 2009; U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2008).

While SDUs might provide more affordable options to renters, they are still costly to build. In Portland, the average construction cost per SDU was $78,760 (Palmeri, 2014, p.2). In addition, system development charges (SDCs) can be as high as $15,000, creating a barrier for many people. In Portland, the SDCs are currently waived to incentivize the construction of more SDUs (Macht, 2015).

In her research, Chapple examines the feasibility of SDUs in the Bay Area through several research projects, each one discussing a background and why understanding the feasibility of SDUs is important, methods, and then findings, recommendations and implications.

Throughout the various research projects that Chapple et al. have completed, the methods are primarily quantitative. Some of these quantitative methods include analyzing parcels using GIS, examining parcel sizes on Google Earth, visiting parcels to record observations, looking at rental data, examining parcels using the assessor's database, and a survey of homeowners and car share data. Brief interviews with city staff are also included as part of the research (Chapple, Dentel-Post, Nemirow, & Wegmann, 2011; Chapple & Nemirow, 2012; Chapple, Nemirow, Wegmann, 2012).

Benefits of SDUs

After conducting research and examining the results based on the above methods, it became clear from Chapple's research and other articles related to infill, that there were several benefits involved if local governments facilitated increased SDU development.

First, in regards to SDUs providing **affordable housing**, "it would be very beneficial indeed if a local program to produce more secondary units could help liberate scarce (and dwindling) public sector housing dollars to serve the households with housing needs that can only be met by such developments" (Chapple, Nemirow, and Wegmann, 2012, p. 19).

Affordability can mean two different things, and the meaning is often unclear when it comes to relating housing to SDUs. Affordability can mean that a family or individual spends less than 30% of their income on housing (therefore, they are not cost-burdened), or affordability could refer to the fact that SDUs are generally less expensive to rent than other, larger options, like a single family home. The second notion of affordability gets at the fact that since SDUs are smaller than a typical dwelling, they will most likely be cheaper in relation to paying a mortgage or rent (Palmeri, 2014).

Second, SDUs offer "**hidden density**". Basically, SDUs that are designed well and to human scale, can blend in with the character of a neighborhood. The thought behind "hidden density" is that if SDUs don't draw attention to themselves, then neighbors are

less likely to object to them as a form of housing. In other words, SDUs are less likely to be noticed and can provide additional density without a high-rise apartment building being placed in a neighborhood. Until a neighborhood issue arises, SDUs often go unnoticed in a neighborhood (Chapple, Dentel-Post, Nemirow, & Wegmann, 2011; Chapple, Nemirow, Wegmann, 2012).

Third, SDUs may provide a way for the older population to **age in place**. As people retire, the thought of paying for such a large dwelling might seem unattractive or too costly. If a person owns an SDU, the SDU or primary dwelling can be rented out for supplemental income, and provide housing options to allow for one to age in the community in which they are a part of. As people age, they've expressed a desire to be part of their same community. SDUs are increasing in production and more of the retired aged population is thought to be likely move into one as this movement gains momentum (Brown, 2015 & Palmeri, 2014).

Lastly, SDUs can have a **positive environmental benefit**. "As houses have grown, evidence has accumulated that size is likely the single largest factor in the environmental effect of a dwelling, in terms of both energy and materials" (Palmeri, 2014, p.14). In other words, SDUs consume considerably less energy than a typical single family dwelling purely because of their size.

While SDUs do not have to be built with energy efficient appliances and strategies, many are being built this way. This means that each dwelling has the potential to contribute to an even smaller environmental footprint.

If, as Chapple's research discusses, SDUs are built within a half mile of public transportation and parking restrictions are relaxed, then the environmental footprint for each SDU might be lowered significantly, particularly if those in SDUs have the option to walk, bike, take public transportation, or use car share.

Similarly, SDUs as infill can provide environmental benefits. While not specific to SDUs, infill housing reduces "development pressure" on farmland, open space, and vulnerable ecosystems like wetlands. Infill development utilizes existing land and infrastructure in an effort to build more efficiently (Landis, Hood, Li, Rogers, & Warren, 2010).

In states such as Oregon, where each jurisdiction must plan to accommodate 20 years of growth, including housing, inside an urban growth boundary (UGB), maximizing the capacity of existing land within the UGB can occur in part, with infill development such as SDUs. An important point to make is that density that occurs too quickly or without standards can cause incompatibility within neighborhoods and gentrification, although, SDUs generally develop very slowly and are an incremental form of development (Landis, Hood, Li, Rogers & Warren, 2010).

In addition, Palmeri and Brown discuss how SDUs address the housing "mismatch" that is occurring as demographics change. According to Palmeri, household size in the United States has been declining, but the actual square footage of single-family homes has been increasing. This creates a ton of additional space that is probably not needed for many small households in large homes. SDUs are an efficient form of housing that fills this gap so that those who have a smaller household size can find a dwelling size that matches their needs and lifestyle (Brown, 2015 & Palmeri, 2014).

Barriers to Increased SDU Development

While there is the potential for over 10,000 SDUs in the Bay Area, and 93% of parcels in Berkeley could accommodate an SDU, it is unlikely and unreasonable that every person with the capacity to build and SDU will. In the article, "Yes in my backyard: mobilizing the market for secondary units", Chapple, Dentel-Post, Nemirow, and Wegmann, found that 31% of single family residential owners in Berkeley, Oakland, Richmond, El Cerrito and Albany want to build an SDU, but the barriers in place make it difficult for them to do so. It is important to note that many of the barriers vary in scope depending on the regulations and policies in place for each jurisdiction.

Table 1. Description of Barriers as Summarized from Current Literature

Procedural	- Obtaining signatures from neighbors - Public hearings - Permit process is time consuming and overly complicated - Minimum lot size limits the number of SDUs that can be built
Economic	- High application fees - Conditional use permit fees (in places where not permitted "as of right") - Utility construction - System development charges (SDCs) - Obtaining loans
Design	- Design review - Design restrictions (ex. slope of roof)
Site Plan	Too much detail in preliminary site plan
Parking	- Not enough multimodal and public transportation options - Modify off-street parking requirements - Increased density leads to increased congestion
Zoning	- Minimum lot size limits the number of SDUs that can be built - Minimum setbacks

Sources: (Brown, 2015; Palmeri, 2014; Chapple, Dentel-Post, Nemirow, & Wegmann, 2011; Chapple & Nemirow, 2012; Chapple, Nemirow, Wegmann, 2012; Chapple & Wegmann, 2012).

Solutions and Recommendations

This section details the solutions and recommendations from literature that has taken a quantitative approach to understanding SDUs.

Every jurisdiction will have a little bit of a different view on the feasibility and willingness to enact certain solutions; however, if a jurisdiction wants to actively encourage SDUs as a viable form of housing, there are several items that can be modified to allow for this. In addition, whether or not a jurisdiction wants to promote SDUs, addressing barriers is necessary so that at the very least, SDUs are not being built illegally.

The following paragraphs will detail recommendations that remove the barriers described in Table 1. These recommendations can be implemented separately or together depending on the extent that a jurisdiction wants to encourage this type of housing.

First, simplifying the permitting process for SDUs is one way that a jurisdiction can work to break down barriers. This recommendation largely gets at whether a jurisdiction considers SDUs a use that requires a conditional use permit or a variance, or SDUs "as of right." Particularly for homeowners, in places where the building of an SDU requires a conditional use permit or variance, this complicates the process and may discourage many to even consider building an SDU.

Other solutions to regulatory barriers include, allowing for more flexible parking, and getting rid of minimum lot size requirements and minimum setbacks.

In terms of parking, when homeowners add an SDU to their lot, they have to conform with their jurisdictions' parking requirements. This may mean that an SDU requires an additional parking space. Particularly when an SDU is in the form of a converted garage, this leaves no room for parking other than the street or driveway. Often, this is hard to accommodate given the difficulty of accommodating the current volume of cars in many neighborhoods.

Chapple's research suggests that less than 30% of properties with an SDU in each Berkeley, El Cerrito, Richmond, Albany, and Oakland could accommodate the necessary parking regulations for their property (Chapple & Nemirow, 2012). In each of these cities, there were different combinations of requirements that made meeting parking requirements difficult. Some jurisdictions required covered parking, some a certain number of off-street parking, and many require non-tandem parking spaces (meaning one car parked behind another).

Chapple suggests that to make it easier on those wanting to build an SDU, allowing for tandem parking to utilize space more efficiently would be one way to break down the barriers. Another way would be to not require parking for SDUs. In addition, building

SDUs near transit oriented development and expanding mode share such as bike or car share, would not only help overcome the parking barrier, but lessen the impacts of parking on the neighborhood (Chapple, Dentel-Post, Nemirow, & Wegmann, 2011; Chapple & Nemirow, 2012; Chapple, Nemirow, Wegmann, 2012; Chapple & Wegmann, 2012).

Another recommendation to overcome barriers would be to create a loan program specifically for secondary dwelling units. For those jurisdictions hoping to increase the SDU market, having loans in place to aid homeowners in costs associated with SDUs would make a huge difference. The City of Santa Cruz received financial assistance by the California Pollution Control Financing Agency. The agency stated that infill is an energy issue and provided $350,000 through the Sustainable Communities Grant and Loan Program. The City was then able to use this money to offer such cheap technical assistance and other financial incentives to encourage SDUs (Stege, 2009).

Financial incentives and programs in place to assist homeowners in building SDUs include the availability of low interest loans (4.5%) up to $20,000 (David, 2004, p. 26). In addition, development fees were waived for those building SDUs reserved for low and very low income families (U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2008).

Lastly, education is a simple, yet powerful solution to overcoming barriers. Many homeowners have a misperception about parts of the process, and clarifying the process and the benefits to this type of housing would be an easy way to inform the community. In Santa Cruz, the City stressed the other benefits of this type of housing such as spending less on rent, or for landlords, having a supplemental income in order to promote SDUs (Stege, 2009, p. 44). In addition, all of the prototypes and process guidelines came together in the *Plan Sets Book* and the *ADU Manual for Homeowners*, which created a process in which understanding SDUs and how to build one could be attainable to all residents (U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2008).

