

RESPONDING TO CHANGING HOUSEHOLDS: REGULATORY CHALLENGES FOR MICRO-UNITS AND ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN LAND USE INSTITUTE
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
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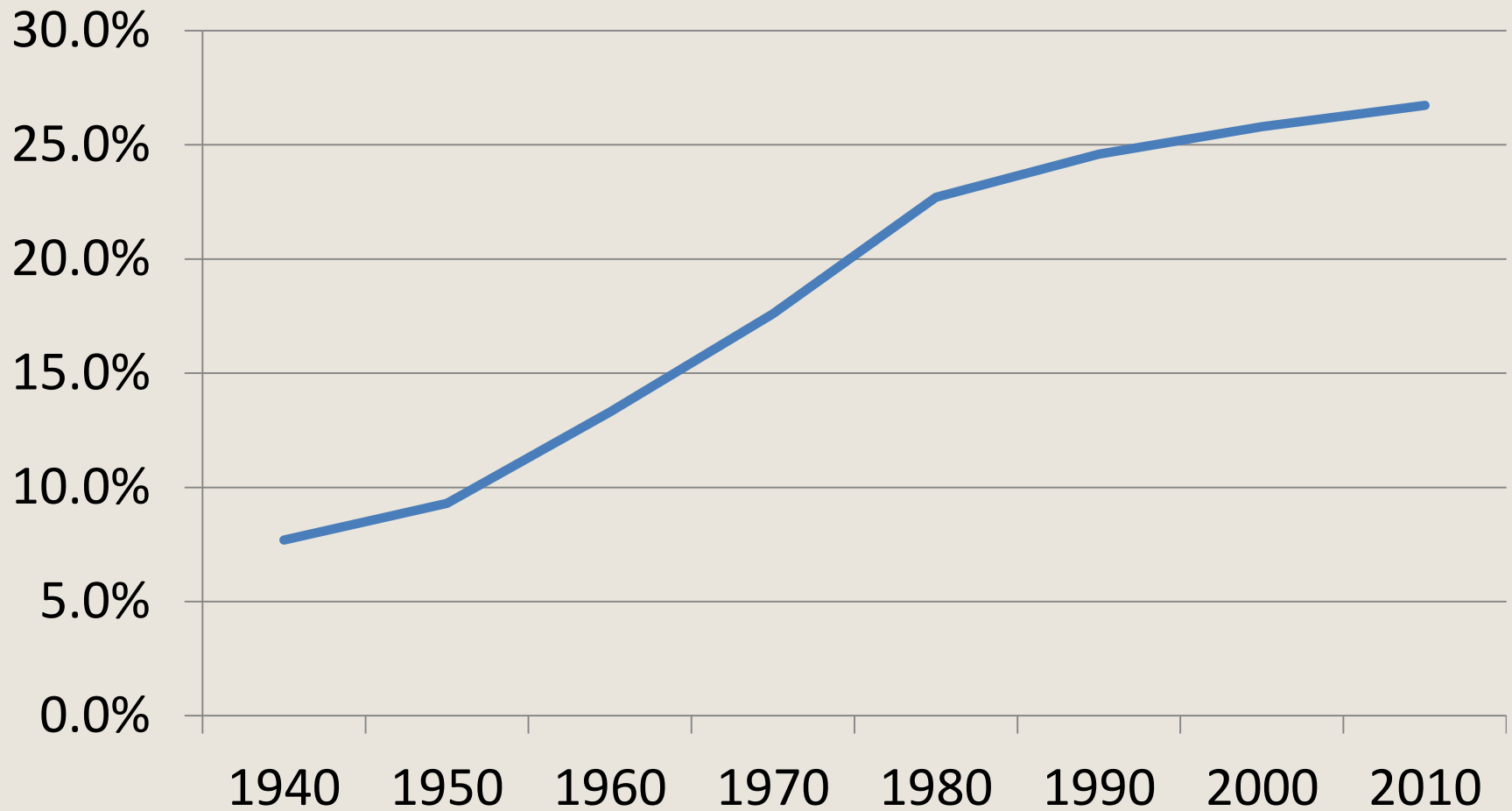
John Infranca

**Assistant Professor, Suffolk University Law School
Research Affiliate, Furman Center for Real Estate & Urban Policy**

Project Background

- ❑ **Furman Center for Real Estate & Urban Policy**
- ❑ **What Works Collaborative**
- ❑ **Study Cities**
 - ❑ Austin
 - ❑ Denver
 - ❑ New York
 - ❑ Seattle
 - ❑ Washington, D.C.

