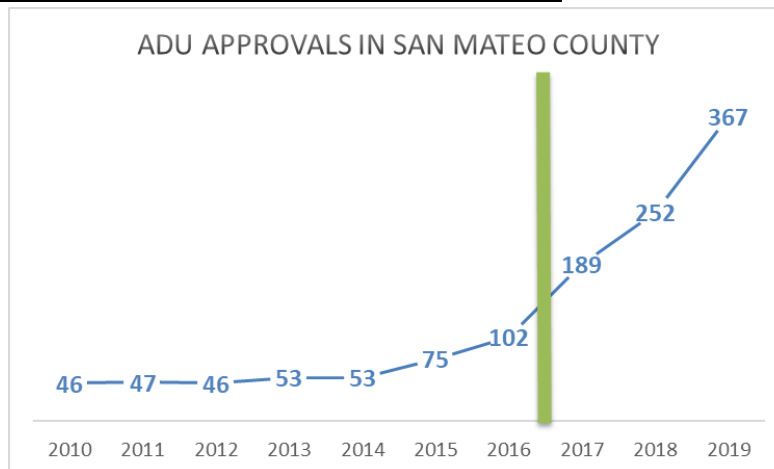


## Additional Second Unit Resources for Community Leaders

Home for All knows of several other resources that may be of interest to community leaders seeking to promote second units. These include:

### **1. Progress on Second Unit Construction in San Mateo County**



Following new state rules that took effect in 2017 (the green bar in the chart above), the number of second units approved across San Mateo County rapidly accelerated from roughly 50 per year in the early 2010s to nearly 400 in 2019 (with 19/21 jurisdictions reporting their 2019 data so far).

### **2. Best Practices**

Several communities have begun best practices that help encourage the development of second units. All such best practices can be found online at <https://secondunitcentersmc.org/convening>.

#### **a. Fee Waiver for Affordable Second Units**

The County of Marin has developed a program that provides waivers on the cost of planning and building permits. The size of the waiver is on a sliding scale to encourage second units rented at affordable prices.

#### **b. East Palo Alto Garage Conversion Initiative**

The East Palo Alto Garage Conversion Initiative is a community effort to help homeowners convert garages in East Palo Alto to second units and legalize unpermitted units. The website features a property lookup tool that helps homeowners understand if they have a suitable garage, and a built-in calculator that helps estimate the cost of the conversion.

#### **c. San Mateo County Amnesty Program**

Unpermitted units are present in many single-family homes- some estimates suggest up to 10% of the homes in the county may have an unpermitted second unit. In the unincorporated county, the County has recently begun operating an innovative amnesty pilot program for these unpermitted units.

#### **d. “Bright in Your Own Backyard” One Stop Shop**

The “Bright in Your Own Backyard” One Stop Shop is a program to help homeowners in Redwood City, Pacifica, East Palo Alto, and the unincorporated County successfully complete the process of building a second unit. The program offers free project management assistance with building a second unit. For more information, visit <https://www.hellobright.org/>.

e. **Symbium's ADU Tool**

Residents and planners in Redwood City, Pacifica, and Unincorporated San Mateo County can use [Build.symbium.com](http://Build.symbium.com) to quickly determine whether an ADU is allowed at a particular address and, if so, what specific development standards (state and local rules) apply. This free online tool incorporates the relevant planning and zoning rules into map and satellite data so anyone can visualize what's possible on a property. To find out more about adding your city to Symbium BUILD, please contact [info@symbium.com](mailto:info@symbium.com)

**3. Framing Resources for Talking About Housing**

Talking about adding new housing supply, including second units, can create a fraught conversation in some circumstances. The Frameworks Institute has some useful information on avoiding common messaging backfires and better communications strategies to employ, which is available on the convening webpage listed above.

**4. HEART of SMC Preapproved Second Unit Plans**

San Mateo County's nonprofit affordable Housing Trust, HEART of SMC, is in the process of developing free plans for second units that homeowners can use (these plans will soon be preapproved by participating cities, to help eliminate any uncertainty from the planning process). More information can be found online at <https://www.heartofsmcadu.org/>.

**5. Fact Sheet on Property Tax Impacts of Second Units**

One of the most common homeowner questions about second units is "what will this do to my property tax bill?" The good news is that second units only add to your valuation based on the value of the new construction- they don't trigger a full revaluation of a house. More information can be found in a new fact sheet from the Assessor's office, which is located online at: <https://www.smcacre.org/assessor-faqs>

**6. County-staffed Second Unit Outreach Events**

In addition to its flagship ADU resource fairs, the County of San Mateo sometimes sends staff to present or table about second units at events hosted by nonprofits, real estate agents, and others. If your group would like a presentation on second units or would like to host an educational event for homeowners about second units with county staff participating, please contact Home for All ([homeforall@smcgov.org](mailto:homeforall@smcgov.org)).

**7. Second Unit Calculator**

San Mateo County's online Second Unit Center calculator helps a homeowner get an approximate estimate for what a second unit project might cost, yield as an investment, and allows a user to change assumptions such as location, unit size, type of unit, and much more. The calculator can be found online at <http://calculator.secondunitcentersmc.org/>.

**8. Casita Coalition**

The Casita Coalition is a nonprofit state-wide coalition of second unit advocates, policymakers, builders, affordable housing advocates, and others who are keen to promote second units as a housing option. Anyone who is interested in getting more deeply involved in the world of second units might wish to consider joining the Coalition. More information is online at: <https://secondunitcentersmc.org/convening>.

**For up to date information on the latest in second units, please sign up for updates at <https://SecondUnitCenterSMC.org/subscribe>.**