SDUs and Universities

There is little research that discusses the role of student housing and its effects on nearby neighborhoods. There is even less, in fact, no research, trying to understand the role of SDUs near universities.

Despite this gap, there is literature that suggests that the characteristic of neighborhoods next to universities is different that those neighborhoods farther away from one. Many times, universities and the local neighborhoods form partnerships that end up enhancing the neighborhood through increased economic activity. While some authors suggest that the role of students can create safety concerns and higher noise levels that affect homeowners in the neighborhood, these concerns do not overshadow the benefits of living in close proximity to a university. It is important to note that many

of these studies focusing on neighborhoods near universities have been quantitative and therefore cannot fully capture all neighborhood attitudes in an in-depth manner (Cortes, 2004).

Controversies

Much of the literature surrounding the topic of SDUs focuses on the benefits of this type of housing and how to increase the feasibility of SDUs. Therefore, there is a huge gap in understanding the downsides of this type of housing, or the concerns that homeowners in neighborhoods with SDUs have in regards to this type of housing, particularly with student tenants.

One of the only controversies evident in the literature is the idea of increased density, and how SDUs might add to congestion, in the form of parking, or privacy concerns (Landis, Hood, Li, Rogers & Warren, 2010).

Section 2: The Eugene Context for Secondary Dwelling Units

The three neighborhoods that comprise the University Area Neighborhood for the purpose of this research are the Fairmount, South University, and Amazon neighborhoods. See Appendix A for a map displaying the proximity of each neighborhood to the University of Oregon.

As a result of concerned homeowners in the University Neighborhood about increased density and the things that follow such as congestion, student noise (because of proximity to the University), and privacy, a new ordinance was created to address these underlying concerns ("University area interim protection measures", 2014).

The ordinance, Ordinance 20541 passed in July 2014, creates new standards specifically for SDUs in Fairmount, South University and the Amazon neighborhoods.

The ordinance modifies Eugene's code in relation to SDUs, with particular emphasis on the neighborhoods described in this research project. Table 9.1245 of the ordinance states that legal pre-existing SDUs include those built (legally) before April 12, 2014 in the R-1 low-density residential zones of the South University, Fairmount, and Amazon neighborhoods (Council Ordinance 20451).

Section 17 of the ordinance details the regulations surrounding SDUs in Eugene including:
- Lot area- lots need to be at least 6,100 square feet to allow for an SDU (12,500 square feet for flag lots)

- Building size- SDUs cannot exceed 10% of the total lot area, or 800 square feet (whichever is smaller)
- Height and setback restrictions
- Owner occupancy requirements - the owner of the property must live in either the primary or secondary dwelling, and must be present for at least 6 months of every year
- Accessibility- including a pedestrian walkway and details for the entranceway

In addition (17)(c) of the ordinance presents area-specific requirements that only apply to the South University, Amazon, and Fairmount neighborhoods. These requirements include:
- Larger minimum lot size- 7,500 square feet to allow for an SDU
- Lot dimension- boundaries must meet minimum dimensions of 45 ft. X45 ft.
- Lot coverage- similar to requirements for R-1 (except roofed areas are part of the lot coverage calculation)
- SDU size- for lots 7,500- 9,000 square feet, the SDU cannot be larger than 600 square feet; for lots 9,000 square feet or more, the SDU cannot be larger than 800 square feet
- Maximum number of bedrooms and occupancy- depend on number of bedrooms in primary dwelling
- Building Height and setbacks

After Envision Eugene, Eugene's comprehensive plan update process, creating neighborhood refinement plans for these three areas that address standards regarding SDUs will become a priority. This process will allow for input on the part of the neighborhoods and will allow them to address their concerns, and developing regulations that mitigate the concerns that neighbors may have.

Figure 2 shows the zoning in the South University Neighborhood. Note the lack of transitional space between the R-1 and R-3/R-4 zones, as well as proximity to the University of Oregon. Some the quality of life issues and reasons to modify the ordinance as discussed in this chapter, stem from these issues.

Figure 2. Zoning in the South University Neighborhood
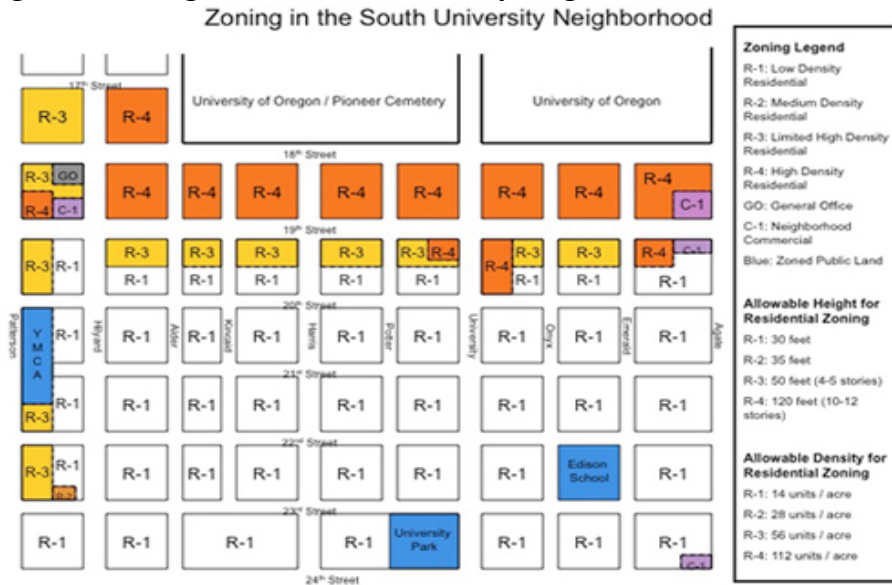
Source: (South University Neighborhood Association, 2015)

Section 3: Gaps in the Field of Study and the Need for this Research Project

By conducting a literature review, it became evident that one major gap in looking at secondary dwelling units (SDUs) is that no one has had in-depth conversations with the owners, occupants, neighbors and the population who is generally affected by the decision to increase density through SDUs. In addition, the barriers revealed by the literature, mainly economic and procedural barriers, can be measured through hard data that is driven by quantitative methods.

The literature also points out that much of the existing research focuses on large cities or regions like Portland, Santa Cruz, Seattle, and the Bay Area. Eugene is a mid-size city, and while every city has its own unique community characteristics, hopefully some of the results of the research will translate to other mid-size cities, or neighborhoods near universities across the country.

Current gaps in the research surrounding SDUs include:

- A comparison of SDUs to multi and single family housing relating to energy usage, typical occupants, and travel behavior.

- The ultimate potential for SDUs. That is, looking at the maximum number of SDUs that can be built in a jurisdiction given environmental constraints, social constraints (resident acceptance or pushback), and financial constraints or opportunities.

- Community acceptance and attitudes towards SDUs, specifically, in mid-size cities like Eugene.

These gaps demonstrate that in order to understand the full impact that SDUs will have on a neighborhood, researchers, planners, and policy makers need to go out and talk to the people most affected by the increased density. This project seeks to fill that gap and take an initial look into the quality of life issues that surround SDUs near universities. It by no means represents the views of every community member, but those who were chosen for interviews represent people with varying viewpoints (from extreme like to extreme dislike, and everything in between) with the hope that some similar themes will come out of each interview, allowing a complete picture to emerge.

In addition, this research seeks to build an understanding of how the built environment, in this case SDUs, interacts with the surrounding neighborhood. This is a very broad statement that can mean many things, but gets at understanding how SDUs bring about certain quality of life benefits and/or drawbacks that affect neighborhood character and individual lifestyles. No research thus far examines this human element to SDUs; rather, current research looks at SDUs without considering their impacts to a community's quality of life.

Chapter 3: Methods

This chapter will detail the methods used throughout this project starting from the initial research steps through the synthesis and analysis stage.

Literature Review

The first step in this project was to conduct a literature review for topics including a broad search about secondary dwelling units (SDUs), the effect of universities on nearby neighborhoods, and the effects of universities on nearby student housing.

The results of the literature review focus on the feasibility of SDUs, as well as benefits, barriers, and solutions to aid in construction of SDUs, with little research discussing the role of SDUs and universities. Furthermore, information about Eugene's code and current issues around SDUs was included in the literature review. The results of the literature review can be found in Chapter 2.

Interviews

Interviews are the sole method of data collection for this project. As previous research around SDUs was quantitative in nature, this project fills that gap through interviews. In addition, the number of SDUs around the University is not nearly enough to create significant results using a survey. Furthermore, interviews allow for more in-depth explanations about each participant's viewpoint. This is important as the research questions are meant to answer questions about quality of life issues, which is cannot be answered with a yes or no answer. The answers to these questions require an explanation and context of the underlying issues in each neighborhood.

The research questions this report set out to answer are "to what extent", "what is the link", and "what is it about" questions that are best answered with a detailed explanation, as opposed to a survey method.
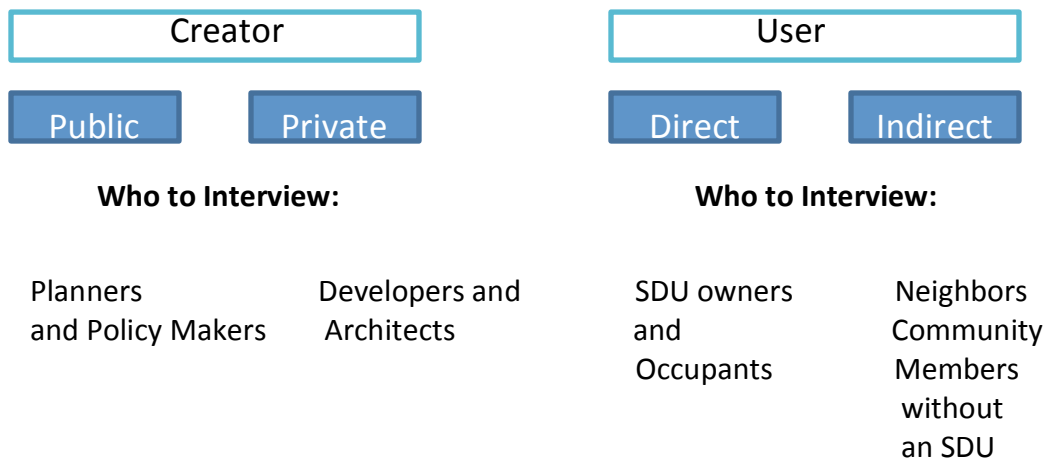
Interviewees

Twenty people participated in interviews for this project. Interviewees were guaranteed confidentiality, but each person was part of one or more of the following categories:

- SDU Owner in the University Neighborhood

- SDU Occupant in the University Neighborhood
- Neighbors in University Neighborhood
- Neighborhood leader or someone part of a neighborhood association in the University Area Neighborhood
- Planners
- Policy Makers
- Developers
- Architects

Originally, the interviewees were grouped by "creators of SDUs" and "users of SDUs". Creators included planners, policy makers, developers, and architects who create the policies or physical dwelling for SDUs. The users include those affected by SDUs directly, like owners or occupants, or indirectly, like other neighbors in the University Area Neighborhood (See Figure 3 Below).