Share of U.S. Households Consisting of One Person Living Alone 1940-2010



One-person households and high rent burdens

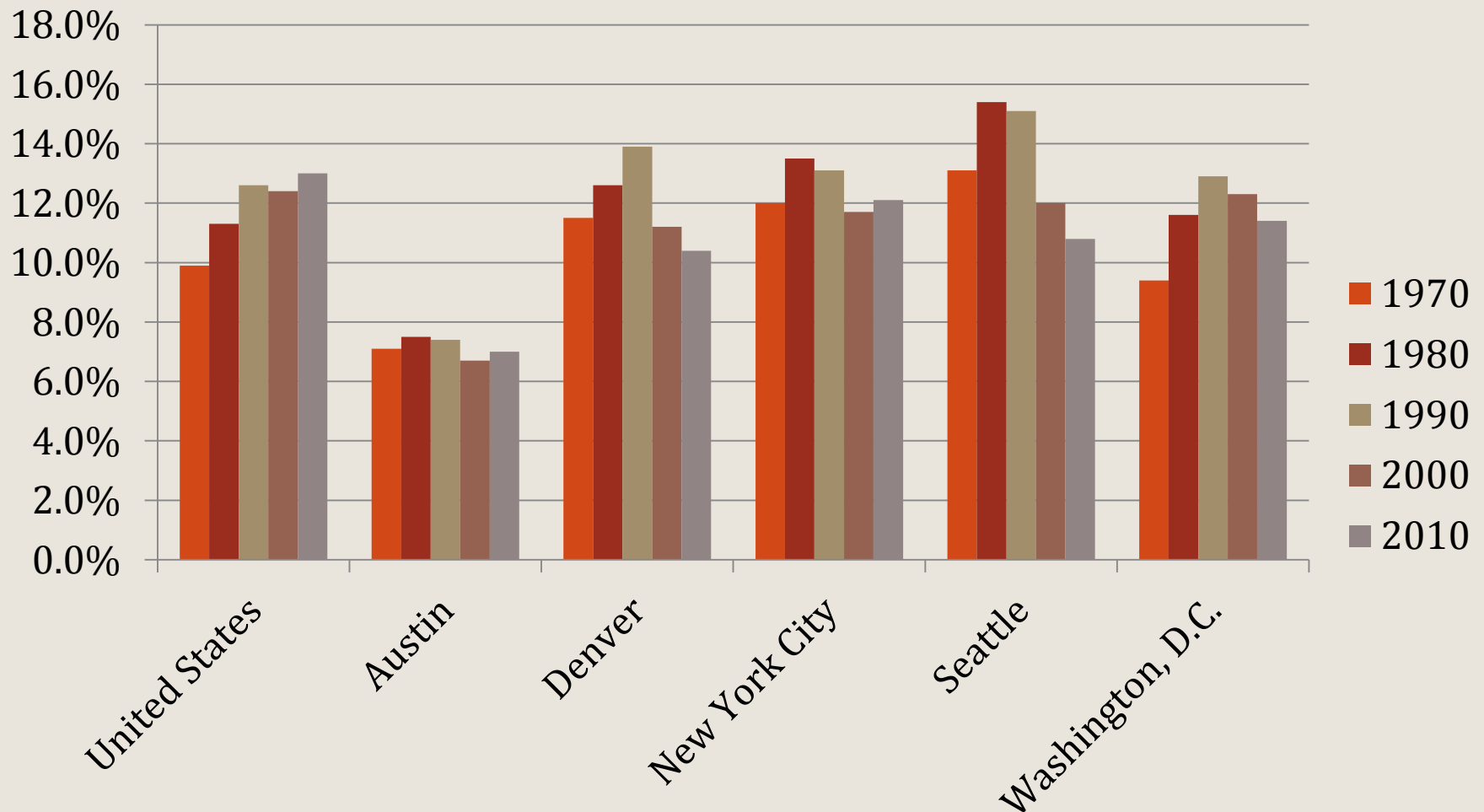
One-person household as share of all households

