

Legalizing Homes in Idaho

A POLICY ROADMAP FOR MORE CHOICES AND LOWER COSTS

Idaho's Housing Shortage

- Home prices and rents have outpaced wages across the state.
- Most neighborhoods only allow one home per lot, even near jobs, schools, and services.
- Families, workers, and seniors are left with fewer options and longer commutes.

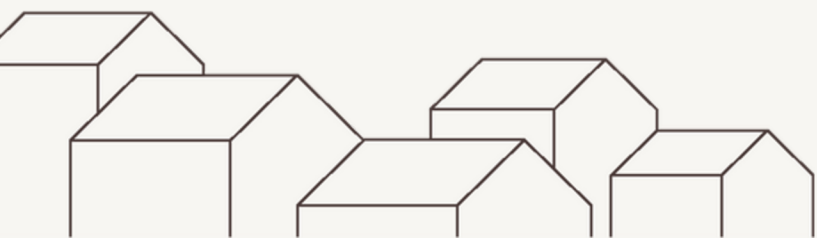
What's Holding Us Back

For decades, state and local rules have made new housing:

- Illegal in many neighborhoods (bans on duplexes, fourplexes, and ADUs)
- Expensive through high fees, excessive parking mandates, and utility hookup costs
- Slow with endless public hearings and permitting delays
- Risky for small builders who lack financing tools



Download this explainer and get involved at: gemstatehousing.org



Four Key Reforms for Idaho ADU

1. Legalize ADUs and Missing Middle Homes

- Allow one ADU by right statewide.
- Permit duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes in residential areas.

2. Make Housing Approvals Faster and Cheaper

- Enact permit shot clocks (e.g., 90 days for decisions).
- Reduce unnecessary parking requirements near schools, jobs, and transit.
- Use pre-approved designs to streamline approvals.

3. Ensure Every Neighborhood Does Its Part

- Set regional housing targets so growth is shared fairly.
- Require cities to zone enough land for attainable homes.

4. Strengthen Financing for Small Builders

- Create a state revolving loan fund for neighborhood-scale projects.
- Support Idaho contractors and nonprofits who want to build attainable homes but face barriers to financing.

BENEFITS FOR IDAHO:

Lower housing costs for working families, seniors, and young people

Shorter commutes and less traffic by building near jobs and schools

Stronger local economies with more jobs for small contractors

Protected farmland and open space by adding homes within existing neighborhoods

Myths & Facts

Myth: Legalizing more homes will ruin neighborhood character.

Fact: With clear design standards, duplexes and fourplexes look like large homes.

Myth: Growth will overwhelm roads and schools.

Fact: Infill happens gradually and actually helps cities plan more predictably.

Idaho families can't wait. We need bold but practical solutions to make housing legal again.

FOR CITIES:

Update zoning codes to allow ADUs, duplexes, and fourplexes.

FOR IDAHOANS

Join Gem State Housing Alliance to support legalizing homes.