Figure 3. Targeted Groups for Interviews

Creator		User	
Public	Private	Direct	Indirect
Who to Interview:		**Who to Interview:**	
Planners and Policy Makers	Developers and Architects	SDU owners and Occupants	Neighbors Community Members without an SDU

The intent of including the "creator" and "user" category was to make sure that the interviews included an even amount of multiple perspectives. This became difficult as people can have multiple roles, i.e. an architect and an SDU owner, or a neighbor and a planner, etc. In any case, every attempt was made to represent each role equally, and to seek out people with a variety of attitudes towards SDUs in order to form a complete picture to represent a comprehensive understanding of the underlying issues related to this form of housing in the University Neighborhood.

Scheduling Interviews

Contact information for SDU owners in the University Area Neighborhood was found in the Regional Land Information Database. The information in this database is public information and was provided by staff at the Eugene Planning Department.

After each interview, the interviewee was asked if there was anyone that he or she could think would be beneficial to talk to for the purpose of this project. Interviewees were asked to include names who might oppose SDUs, who favored SDUs, and who might be neutral towards this form of housing. This was meant to ensure that all viewpoints could be represented for this project.

Other contacts were made through the Neighborhood Services website, which provides email addresses for neighborhood leaders. Public testimony (available online) in the form of emails and letters for past meetings regarding SDUs was another way to find contacts who fit the above categories.

Interview Structure

Each interview lasted anywhere from 30 minutes to an hour, and took place at various locations around Eugene including cafes and at some SDU owners' homes.

While interviews were fairly informal, an interview guide was prepared before each interview began. The interview guides included many similar questions, although some questions were tailored to better reflect the interviewees' specific role. For example, questions for architects focused on creating a design that mitigated some of the quality of life concerns that became apparent through interviews; whereas, for neighborhood leaders, questions focused on the underlying concerns of their specific neighborhood and how these concerns affect the quality of life in their community.

Rather than including all 20 interview guides, a list of all of the different questions that were asked are available in Appendix B.

Synthesis and Analysis

After completing all 20 interviews, the next stage included synthesizing and analyzing the key results. This required synthesizing interview notes and pulling out key themes. This was the most challenging part of the project as it included balancing extreme opposite opinions with moderate ones in order to create a comprehensive understanding of the underlying issues around SDUs in Eugene's University Area Neighborhood. The results of this stage can be found in Chapter 4.

Challenges and Limitations

Interviews are the best method to delve into understanding attitudes and opinions. They work well to aid in comprehending the meaning behind a given idea, and provide context around complex ideas and opinions. In addition, 20 interviews match the scale of the number of SDUs in the community and were more than enough interviews to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand.

That being said, there were challenges to conducting the interviews. The interviews took place beginning early March and ended early May. Contacting people and finding the relevant actors in the community took time.

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the original goal was to get an equal number of different "creators" and "users". It became apparent early on that people fit into multiple roles, and so it was difficult at times to make sure that a fairly equal amount of interviewees from each category were participating.

In terms of limitations, while the 20 people who participated in interviews provided invaluable insight and information to this project, by no means do they represent everyone in the community. Given the time constraints of this project, it would have been difficult to get any more people involved in the project; however, interviewees were chosen as "representatives" in a way, to speak for other like-minded people in their profession or neighborhood.

Overall, interviews represented the best method to answer the research question and sub-questions. This method allowed for a deep understanding of the underlying issues regarding SDUs near the University of Oregon. The results of the interviews will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Findings

This chapter includes a brief summary of findings, implications and recommendations followed by a detailed analysis of the key findings as they relate to the research question and sub-questions.

The table below briefly describes the high level findings that surfaced after examining the main research question and three sub questions. Subsequent chapters will discuss the implications and recommendations in more detail.

Table 2. Overarching Findings, Implications, and Recommendations

Findings	Implications	Recommendations
#1 The University Area Neighborhood faces different issues than other Eugene neighborhoods.	• Change in Neighborhood Character • Marketability of the University and Eugene	• Solutions should be tailored to each neighborhood • Bottom-up planning process
#2 Student noise, privacy, and congestion/parking are all issues but not necessarily a deal breaker for residents.	• Change in neighborhood character • "Economically mobile" move out	• Limit the number or percentage of SDUs per block • Education and outreach
#3 Absentee landlords are the single largest problem related to SDUs and student renters.	• Increased noise, privacy, and congestion issues • Change in neighborhood character	• Enforce current regulations • Limit on number of bedrooms
#4 The second most pressing issue is lack of enforcement of the current regulations.	• Absentee landlords • Change in neighborhood character	• Build in follow-up process after permit issuance
#5 The University Area Neighborhood quality of life and character change with increased student SDU renters.	• Marketability of the University and Eugene • "Economically mobile" move out	• Solutions should consider all types of renters and homeowners alike • Additional amenities such as parks and open space • Bottom-up planning process

Section 1

What are the social barriers that exist and impede density in the form of secondary dwelling units in Eugene, Oregon's University Area Neighborhood?

This section states and details the social barriers that exist, and explores whether not each barrier has an effect on density in the form of secondary dwelling units (SDUs) around the university.

#1 The University Area Neighborhood faces different issues than other Eugene neighborhoods.

The University Area Neighborhood does, indeed, face different issues related to increased density in the form of secondary dwelling units (SDUs) as compared to other neighborhoods in Eugene.

Each neighborhood around the University of Oregon faces different challenges, but the three neighborhoods are united in that the proximity to the university exaggerates the problems that these neighborhoods face with increased density in the form of SDUs. The South University Neighborhood cites the biggest problem as student rentals of SDUs combined with increased quality of life issues as a result of fraternities and sororities nearby. The Amazon neighborhood is filled with illegal SDU rentals. Similarly, the Fairmount neighborhood has many illegal SDU rentals, as well as the Matthew Knight Arena, which further exacerbates issues of noise, congestion, and privacy.

Other neighborhoods might have illegal SDUs as rental units or have noise, congestion, and privacy concerns, but the SDUs are scattered throughout the neighborhood. In the University Area, the problems are magnified by the sheer number of student rentals, particularly, SDUs, on each block. The demographics of the University Area are much different than other places in Eugene. The fact that young students, as opposed to families, move in next door to one another, raise significantly higher concerns for owners near the university, than other areas of Eugene, where students are scattered throughout the neighborhood, rather than concentrated on blocks of each neighborhood.

Furthermore, the neighborhoods near the university are some of the most historic in Eugene. Residents of these neighborhoods constantly feel like they are battling with the city in order to preserve the quality of life and historic charm of their neighborhoods against the student population. According to residents of these three neighborhoods, "the burden to keep UGB where it is should not fall on older neighborhoods." In addition, the growth of the university causes extra concerns about the future of these historic neighborhoods as more and more students move in.

Despite the high renter turnover, and quality of life concerns imposed upon long-standing residents, students are considered the "bread and butter" of the neighborhood. While students have a greater effect on the University Area Neighborhood as opposed to other neighborhoods, they are still necessary to create a vibrant community.

#2 Student noise is an issue, but not necessarily a deal breaker for homeowners near the university.

Student noise was cited as an issue for all owners and occupants in the University Area Neighborhood. Even those outside of the neighborhood cited noise as something they have heard as an issue. The close proximity of an SDU to the primary dwelling to other neighbors nearly in the backyard increases the nuisance of the noise. Some interviewees who aren't opposed to density in the form of SDUs have expressed sentiments along the lines of, "density brings concerns like noise, but it is a necessary evil."

That being said, the above quote came from someone who lives outside of the neighborhood. Residents of the neighborhood, however, have expressed the largest concern about noise. Several landlords and neighbors in the University Neighborhood Area cited many occurrences where the proximity of the SDU to the primary dwelling and other houses was unbearable. In some instances, the noise escalated so much that neighbors had to come over and shut down parties several times. Additionally, neighbors called landlords of SDUs several times, to the point where some landlords will now avoid renting to undergraduate students.

Despite all of the parties and noise complaints, there is a willingness among single-family residential owners to put up with the extra noise because of the proximity to the university and its convenient access to nearby jobs, schools, and amenities. Many interviewees cited SDUs as adding to the noise concern because with increased housing, comes increased noise, but noise is not a deal breaker for those living in the community.

#3 Privacy concerns were cited in nearly every interview as a major concern.

Nearly every person said privacy concerns as an issue that would make one reconsider living in close proximity to an SDU. The lack of privacy that accompanies SDUs is not "compatible" with single-family residential neighborhoods. Several people cited the R1 (14 residential units per acre) as being an important reason as to why they chose to live where they live. Increased density in the form of SDUs is seen as a problem because people want the back yard that they chose to live in, they want somewhere to play, and some space that is private and their own. Many people noted that SDUs infringe upon one's yard, and while they can be a good type of housing to add into the mix, are not good for the R1 zone around the university. Most complaints about privacy came from people whose backyard backed up to someone with an SDU, rather than a primary dwelling owner who had an SDU in his or her own backyard.