| | Austin | Denver | New York | Seattle | Washington, D.C. |
|---------------------|--------|--------|----------|---------|------------------|
| 2011 (ACS one-year) | 34.5% | 40.8% | 32.6% | 40.9% | 45.2% |

Percentage of renters who spend more than 30% of their income on rent

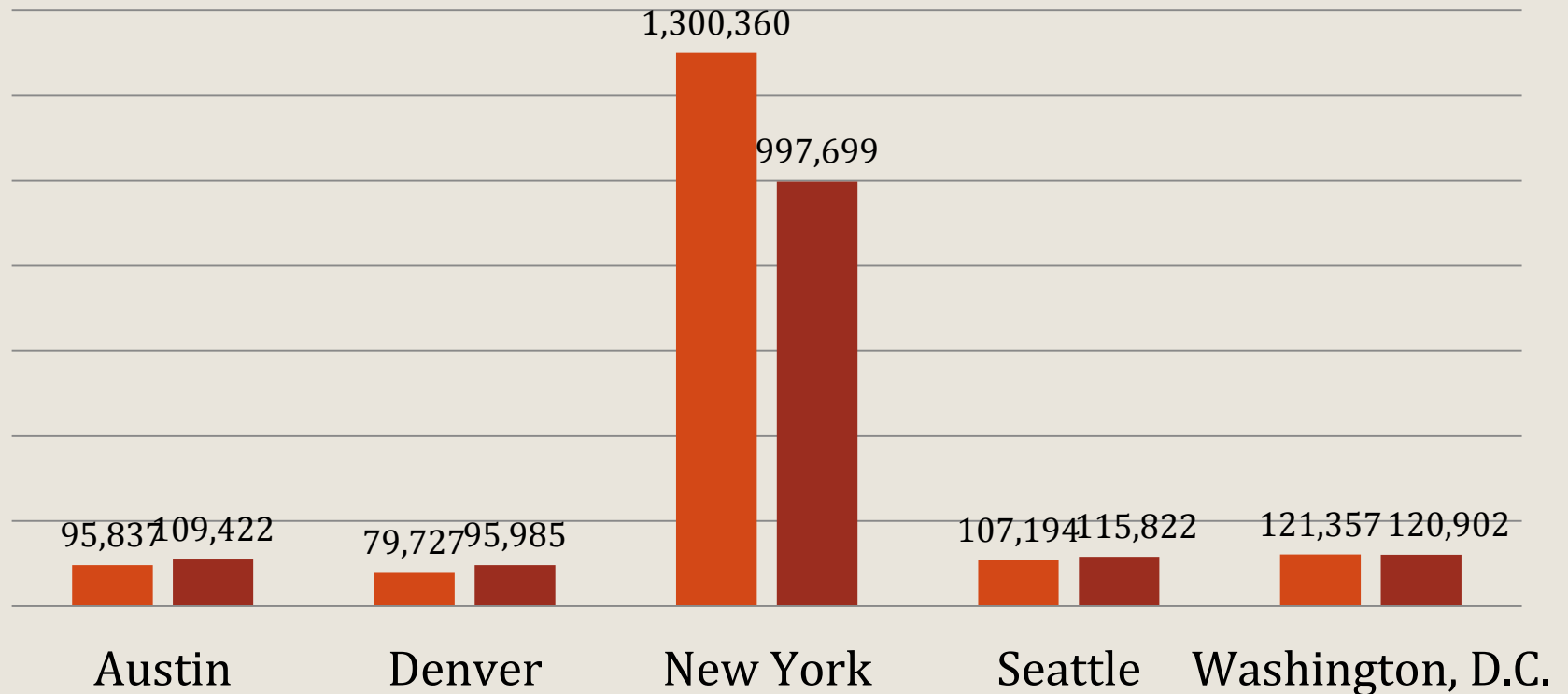
| | Austin | Denver | New York | Seattle | Washington, D.C. |
|---------------------|--------|--------|----------|---------|------------------|
| 2000 (Census) | 41.7% | 38.6% | 40.7% | 39.5% | 35.2% |
| 2011 (ACS one-year) | 50.9% | 49.2% | 54.5% | 48.7% | 49.3% |

