

# More Backyard Home Choices for Washington Families

January 2026

Washingtonians urgently need more affordable home choices, and MDUs—mobile dwelling units—fill a critical gap for families across the state.

- MDUs are the **lowest-cost, fastest** housing option on the market. Buyers can purchase these homes today for under \$100,000 with **no public subsidy**.
- Their small-scale, flexible design makes them less expensive and **lighter-impact than conventional ADUs**.
- MDUs are already a **popular** dwelling option, but local zoning practices largely **restrict them to manufactured home parks**, which are scarce, pricey, and often far from jobs, transit, and community resources.
- People currently live in MDUs all across Washington, forced to accept the precarity of non-compliance and forego safety and renter protections. **Legalizing safe, utility-connected** homes with wheels in more places statewide would quickly add affordable homes where they're most needed while shifting from "don't ask don't tell" enforcement to clear, consistent standards for everyone.
- MDUs are an ideal option for **different life stages** and needs, from elderly family members to caregivers to young people starting out.
- They can also serve as a "**mortgage helper**," providing stabilizing rental income for homeowners.
- With their rapid install and low cost, they're a critical lifeline option to prevent someone falling into **homelessness** when they experience a sudden hardship.
- For neighbors with aesthetic concerns, many cities and towns already have laws on the books limiting or **restricting "junk vehicle" storage** on one's property.
- Foregoing a typical ADU in-ground foundation, MDUs can help to **preserve the trees** on a homeowner's property, even as they supply a new spare room in the yard.

In a state facing a severe housing shortage and soaring costs, MDUs are the fastest, lowest-cost housing solution state leaders can legalize for Washington families today.