Many people felt that SDUs obstructed their view, but also that they could see into the others' home. Adjacent neighbors of SDUs who were interviewed felt uneasy in this close proximity with a lack of visual privacy.

Homeowners and neighbors saw no way for privacy issues to be mitigated. This group of people thought that there should not be any SDUs constructed on a property. For some, the lack of privacy would make some residents reconsider ever living in the neighborhood.

On the other hand, architects and designers saw a way to mitigate the concerns. First, SDUs should be built on lots that are of a good size and shape as to not infringe on the primary dwelling unit or neighbor properties. Bushes, trees and fences could mitigate some privacy concerns. In addition, the placement of windows and the direction of the entrance can alter the feel of the area quite dramatically. SDUs can also be built in a way so that the windows do not line up with those of the primary dwelling. After visiting several SDUs, it seems that large gardens, trees and fences can indeed make it seem like the SDU is on its own private lot.

Alternatively, SDU occupants feel like their home actually increases their own privacy because they are not on the main street.

#4 Congestion and parking as a result of increased density in the form of SDUs act as a barrier to wanting an increase in SDU development.

In typical SDU rentals near the University, interviewees stated that at least two students are living together in one SDU. This means that there is an *exponential impact* in terms of cars, noise, and general congestion in a neighborhood if students each have their own friend groups that come to their dwelling.

Most residents of the neighborhoods don't have a problem with the students or other residents who use SDUs as originally intended, for a son or daughter moving back home, or an older parents who wants to age in place. The problem occurs when students move into these small dwellings in groups of two or three and bring their own friend groups who each have cars, and use the backyard to have parties, thus contributing to a ton of noise and congestion problems in the neighborhood.

Despite that the University Area Neighborhood is within walking or biking distance to campus, many residents are frustrated that students bring cars with them and take up the already limited parking spots in their neighborhoods.

The real problem here is car *storage.* Residents in these three neighborhoods are frustrated because SDUs require additional parking spots. Also, many students might park/store their cars on lawns for long periods of time, which decreases the attractiveness of the neighborhood.

Those who support SDUs but do not live in one of these neighborhoods have an understanding that "parking kills SDUs." These people, generally architects and planners, want to see increased density in the form of SDUs, but believe that this cannot happen without changing the parking minimums. Planners fully acknowledge that parking contributes to congestion and quality of life issues for existing residents, and know that if SDUs are going to succeed, restrictions on the number of cars must be included.

This is of particular importance in the Fairmount Neighborhood, which is adjacent to the Matthew Knight Arena. Residents of this neighborhood expressed concerns because they can't have guests park anywhere near their SDU when there is an event at the arena because all of the off-street parking is either permitted or is taken over very early in the day. In addition, the same family was upset because they feel that they receive different treatment in terms of parking that "regular" houses aren't subject to. For example, aside from not being able to have their guests park nearby during an event at the arena, the SDU occupants themselves cannot park on the street anymore. At the same time, they can't park in their alley either because of concerns about access for emergency vehicles. According to these occupants, "there is just a total disregard for SDU occupants" as it relates to parking and congestion. This is an issue, since by nature, SDUs can be a converted garage, and there might be a lack of places where SDUs can be built. While technically, many parking spots around the arena are two-hour spots, through these interviews it has become apparent that parking regulations are not always enforced.

Some alleys have space available to park, but others don't. Many SDU occupants might consider parking in the alley if possible, but to other residents in the nearby neighborhood, this creates more congestion, contributes to lack of privacy because there are now people in the backyard who can look into one's house, and creates more noise, with the additional cars.

Others feel that it is a real benefit to have SDUs that are oriented towards the alley. In these instances, there can be "eyes on the street" which might increase the perceived safety of the alley. Orientation towards the alley, over time, can contribute to the alley becoming a place that is not just thought of a place to pass through (by cars), which could alleviate some perceived notions of alleys as unsafe areas. Many residents do not agree with this; however, and see alleys as a huge source of congestion in the neighborhood. Several people do not believe how dwelling orientation or design could mitigate congestion concerns.

Lastly, some residents actually feel that the increased density, which in turn creates an increased need for parking, contributes to a less safe neighborhood. The rationale behind this point is that people might have to park farther away from their dwelling and walk farther to their homes at night. Many residents are concerned about students having to walk far to get from their car to their home. While most neighbors say that

their neighborhoods are very safe, this concern is directly related to increased density in the form of SDU student rentals because parking is especially hard to accommodate.

#5 Absentee landlords were cited as the single largest problem of SDUs and the largest contributor to change in neighborhood character over time.

The single largest factor that impacts support that density in the form of SDUs is the problem of absentee landlords. Throughout the 20 interviews, nearly every person stated that they have no problem with SDUs as they were originally intended (for family or as a guest house) when the owner of the property lives on site. This is because the owner can mitigate any neighborhood concerns that arise as a result of the concentrated density.

The problem with absentee landlords as they relate to SDUs is that absentee landlords are not around to mitigate neither tenant nor neighborhood concerns.

Property management companies take advantage of students, as the students have to live somewhere. It's a competitive market so often landlords can charge a lot of money per bedroom. In addition, students are viewed as a way to make a lot of money, so landlords try to fit more people than allowed into each unit. This is especially detrimental in SDUs, which are naturally just meant for one or two people. With the increased students come the increased concerns mentioned above like noise, privacy, and congestion.

As many interviewees stated, "absentee landlords are the heart of the problem" around the contentious issue of increasing density in the form of this type of housing. Absentee landlords were cited as the number one factor contributing to neighborhood change over time. This is because absentee landlords are not selective with who lives in their apartment, and will accept loud students who have no regard for the neighborhood. In fact, the landlord in these situations does not have to care about the neighborhood because he or she does not have to live with the consequences of the student actions.

There is no social pressure to behave if the landlord lives elsewhere, even if that is across town. Many interviewees, whether or not residents of the University Area Neighborhood, strongly support owner occupancy requirements for these reasons. For other types of rental housing, many interviewees stated the necessity of the landlord living within walking distance so that he or she can mitigate student and neighbor concerns.

If a student can't interact with his or her landlord, the student will feel that his or her concerns are not important. Many residents cited this as a problem as well. A lot of out-of-town landlords use property management companies to manage their rental, which creates a sense that the landlords don't care about his or her tenants.

For example, if the students could feel pride in their dwelling, they might stop leaving

beer cans and garbage all over the lawn or neighborhood. For many students, this is their first time away from home, and it takes time to learn how to fit in with the neighborhood; however, having a landlord that can't help in this process creates anxiety for many residents around the university. Again, this is a problem for many student rentals, but the effects are magnified in an SDU where one is so close to their neighbors.

Despite all of the complaints, many residents near the university want a diverse neighborhood and a variety of housing types. The problem is that the families respect the students, but the students do not respect the overall character and values of the neighborhood.

It's a difficult task to regulate owner occupancy, but it is viewed as necessary. For one, the landlords cannot mitigate any concerns. Several of the landlords interviewed for this project have said that they've been approached by property management companies who want to take over their property. Some of these landlords almost agreed to because they can't charge the rent that they want anymore with the presence of rental companies who can compete with their rents; however, maintaining the character of their neighborhoods was seen as of the utmost importance. Furthermore, absentee landlords create an uneven playing field. The people who abide by the rules, and build SDUs after obtaining the legal permits, simply cannot compete with other housing in the area. Many landlords have to lower their rents if they want tenants, despite the fact that many of the landlords who go about this process legally, have better quality housing and are more attentive to the tenants.

It is difficult to rid a neighborhood of absentee landlords because there are so many loopholes in terms of maintaining ownership. A resident near the university said that his house is being bought by a wealthy family from California so that their child will have a place to live near the campus. The issue is then who manages the property while the parents are in California, and who manages it when their child graduates. A lot of residents have spoke of similar situations. To get around the owner occupancy requirement, the parents might transfer ownership to their child. After graduation, the house will become a rental property most likely managed by a local property management company, as the family will have no interest in what happens to the neighborhood. In addition, many families in this situation might also build an SDU to increase their profit.

It is easy to convert a single family residential home into a rental property; however, it is difficult to convert a rental property (specifically for students) back to a single-family house. After years of student rentals, the house becomes a real fixer-upper and is quite expensive to rehab. Many residents said that while having a mix of students is a good thing, they still want to attract young families to the neighborhood. Many new families simply cannot afford to fix up an old student rental up. This dynamic definitely shifts the neighborhood character over time, as well as devalues the property.

#6 SDUs undermine R1, low density residential zoning.

The majority of the University Area Neighborhood is zoned R1, which means there can be 14 residential dwellings per acre. There are some higher density zones directly next to the University of Oregon, but there is a general consensus that there is not only a lack of transition zones from high density to low (R1), but that SDUs belong in higher density areas.

Nearly all residents feel that SDUs are a viable form of housing, but they should only be allowed in order to house a child or older parents, as opposed to students.

One resident of the area said that, "allowing SDUs changes the definition of the R1 zone without a process." In other words, because SDUs are allowed as of right, no one gets a say in whether or not the SDU should be built unless the applicant is applying for a variance or conditional use permit, which would require a hearing. This person has even said that he's had to deal with extremely distraught people on the phone who say that having an SDU in their neighbor's backyard has caused so many issues and even went as far as to say that it ruined their life.

Many interviewees agreed that having increased density in the form of secondary dwelling units, particularly when they are filled with students, is contrary to the "point of the neighborhood." If one wants high density, there are other options that moving into an R1 zone. A new neighborhood could be created elsewhere that allows for this type of development. Along the same lines, it is important to note that SDUs are only allowed in R1 zones. Also, in the end, property owners can do what they want without consulting their neighbors.

When asked about consulting with the neighborhood, architects responded that they are in "servitude" to their clients and don't have to pay attention to the externalities that the SDU in which their client wants, causes. That being said, most architects and designers agree that SDUs can be built in a graceful way that mirror human scale and can contribute to a greater sense of community.