Percentage of Residents over 65 years of age, by city and decade

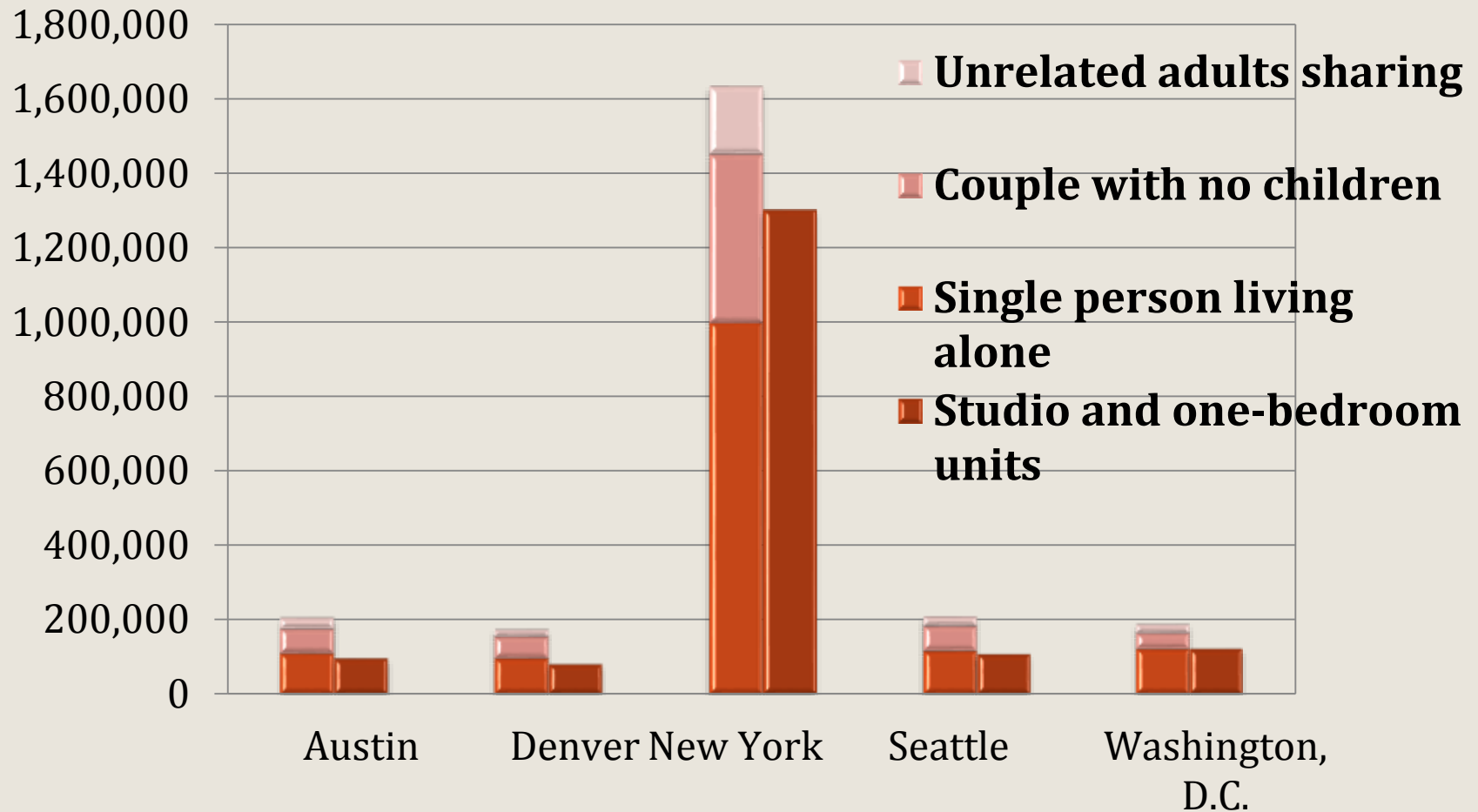


Studio and one-bedroom units and single person households, by city