Therefore, it's crucial to note the opposing viewpoints. On one hand, you have many residents of these neighborhoods saying that if they would have known the increased SDUs were going to pop up in their neighborhood, they would not have moved to where they did, since they value strict R1 zones. On the other hand, most architects, designers, and SDU owners in the Amazon Neighborhood feel that the increased density adds to community. In circumstances of increased density, more people might come outside and talk, what one resident calls the "doorman effect". This is where one neighbor opens up space to the community by being on his or her own porch and then others start to come out of their homes, making the community a more lively place.

Lastly, many residents of these neighborhoods see the University of Oregon as contributing to the problem of undermining the R1 zone. The university can be a great

neighbor at times, but when it comes to the built environment, it disregards the standards in place for the neighborhoods around it. This perplexes many people as the university should have a vested interest in preserving the single- family characteristics of the neighborhoods. The University of Oregon can attract faculty and compete with other universities because of the high quality of life in the surrounding neighborhoods. There are complete and walkable streets from housing to campus, nearby amenities, and overall, "the quality of life simply cannot be improved upon." Yet, many have said that the university "squanders" these amenities and this leverage that allows it to compete nationally.

#7 High renter turnover contributes to a lack of community engagement, which many residents attribute to the student population.

Many residents pointed out that it's hard to challenge student rentals coming in on the basis of neighborhood character, despite that it's a semi-legal concept that can be challenged in courts. There is no doubt after talking to neighbors that the sheer number of student rentals, particularly students in SDUs, has changed the landscape of the neighborhood.

It's hard for many residents to sit back and be content with their neighborhoods changing because for some, housing might be one's greatest asset. Housing can be the culmination of years and years of work and putting roots down; there is a lot of sentimental value in having a home. At the same time, students who come in to rental properties change the surrounding neighborhood for better or for worse and can contribute to a neighborhood with noticeable differences over time.

Having students in the neighborhood creates a vibrant community, as opposed to a stagnant neighborhood, but if a neighborhood isn't attracting any new single family residences, and only student rentals, then one has to ask themselves what is it about this neighborhood that is detracting families from moving in.

Having high renter turnover does not contribute towards the stability of a neighborhood. There are bound to be shifts in neighborhood character over time, but as many residents see it now, their neighborhoods are being taken over by student rentals, which many feel is out of their control.

It's healthy to have a mix of owners and renters, but renters, particularly students don't see the long-term impacts of their housing choices. For example, the more renters there are, the more renters a neighborhood attracts, and this may have an impact of schools nearby if there are fewer students who attend.

The largest problem with having a higher renter turnover is a general lack of community engagement. The University Area Neighborhood has a lot of community engagement, but renters, particularly student renters, never participate in the process. There's a lack

of a sense of belonging on the part of student renters, but the neighbors can only do so much to make them feel welcome before the relationship gets reciprocated.

Some neighbors educate their student neighbors about lawn maintenance and not leaving garbage in the lawn, but many residents feel exhausted after having to say the same things to new students every year, without seeing many results.

Another important note is that in South University, several occupants of SDUs in the neighborhood stated that there's an invisible line. To one side, are more affluent property owners who don't want student rentals, or increased density in the form of SDUs, at any cost. On the other side of the line, are property owners more open to student rentals, but want to see them as active members of the neighborhood. It is frustrating for many that new neighbors come in every year, and problems cannot be mitigated because the turnover rate is so high.

In terms of a sense of community, older SDU occupants and owners stated that they depend on their neighbors. Their neighbors might drive them to the hospital or grocery store, but that's not really the case with student renters because they don't have the same sense of belonging and neighborly responsibility.

Overall, the problem seems to be that there is no effort on the part of students to get involved with the neighborhood, coupled with the fact that students move in and out each fall. It is hard for residents of the neighborhood to communicate with student renters. It is especially frustrating when the students are in one's backyard, which is such close proximity, but will not get involved in the neighborhood engagement activities.

Despite all of the social barriers listed throughout this section, none of them are to the extent that would cause people to move out of their current homes and to a different neighborhood; however, they are enough to encourage some people who live outside these neighborhoods to not consider moving there. For many who live close to the university, they realize that student SDU rentals are a necessary evil, but proximity to nearby amenities trumps these quality of life concerns. For those outside of these neighborhoods, these barriers seem like far too much to have to overcome in order to achieve a high quality of life.

Section 2
What is it about Eugene's regulations that act as barriers to an increase in secondary dwelling units In Eugene's University Area Neighborhood?

To answer this question, it is important to explore three key themes that came out the twenty interviews.

1. Eugene's regulations actually address quality of life issues that are seen as barriers to increased development in the form of SDUs.
2. Some people see Eugene's regulations as too restrictive, and thus are the only barrier to increased SDU development.
3. A lack of enforcement of the current code exacerbates quality of life issues regarding SDUs, causing many people to dislike this type of housing.

First, it is important to know that the recent Interim Protection Measures are a reaction to all of the quality of life issues in Section 1. For example, after noticing too many absentee landlords, hearing too much noise, and dealing with daily congestion and privacy measures, the leaders in Amazon, South University and Fairmount worked for measures that would be restrictive enough only to allow SDUs as they were originally intended. This means that SDUs would be legal to build for a relative, or as a guesthouse, but not for large student rentals.

Residents of these neighborhoods have noticed their quality of life being impacted as more and more students move in. City planners fully acknowledge that the issues that these neighborhoods face are different than those in the rest of Eugene around SDUs. That being said, the difference in quality of life as a result of SDUs is enough of a reason for the new standards to apply to the University Area Neighborhood only.

The essence of the protection measures is that it limits the number of bedrooms that can be built within an SDU. The hope is that by not allowing 4+ bedroom units, there will be less congestion, less noise, less privacy issues, and overall, a lesser effect on the rest of the neighborhood's character and quality of life. In addition, more restrictive minimum lot sizes are introduced with the hope that an SDU will not be built somewhere where it would involve "cramming" students into a small space.

One of the difficulties in these measures is that essentially, they aim to change behavior. It was debated by interviewees as to whether or not changing the built environment would be the most successful way of doing it, but since the interim protection measures have been in place, South University Neighborhood leaders have said there have been significantly less complaints.

The interim protection measures are not permanent. There are likely to be some changes that occur after area planning of all three neighborhoods takes place. Area

planning will occur after the Envision Eugene, the comprehensive plan update process, is complete.

It is inevitable that the interim protection measures will change after this process, but for now, it is important that they are in place to address the quality of life issues discussed in this chapter. The measures are also proactive as they react to the University of Oregon's growth with the hope that quality of life issues won't continue to be a problem if they are addressed sooner, rather than later.

One of the challenges about these regulations lies in the fact that they are special area standards and only apply to the Amazon, South University, and Fairmount neighborhoods. Architects have cited the protection measures as a problem. One architect stated, "it's always hard to get the first draft of the plan just right." In other words, the code is already difficult enough to understand, without restrictions varying from neighborhood to neighborhood. The additional measures make it even more difficult for architects designing SDUs since different places now have different restrictions.

Next, some people see Eugene's regulations as too restrictive, and thus, the regulations themselves, are the only barrier to increased SDU development.

It is important to note that many of these regulations came about after many of the people interviewed moved into their SDU or built one. The regulations, while considered a barrier by some, are not enough of as an impediment or reason to move or sell property; however, for some people, these regulations might be enough not to buy property and build an SDU.

For example, the ordinance requires owners of the property to live in either the SDU or the primary dwelling for a certain number of months out of the year. One SDU owner and occupant feels that this regulation infringes upon his right to move freely. He sees no reason as to why the City should regulate how long he is away.

However, that is exactly the essence of the absentee landlord problem. These new measures seek to discourage people who buy homes for their children and then move away, or large management companies coming in and building tons of bedrooms for students in an area that is not meant for that amount of density. The measures require living on site for a certain period of time because that helps mitigate the neighbors' concerns. It's possible that this could backfire and there could be more illegal SDUs instead, but that will be covered later in this report when discussing enforcement.

That being said, the fact that one has to live onsite for a certain number of months per year, and has to pay to register their SDU to a list could seriously deter some people from building. In fact, this alone has made some residents reconsider wanting to live near the university more than any of the social issues discussed in this paper. One SDU

resident said, "if you want a stable neighborhood, don't buy a house next to a university."

That being said, these regulations are meant to protect the neighborhood character, and were constructed by a task force composed of neighborhood leaders. Those who do not follow the rules and create packed student rentals in small dwellings, should not be allowed according to the majority of interviewees.

The end goal is that the interim measures are restrictive enough to make people who want to build with a total disregard for the existing neighborhood, not allowed to do so.

Lastly, a lack of enforcement of the current code exacerbates quality of life issues regarding SDUs, causing many people to not favor this type of housing. In other words, it's not necessarily the regulations that are acting as barriers to an increase in SDUs around the university; it's the lack of enforcement of the regulations. Without enforcement, issues of noise, congestion, privacy, undermining the R1 zone, and decline in neighborhood character all work against the neighborhood. If the regulations were enforced, these issues would not be issues any longer. In fact, if the original regulations were enforced, the neighborhoods probably would not have needed to create new ones.

The code is essentially complaint driven. This means that the city does not *not* enforce it, but it really only knows if there is an issue if someone calls in about an illegal SDU or issues around noise because four students live in a single dwelling. One resident stated that, "sometimes it's not about the code, it's about the people."

This further complicates the issue as it means that neighbors know that illegal SDUs exist; however, it's hard to call and complain when a neighbor is being respectful. It's easy to call when rowdy students disrupt the quality of life in their neighborhood.

Almost all interviewees agreed that the lack of enforcement around owner occupancy is the reason that SDUs get such a bad rap in these neighborhoods. If the property owner did live on-site, then issues would be mitigated much more quickly. For example, if a property owner hears noise in his or her backyard at 2:00 am, they will take care of the situation because it affects them. On the contrary, absentee landlords never know that this situation occurs and don't do anything to alleviate neighborhood concerns when these events happen consecutively.

Many residents stated that there is really a limit for how much you want to call and complain. In fact, most would rather work out their concerns with the landlord directly, but this is not always possible if the landlord is not around; thus, neighbors bypass that step, and call the City first.

Lastly, many developers, property management companies, and parents with kids in the university exploit the loopholes. For example, a parent can make their child the owner

of the property, which technically means that an owner would live on site. According to many concerned residents, this issue needs to be addressed in the next round of ordinances and code changes.

Overall, the real barriers and dislike of SDUs around the University of Oregon stem from, in part, too many restrictions (for some), but mainly, that if the regulations were enforced, there would be less problems. The interim protection measures are viewed as proactive in order to alleviate the quality of life issues that many residents near the University face. The regulations act as barriers to illegal SDUs and to property owners who want to be an absentee landlord; however, they still allow SDUs for one or two family members, or as a guesthouse. The issue is that certain people take advantage of the codes in place, so regulations were necessary to mitigate concerns. Based on the interviews, it seems like many residents are hopeful that the regulations work and that SDUs will be built only for the right reasons.

Section 3
What is the link between social aspects of the University Area Neighborhood and the feasibility for increased secondary dwelling unit development?

As a result of some of the quality of life challenges detailed in Section 1, residents of the South University, Amazon, and Fairmount neighborhoods demanded more strict standards in the form of Interim Protection Measures. It is still feasible to build an SDU, but the intention is that they are built solely for the purposes in which they were originally intended, that is, for a family member or as a guesthouse. Additionally, many people stated that they are not seeing the same quality of SDUs as those in other cities, like Portland.

The hope for the interim protection measures is that any new SDUs that are built will contribute to the neighborhood in some way, rather than detract because they only house noisy students, for example. Many residents stated that they feared that an increase in density in the form of SDUs without any sort of protections against noise, privacy, congestion, and neighborhood compatibility would lead to the "downfall" of Eugene's historic neighborhoods. In addition, the new measures, in allowing for SDUs as originally intended might aid in renter turnover and stability as well, since family members might stay for years, rather than just one year at a time. Almost everyone agreed that Eugene's neighborhoods, particularly the historic ones around the university, are one of the city's greatest assets. It's important to regulate the housing that comes in in order to protect them.

Residents of these neighborhoods recognize the need to a diverse mix of housing to attract a variety of people, to keep the neighborhoods interesting. Many residents also stated that neighborhoods are dynamic and likely to change, but should be done so in consideration for what current residents want.

A key point that many planners and neighborhood leaders made was that each neighborhood is like an ecosystem. It changes over time and has its own characteristics, but when it really comes down to it, the success of the neighborhood affects the overall vitality of Eugene as a whole. Each neighborhood depends on the prosperity of the others.

This idea was cited as a concern, particularly for the Jefferson Westside Neighborhood. In this neighborhood, the majority of housing was at one point renter-occupied. Students came in and out, and over time, the lack of owners in the neighborhood led to the decline of the neighborhood. It is now being rebuilt with great success, but most residents of the neighborhoods around the university fear that without the interim protection measures, their neighborhoods will have many of the same issues.

The measures are not permanent, hence the word *interim*; however, they are a solution that allows SDUs as intended and at the same time mitigates concerns brought about by student occupants.

The University of Oregon is expected to grow, and it's not clear what the future will hold. Almost every interviewee recognized the importance of creating accessible housing for all, but stated that the cost could be very detrimental to Eugene's most historic neighborhoods if not regulated. According to some planners and residents, regulations are needed to promote a shared understanding of how the community wants to move forward. Many people were sympathetic to the fact that the city does not want to expand its urban growth boundary, but expressed concern as to whether or not SDUs can fulfill that niche.

Those who moved near the University of Oregon moved there for a reason. All residents mentioned that they don't want the anonymity that comes with big city density. Many interviewees moved to Eugene, a medium-sized city, because of the residential lots that allow one to have privacy and a large yard, while amenities within walking distance, make the city feel more like an urban environment. Residents, however, do not want their neighborhoods becoming so dense as they feel that density undermines everything that Eugene has to offer, particularly when students are coming in and changing the neighborhood.

The social issues created a need to explore solutions that would keep the neighborhood from being taken over by students. The regulations allow for SDUs as originally intended and work to protect the historic element and neighborhood vitality that attracted many residents to the area in the first place. SDUs could very well be just a new trend that will fade, and if that's the case, neighborhood residents want to mitigate any decline that could come as the trend ends.

Section 4
To what extent are the barriers to secondary dwelling unit development in the University Area Neighborhood linked to the presence of the University of Oregon and the student population?

The presence of the University of Oregon and its student population is **greatly** linked to the barriers to secondary dwelling unit (SDU) development in the University Area Neighborhood.

First, many residents, particularly those in the Fairmount Neighborhood, who deal with the effects of increased congestion and parking problems as a result of the Matthew Knight Arena, feel that the university is not a good neighbor. As has been mentioned in previous sections of this chapter, the university shows up to the table to chat, but ultimately does what it wants without regard to the nearby residents. According to residents, this doesn't make sense. Residents understand that the university might not care for their particular well-being and quality of life, but it should care about preserving the neighborhoods around the university as they attract and provide housing for many faculty and staff.

With all of this being said, residents feel that the university should be stepping in to help preserve the neighborhoods and that any new development should not negatively affect the neighborhood as much as the Matthew Knight Arena has.

Second, given the general transitory nature of student living situations, there is a direct link between students from the University and social barriers to an increased want of SDUs. According to local policy makers, there needs to be some piece in place that recognizes the transitory nature and patterns linked to student housing. Many residents think that the students who live closest to the university, are undergraduates, or students who haven't been away from home for very long. Many of them simply do not understand the concept of being part of a neighborhood, and the responsibilities that come along with it. These effects are magnified when dealing with an SDU, where these students are living in a backyard in a relatively dense environment.

Particularly, not taking care of the yard, parking in other people's spots, having friends over until all hours of the night, not participating in the neighborhood activities, and then moving out after a year or so, really does not add value to the neighborhood. Even worse, when students' parents transfer ownership to them, after the student graduates, the property could be managed by a property management company that does not care about the neighborhood vitality. More importantly, a particular property becomes a rental, and it is hard to change it back to a single-family residence to attract families.

Lastly, it's important to note that a lot of this information is actually specific to SDUs. While it might be hard to separate general student renters with student renters of SDUs, most of the comments made by interviewees were specifically concerned with the magnified and concentrated effects of the increased density in someone's backyard, and that effect on the neighbors. Yes, student rental properties were not seen in the most favorable light either, but the mere fact that SDUs increase concentrated density, was seen as the most major barrier by many.

The barriers to SDU development are greatly linked to the presence of the University of Oregon. Circling back to the original reason as to why the Amazon, Fairmount, and South University neighborhoods were chosen as the study area for this project, they face different issues than other neighborhoods specifically because of the large student population. In addition, the university does not work to mitigate the effects of the growing student population that is housed in SDUs, which raises many neighborhood concerns. Many residents expressed the fact that while there would most certainly be other issues about SDUs if farther away from the university, the same issues about quality of life barriers as a direct result of students, would not be present.

There are many quality of life issues that affect residents of the University Area Neighborhood. These issues are magnified in SDUs because of the concentrated number of students in each neighborhood. For many residents, these issues do not outweigh the benefits of living in such close proximity to so many amenities, including the University of Oregon; however, they do make non-residents think twice about ever moving into one of the three neighborhoods.

The Amazon, Fairmount, and South University neighborhoods are part of what makes Eugene such a livable and attractive community. The character of these neighborhoods needs to be preserved in order to maintain the marketability of the University of Oregon and Eugene. At the same time, student renters' needs should not be overlooked as they contribute to the vibrancy of the neighborhood. To do so, the interim protection measures seek to squash quality of life issues, especially absentee landlords, and allow for SDU development as originally intended.

Chapter 5: Implications and Recommendations

The findings presented in Chapter 4 discuss the underlying issues around secondary dwelling units (SDUs) as a direct result of proximity to the University of Oregon and its housing of the student population in SDUs. This chapter will discuss the practical implications for planners in other cities where SDUs near universities might be a problem, or even in other places where SDUs are seen as controversial. This chapter will describe the implications, as well as recommendations for moving forward. See page 26 for a brief description of the overarching findings, implications, and matching recommendations.

Implications

The most obvious implication of increased density in the form of SDUs near the University of Oregon is that the neighborhood will change in character over time. The change will probably be slower than most residents think. The architects interviewed as part of this project each only built between one and five SDUs a year. In the scheme of things, that's not very much; however, if they are concentrated on every block, then that can have a real effect on neighborhood character.

Over time, the increased density of SDUs rented out by students can compromise the stability of the neighborhood. If properties turn to rentals, and never shift back to single family homes, or quality of life issues like noise, privacy, and congestion become publicized, the neighborhoods will have a reputation for not being conducive to young families who want to establish roots in one of these neighborhoods. All interviewees recognize that a balanced housing mix is necessary, but all are fearful of getting to the tipping point and not being to bounce back after there are more renters than owners in the neighborhood.

This is important because the people who moved to the neighborhood expect a certain kind of environment when locating in an R1, low-density residential zone. There are certain expectations that quality of life will not change dramatically over time; however, many feel that it is, and that is why they worked to get the interim protection measures passed.

Additionally, Eugene's neighborhoods give the city its great character, and make the University of Oregon a competitive choice for faculty and staff. If the neighborhoods decline, Eugene's marketability will go down, as will the competitiveness of the university.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, the increased density might comprise neighborhood character, but it does have the potential to reduce the pressure to

expand Eugene's urban growth boundary. Many interviewees in favor of increased density in the form of SDUs did so because of environmental values. Rather than expanding outward onto farm, forest and other resource-rich land, the land within the urban growth boundary could be used more efficiently. Many architects, developers, and planners favor this idea because they not only "talk the talk, but, walk the walk." In other words, these people believe in protecting the environment, and are willing to live close together, even in someone's backyard in order to lessen housing's environmental footprint. While many residents of the University Area Neighborhood cited environmental reasons as important, they are not willing to sacrifice their quality of life for the sake of the environment.

This is important because it leads into another key point. That is, those in the University Area Neighborhood who won't put up with students and SDUs disrupting the life they imagined, will move elsewhere. Many residents believe that increasing the density in the form of SDUs around the university will actually encourage sprawl.