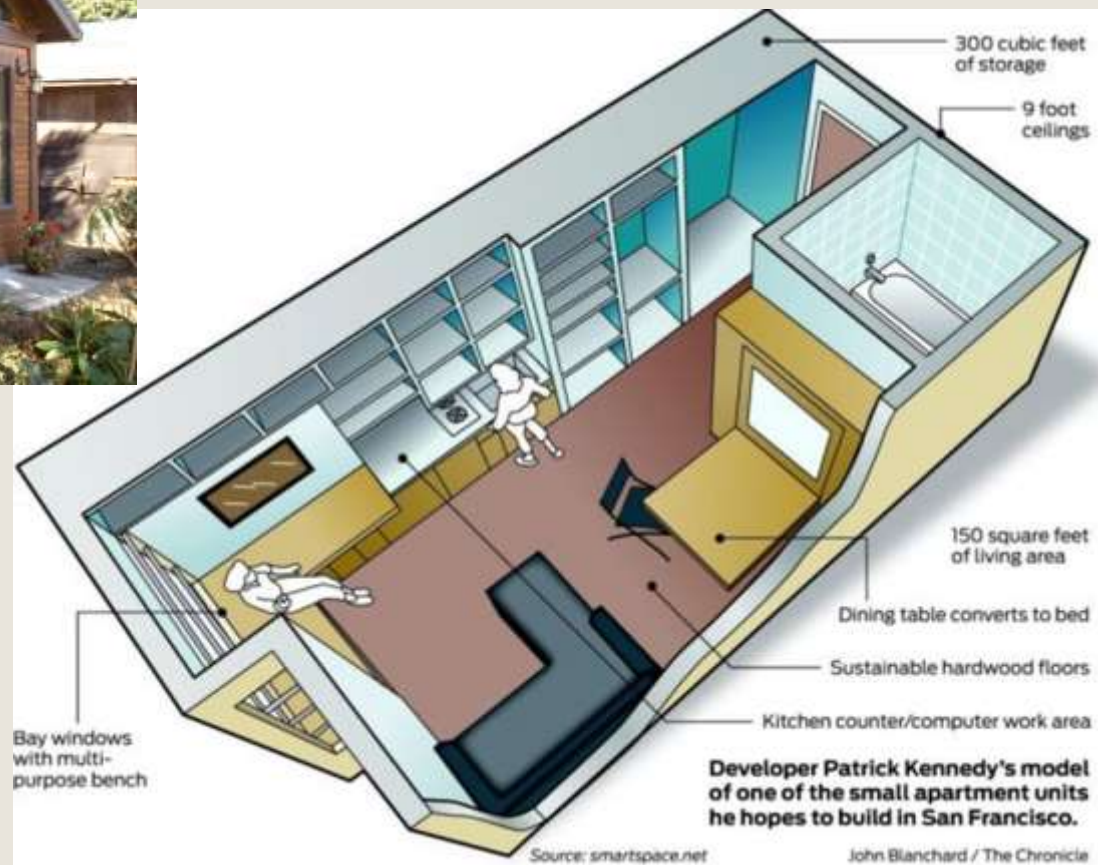
■ Studio and one-bedroom units ■ Single persons living alone



Studio and one-bedroom units and select household types, by city



The Answer(s)?