For the most part, homeowners around the University of Oregon are pretty well off and can be thought of as "economically mobile." That is to say that if SDUs keep popping up and quality of life issues go unaddressed, these people have the means to move. They will probably move farther out where there are large lots and privacy as they initially hoped for. In other words, not addressing the issues of SDUs around the university is thought to exacerbate sprawl because people will move farther out where there is more land for them to do what they want. According to many residents, without the interim protection measures, many people probably would eventually move out.

The issue of SDUs is not to be taken lightly, if an increase in production occurs, especially around the university where students may take over, the neighborhood stability will be off-balance.

Recommendations

Regulations regarding SDUs are being addressed in cities throughout the country. This type of housing is the new trend in many cities; however, up until recently, there is a lack of solutions that please both homeowners and renters alike, causing tension and debate when creating regulations. While many homeowners of neighborhoods might work to decrease the opportunities for building SDUs, fearing changes in quality of life or neighborhood character, it is important that the homeowner voice does not dominate the conversation. SDUs have many benefits including more affordable rent, environmental benefits, and "hidden density," all which contribute to a more lively and diverse community. Quality of life concerns like noise, privacy, and congestion can be regulated through various policies and better enforcement techniques. These solutions offer a way to balance neighborhood fears with the needs of other community members who appreciate the opportunities that SDUs provide.

Key Recommendations to balance renter and owner concerns are listed below and described in more detail throughout the rest of this chapter.

1. Create bottom-up planning efforts and listen to the local community.
2. Respect neighborhood compatibility.
3. Enforce current regulations as they relate to SDUs and create a follow-up process after issuing a permit.
4. Provide additional amenities as density increases.
5. Communicate with the community to make sure that there is a shared understanding of the issues, as well as the rationale behind the solutions.
6. Restrict SDUs to a certain percentage of total dwellings or number per block.
7. Create an education and outreach and preapproved model program similar to Santa Cruz.

#1 Create bottom-up planning efforts and listen to the local community.

While the efforts to reduce the pressure to expand the urban growth boundary (UGB) are extremely important, increased density in the form of SDUs does not mesh well with every neighborhood. Specifically, students' lifestyles don't always match up with the lifestyles and values of families. This clash is magnified when the students living in SDUs are so close to other dwellings.

That being said, density in the form of SDUs works for some neighborhoods, but it isn't something that can be forced, or built up immediately in order to increase density inside the current UGB. The stability of the neighborhood depends on finding the right balance of density. This is done by understanding the needs and wants of a neighborhood, and only be done by talking and interacting with people in a neighborhood. A lot of residents felt like planners approve SDUs and see the extra unit as achieving the goal of increased density so as not to have to expand the UGB. The reality is that SDUs alone will probably not achieve the increased density that is needed to hold the UGB. Additionally, the type of housing that is in demand is single family residential, which, as many interviewees stated, should not be fulfilled in the form of SDUs. When one thinks of a single family home, they think of a yard, privacy, and a place of their own, which doesn't always match up to the definition of an SDU. Many residents expressed concern that planners, when thinking about density, look at numbers, maps and reports, but don't talk to residents of the neighborhood to understand the on the ground effects of these decisions.

When area planning begins after the Envision Eugene process, and the interim protection measures are revised, all residents hope that there is a place for heavy community input. "Density isn't bad, but it needs to be done right," says one resident of the South University Neighborhood.

Residents want to feel like their choice to live in a low-density residential neighborhood is taken into consideration before changing the environment too drastically through density. In addition, while different neighborhoods face many similar concerns, each neighborhood is still unique. The solutions that might work for one place, don't necessarily work for another, so community input is especially valuable.

#2 Respect neighborhood compatibility.

A major concern in allowing SDUs is that they are not compatible with the neighborhood. While it might make it more difficult for those who design and build SDUs in various neighborhoods, ultimately, residents feels that they deserve an input in creating new standards that ensure compatibility, whether or not they are different for each neighborhood. When asked, what new policies one would want to see around SDUs in addition to the interim protection measures, several residents and neighborhood leaders cited design standards.

Requiring that an SDU match the primary dwelling and style of the neighborhood was of utmost importance. Many viewed it necessary to create standards with the intent of somehow controlling unwanted behavior. In other words, it was important to find a way to regulate behavior through the built environment.

#3 Enforce current regulations as they relate to SDUs and create a follow-up process after issuing a permit.

A lot of frustration on the part of residents near the university stemmed from the fact that current regulations are not being enforced. Particularly, the owner occupancy requirement is hard to enforce, but has probably caused the most problems and concern about neighborhood character changing.

The enforcement process in Eugene is complaint driven. This means that the City might never know about an illegal SDU, noise, or absentee landlord concern unless someone calls and complains. There is simply not enough staff or time to follow-up with each SDU permit. Additionally, there are many illegal SDUs that house several students, and aside from complaints, the city has no way of knowing about them.

The interim protection measures were needed to create more strict standards before the SDU was even built in order to ensure that not just any person who wanted to make a profit off of student housing could build one. The intent was to make it so that people who wanted to build one for a family member or as a guesthouse, could, but someone who wanted to build it solely for student housing, could not. If enforced, absentee

landlords, and therefore quality of life issues could have been mitigated early one. Since it was next to impossible to enforce, concerns went largely unaddressed until the interim protection measures were created.

Residents suggest that some sort of follow-up be built into any new regulations that come into play about SDUs in the coming years. This could take the form of a follow-up a certain number of months after a building permit is issued in order to check for compliance.

#4 Provide additional amenities as density increases.

One problem that many residents have with density is that as it increases, there are no additional parks, restaurants, or stores to lessen the stress on existing amenities. One resident stated that her neighborhood has the smallest number of parkland per capita. It is extremely important to provide people with a mix of uses, including parks and open space.

Parks are of utmost importance, especially if people's backyards incorporate an SDU, and there are fewer places to play or relax. Others felt that if there were to be increased density, there should be a focus on new restaurants and shops nearby; on the other hand, many felt that this could make the neighborhood feel more urban than an R1 zone should be.

Regardless, with infill development, many people forget that there are more people who will use the parks, trails, and bike paths. As a solution, land should be reserved for these amenities. In fact, many people felt that their neighborhood parks were a great asset to the livability and charm of their neighborhood. If they were too crowded, this could impact the community and value of the neighborhood.

#5 Communicate with the community to make sure that there is a shared understanding of the issues, as well as the rationale behind the solutions.

One fascinating part of conducting the interviews was to hear essentially the same problems and solutions, but through a variety of lenses. Several people talked about a never-ending moratorium on SDUs, others said there never was one. Some people felt like the City was trying to control their every move through the interim protection measures, while others valued its responsiveness to their concerns. Some felt that students were taking over SDUs at an extremely high rate, while others knew nothing of the problem. Overall, the point of this is that there were only a handful of people who stuck to the facts, and only a handful of people who understood the true reasons for the protection measures, showing that there is a disconnect between what actually went on, and what residents perceived the issue was. This can happen with any issue, but as someone who heard multiple perspectives on the same issue, it became very clear than decision makers need to communicate with residents in a way that makes sense to

everyone. The issues should be clearly conveyed and the solution should be obviously tied to the problem.

In neighborhoods near the university, where this issue continued to persist, perhaps there could have been more educational information sessions. While there were several public hearings, still, not everyone could attend and learn about the issue. It's possible that education materials and simple one-pagers could have helped bridge this disconnect early on. The reason this is so important is because of the neighbors' faith in decision makers to move forward. Many feel distrust towards the city, such as the SDU owner and occupant who feels as though his rights are being taken away due to the owner occupancy requirement. Others are happy with the response and understand the chain of events that led to the protection measures. Overall, this is a good reminder for planners and policy makers that not everything gets translated as intended, and that extra outreach efforts may be needed.

#6 Restrict SDUs to a certain percentage of total dwellings or number per block.

One solution that allows SDUs for those who favor them, while mitigating concerns that come with increased concentration of students, includes only allowing a certain number of SDUs per block. In combination with other regulations, this would help maintain the character of the neighborhood, and the zoning in which the neighborhood was built. Many interviewees stated that it truly is the concentration of these dwellings inhabited by students that magnifies their effects. Therefore, limiting the number of SDUs to a certain percentage of the total dwellings per block or certain number per block could address this problem. The scale, blocks, is important because if the scale were a neighborhood, the SDUs could still be concentrated in one area, but the block level would help mitigate that concern.

This will begin to address quality of life issues as well as compatibility of the neighborhood, and the zoning. Hopefully, this idea will alleviate concerns about SDUs taking over neighborhoods, since they would be limited to a certain number.

#7 Create an education and outreach and preapproved model program similar to Santa Cruz.

The City of Santa Cruz has created an extensive accessory dwelling unit manual that describes how SDUs are built, how to design them, and includes various other resources. In addition, the *ADU Plan Sets Book* includes various preapproved designs for these types of dwellings (City of Santa Cruz, 2015). The information listed in this manual and sets book could be useful in making sure that the programs and policies are clear to a variety of audiences. In addition, there could be a process where concerned residents critique and vote on a set of preapproved basic models that are designed in such a way to mitigate noise, privacy and congestion concerns (the models could be very basic so as to still allow owners to add personal touches to the dwelling). This would give

concerned residents more of a say in the overall process, and hopefully alleviate concerns about overall neighborhood compatibility.

Furthermore, a more extensive outreach program to help residents understand all of the underlying issues related to SDUs and how the process works could only help in increasing transparency and communication between residents and local planners and policy makers.

As a result of the quality of life issues created as a result of SDUs rented by students, residents feel that their neighborhoods are being threatened. This is important for both Eugene and the University of Oregon, as the neighborhoods are what attract many people to the community. In order to lessen the impacts on residents, there are several initiatives described in this chapter than can alleviate concerns. In particular, enforcing current regulations, and consulting with neighborhood groups will be extremely important to earn residents' trust during any upcoming planning processes.

Chapter 6: Future Research and Conclusion

Future Research

It is important to acknowledge that this research can continue to be built upon. Further research can concentrate on understanding community attitudes after more permanent code changes are implemented. It will be interesting to notice if the permanent code changes mitigate all of the quality of life issues described in this report.

Overall, there could be much more research on the environmental benefits of SDUs, aging in place and SDUs, and SDUs as affordable housing.

Furthermore, for informational purposes for community members and planners, it would be interesting to see the potential number of lots that can house an SDU, and the exact number of SDUs that have already been built. This would be important for any community looking to revise policies about this type of housing.

Conclusion

Quality of life issues as a result of students renting SDUs are enough to make those who do not live in the University Area Neighborhood not want to move there, and those within the neighborhood to reconsider their choice to move to the neighborhood, though not necessarily commit to moving out. While many think that noise, privacy, and congestion, are necessary evils that come with density, they do not think that it has to be this way in their neighborhoods. There is a general support for density because of environmental reasons, but again, it is an issue of NIMBY. At this point, residents are not likely to leave their neighborhoods around the university because of quality of life issues, but as absentee landlords persist and issues go unresolved, they may reconsider moving farther out to a location that matches their preference of a low-density neighborhood.

It is important to protect the University Area Neighborhood because its vitality affects the competitiveness and attractiveness of the University of Oregon and Eugene. If the historic neighborhoods aren't protected from quality of life issues that come with increased density, those who care about the success of the neighborhood will move elsewhere, and leave the neighborhoods around the university to decline.

The 20 interviews conducted made it clear that rental SDUs are indeed a culprit in contributing to quality of life issues. This is because the concentration of the units and

increase in density, combined with the proximity to the primary dwelling and neighbors' backyards, magnifies any issues that arise.

Interim protection measures were needed to stop density in the form of SDUs from contributing to decline in the neighborhood. If the neighborhoods can get a handle on absentee landlords, it is likely that quality of life issues described in this report, will not be as much of a problem over time. This will protect the University Area Neighborhood and encourage current residents to stay, creating a stable neighborhood around the university.

Resident concerns need to be addressed; however, their voices should not dominate the conversation. As students contribute to the vibrancy of the neighborhood, they deserve a say as well and should not be ignored. Cities looking to revise policies about SDUs should keep this in mind during the public outreach process. Since each city's situation is unique, an outreach process is necessary to understand the underlying concerns that come with increased density in the form of SDUs. If other cities could take away one key point, it would be that density is context specific, and the placement should be thoughtfully considered after a community input-based process that includes owners and renters, is completed.

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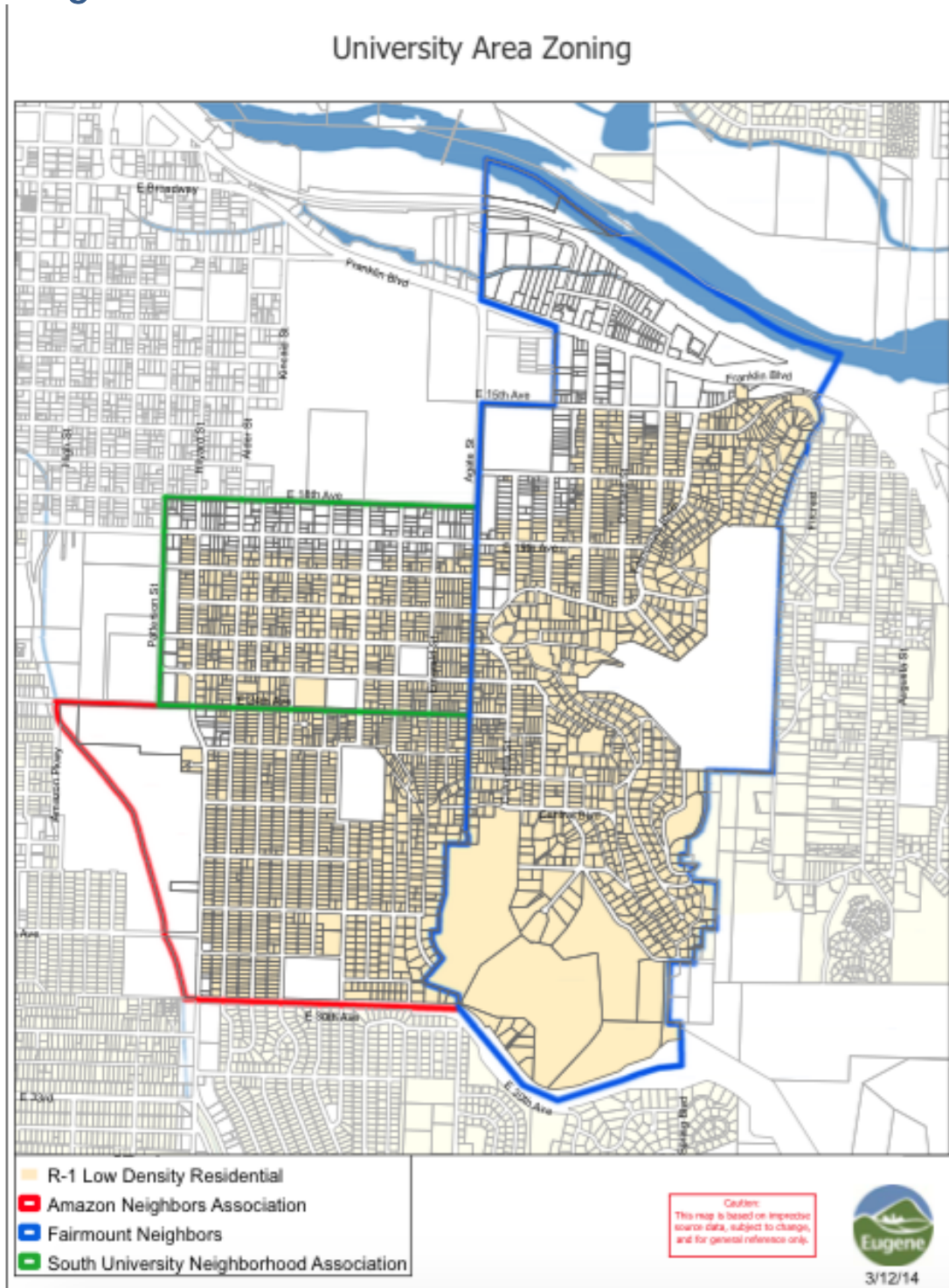
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Appendix A: Map of University Area Neighborhood

University Area Zoning

R-1 Low Density Residential
Amazon Neighbors Association
Fairmount Neighbors
South University Neighborhood Association

Source: ("University area zoning", 2014)

Appendix B: Interview Questions

A variety of interview questions are displayed below. Rather than including all twenty interview guides, this list will include all questions that were asked at some point or another during the interview process for all groups of interviewees. It is important to note that interview questions evolved over time, hence why there is such a variety.

1. What is it about Eugene's regulations that act as barriers to an increase in secondary dwelling units (SDUs)?
2. Are there any other factors in Eugene that you see as a barrier to increasing SDUs?
3. Should the City of Eugene encourage or discourage more SDUs to be built?
4. What is your primary reason for encouraging or discouraging secondary dwelling units?
5. Do you feel like the City of Eugene incentivizes the creation of secondary dwelling units?
   a. If so, what are these incentives?
   b. If not, what are the disincentives?
6. Do you see any benefits or drawbacks to secondary dwelling units?
7. What are the biggest challenges you faced while building your secondary dwelling unit?
8. Who occupies your secondary dwelling unit?
9. What are your thoughts on secondary dwelling units?
10. How do secondary dwelling units affect you personally?
11. Do secondary dwelling units affect your home?
12. Would you consider discussing your views on secondary dwelling units with policymakers?
    a. If so, what would you say?
13. What are your thoughts on the following in relation to secondary dwelling units in Eugene and the University Neighborhood?
    a. Design requirements
    b. Parking requirements
    c. Economic incentives
    d. Zoning laws
    e. Permitting process
14. Can you discuss how the feasibility of secondary dwelling units in the University Neighborhood might differ from other neighborhoods in Eugene?
    a. Why do you think this is the case?
15. Do you think secondary dwelling units will change any quality of life aspects for neighbors of secondary dwelling units?
    a. If yes, what are these changes?

16. In your experience, does proximity to the University of Oregon affect one's decision to own (a property with), build a secondary dwelling unit, or support the building of (someone else's) secondary dwelling unit?

    a. If so, what are your biggest concerns about being in close proximity to the University?

17. To what extent do quality of life issues come into play to inform your views of secondary dwelling units?

    a. Safety concerns?

    b. Absentee landlord?

    c. Density of the neighborhood?

    d. Social justice issues?

18. Can a good design mitigate some of the quality of life issues listed in the previous question? If so, how?

    a. What about neighborhood compatibility issues?

    b. Please explain.

19. When designing or building something, how do you/ do you interact with community members/ neighborhood associations? Please describe these interactions.

20. Are there any policies around design requirements for SDUs that you would like to see changed or added in Eugene?

21. Do you foresee any cultural changes to the University Neighborhood if secondary dwelling unit production is increased? Can a certain design of SDUs play a role in this?

22. If you had to guess what the main underlying issues around secondary dwelling units in Eugene are, what would you say?

23. Are you aware of the moratorium and revised ordinance about secondary dwelling units in your neighborhood? Can you discuss what you know about this issue?

24. Do you have any additional comments you would like to add regarding secondary dwelling units in the University Neighborhood?

25. If you could change a policy around SDUs, what would it be?

26. Can you discuss the moratorium on SDUs in your neighborhood? Is it still occurring?

    a. What are the underlying issues?

    b. What are you feelings on the new ordinance that sets special standards for neighborhoods around the university in terms of SDUs?

    c. What do you hope to see come out of the refinement plan process in relation to SDUs?

27. Does your proximity to the University of Oregon affect your decision to live in a secondary dwelling unit?

    a. If so, what are your biggest concerns about being in close proximity to the University?

        b.   If you lived in another neighborhood, would your opinion change in regards to secondary dwelling units?

28. Do you have any questions for me or about my research?
29. Do you know of any other residents, owners, someone who has tried to build a secondary dwelling unit, developer, architect, planner, or policy maker who might be willing to take part in this research as an interviewee?

        a.   If yes, can you provide me with contact information?