Developer Patrick Kennedy's model of one of the small apartment units he hopes to build in San Francisco.

Source: smartspace.net

John Blanchard / The Chronicle

Claimed Goals and Potential Benefits

- ❑ **Respond to changing household size and demographics**
- ❑ **Provide affordable housing**
- ❑ **Attract/retain young professionals**
- ❑ **Reduce sprawl**
- ❑ **Mitigate environmental impact of development**
- ❑ **Allow seniors to age in place**

Micro-unit Development

- ❑ **San Francisco**
- ❑ **Boston**
- ❑ **Vancouver**
- ❑ **Washington, D.C.**
- ❑ **Cleveland**
- ❑ **Providence, RI**
- ❑ **Worcester, MA**



Accessory Dwelling Unit Development

□ **California**

- Ministerial review process

□ **Santa Cruz** – 40-50 permits annually

- Technical assistance, loans, wage subsidy
- Waives development fees if affordable
- Requires owner-occupancy

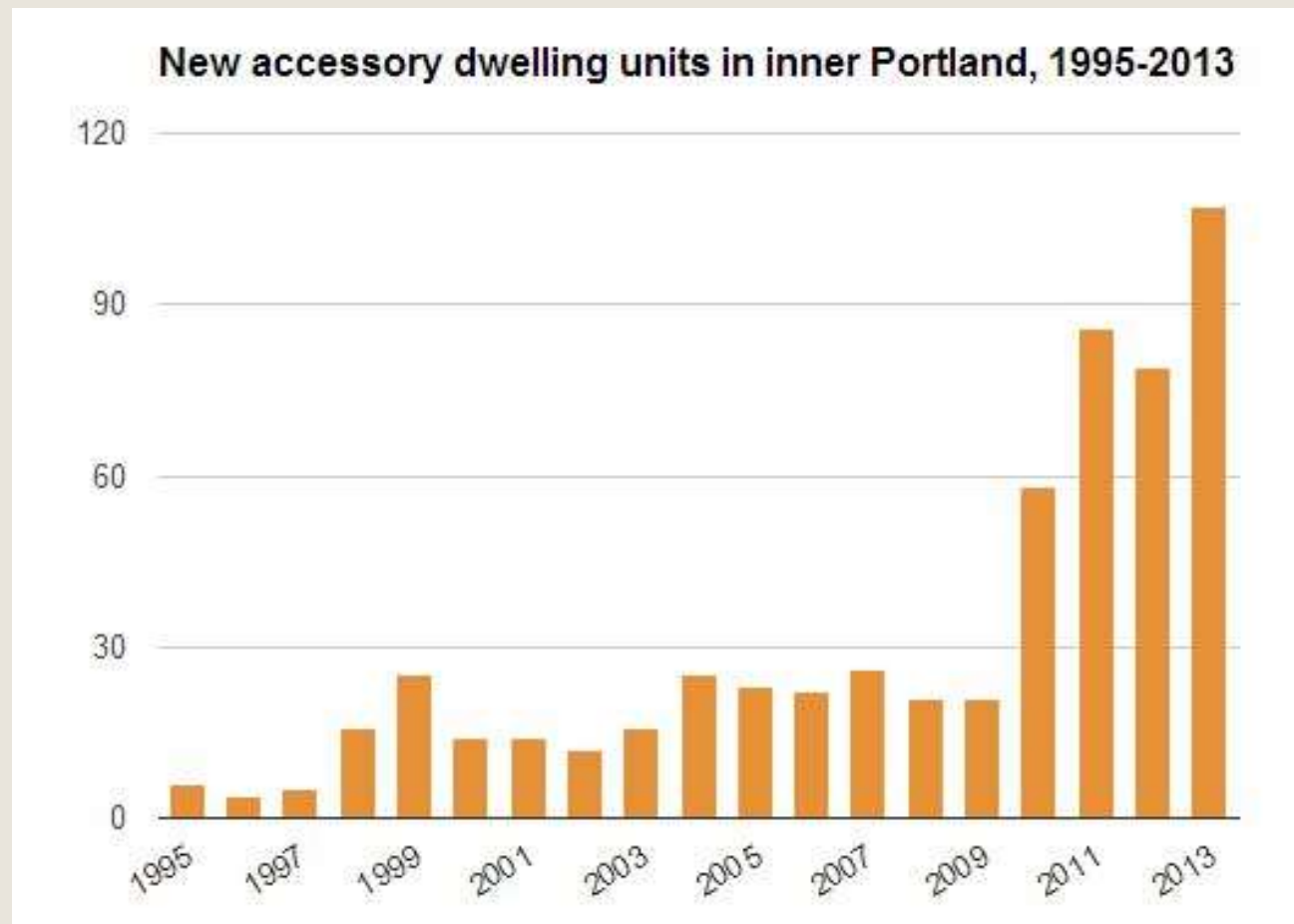
□ **Vancouver, BC** – Laneway Housing

- 800 permits issued since 2009
- 500 built

Santa Cruz, California ADU Manual



Portland, Oregon: ADUs on the rise



(Source: Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability)

New York City

□ **Micro-units**

- adAPT NYC

- 55 modular units; 250-370 square feet

□ **ADUs**

- Estimated 114,000 illegal units built between 1990 and 2000

adAPT NYC Micro-unit



adAPT NYC Micro-unit



adAPT NYC Micro-unit



APT. #3A - DAY

7'x10" high wall surface behind couch used as pin-up wall; kitchen counter is down and ready for a coffee.



APT. #4D - DUSK

Preparation for a dinner of 4 is underway.



APT. #3A - NIGHT

Convertible sofa-bed folded down; kitchen counter folded up; coffee table is effectively removed to wall.



APT. #4D - NIGHT

Dishes from dinner stored; kitchen table folded into bed. Murphy bed folded down; floor is clear; counter also folded down - ready for breakfast tomorrow.



Seattle

□ **Micro-units**

- aPodments, units as small as 120 square feet
- Approximately fifty buildings, up to 64 units

□ **ADUs**

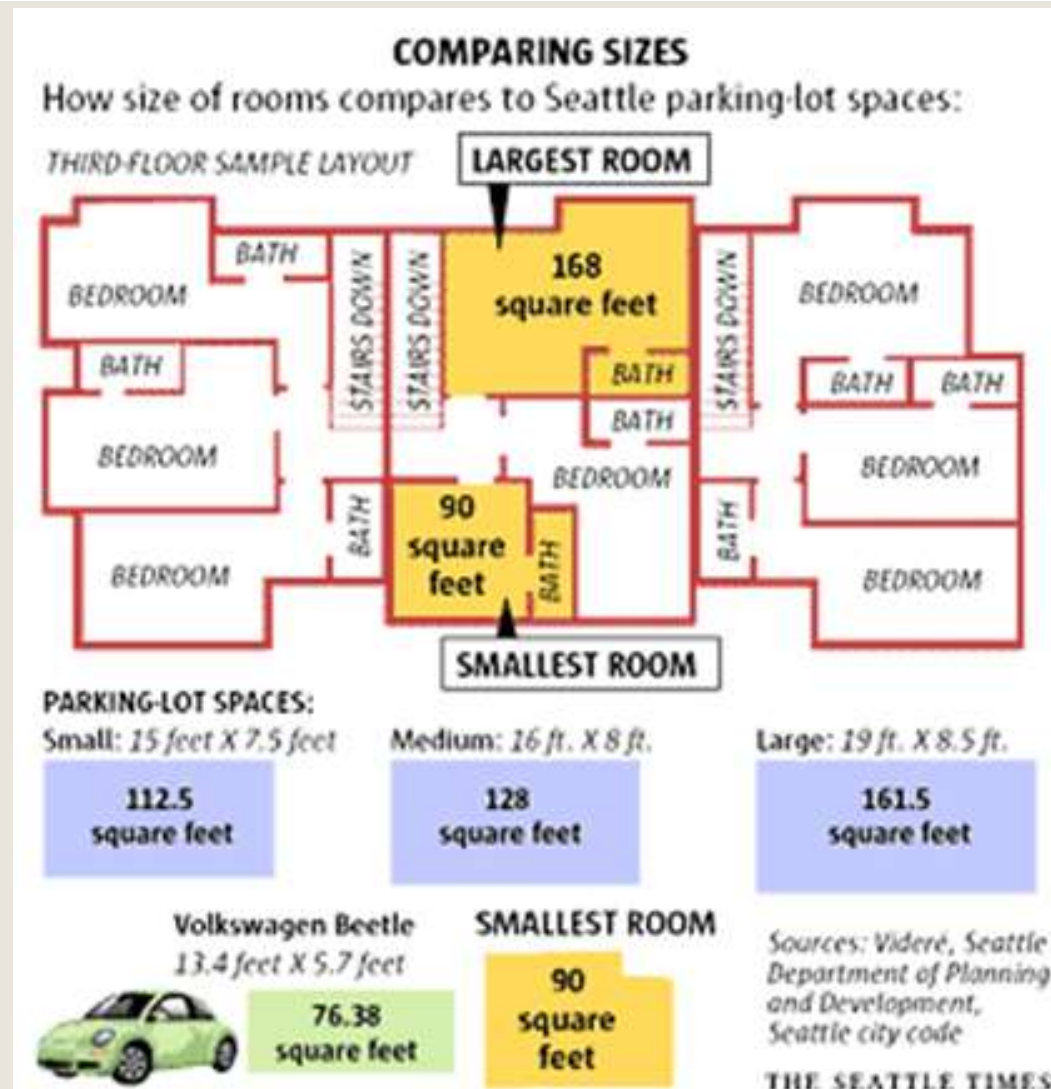
- Approximately 50 applications annually
- Annual report by Planning & Development

aPodments in Seattle



aPodments on 12th Avenue and East John Street, Seattle
Gina Biber / The Capitol Hill Times

aPodments in Seattle



Austin

□ **Micro-units**

- Capital Studios - affordable development downtown
- AIA event on micro-units and affordable housing

□ **ADUs**

- Alley Flats Initiative
- YardHomes Austin
 - Ground lease model; some prefabrication

Austin Alley Flat



Austin Alley Flat



Austin Alley Flat



Regulatory Research

- **Regulatory issues in areas including:**
 - **State and Local Policy**
 - **Zoning**
 - **Building code**
 - **Occupancy regulations**
 - **Parking regulation**
 - **Approval process**

Regulatory Challenges

□ **Both micro-units and ADUs:**

- Minimum unit size
- Off-street parking requirements
- Lot coverage, setbacks, related regulations
- Financing

□ **ADUs:**

- Minimum lot size
- Capping ADU size based on percentage of main unit
- Owner occupancy requirement
- Review process
- Design requirements

Parking

- ❑ **Drives up development costs**
- ❑ **Financing issues for micro-units**
- ❑ **Conflict with other regulations**
 - ❑ Austin – impervious surface cap
- ❑ **Creative solutions**
 - ❑ Seattle allows tandem parking and waives requirement if not feasible or parking study indicated adequate on-street capacity

Future Research Questions

- ❑ **Affordability/Land Prices**
- ❑ **Neighborhood effects**
 - ❑ Transit and car share usage
 - ❑ Demographics
 - ❑ Parking
- ❑ **Energy consumption**
- ❑ **Financing**
 - ❑ ADU appraisal
 - ❑ Effect of owner-occupancy requirement

Thank You

John Infranca

Assistant Professor of Law,
Suffolk University Law School
Research Affiliate,

Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy
jinfranca@suffolk.edu



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FOR REAL ESTATE & URBAN POLICY
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF LAW • WAGNER SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE



Suffolk University
Law School