

CONVERT YOUR BASEMENT

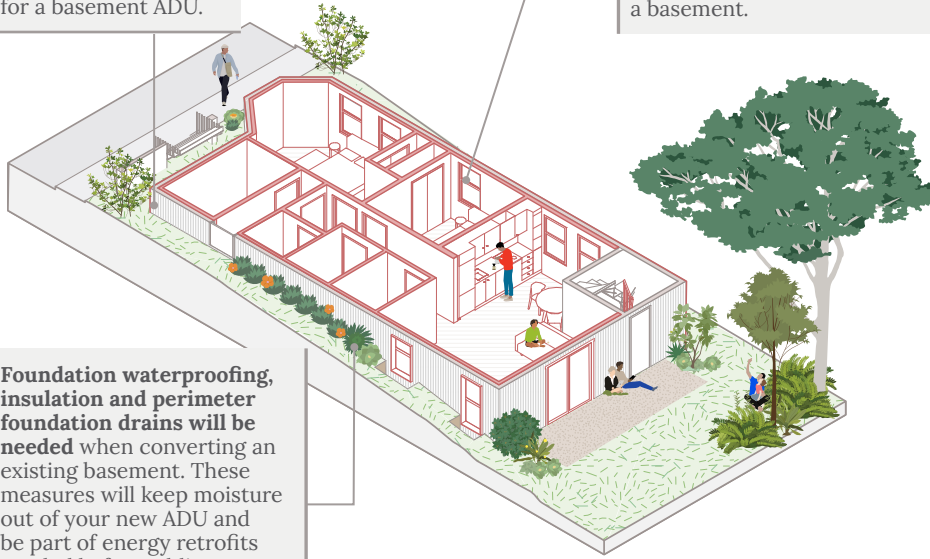


Is your basement partially above ground and underutilized? Turn it into an ADU.

If your home is on a sloping site, it could be a great candidate for a basement ADU.

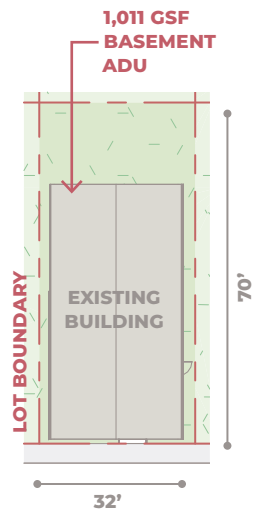
Window wells and windows sized for egress are needed for any bedrooms located in a basement.

Foundation waterproofing, insulation and perimeter foundation drains will be needed when converting an existing basement. These measures will keep moisture out of your new ADU and be part of energy retrofits needed before adding heating and cooling systems.

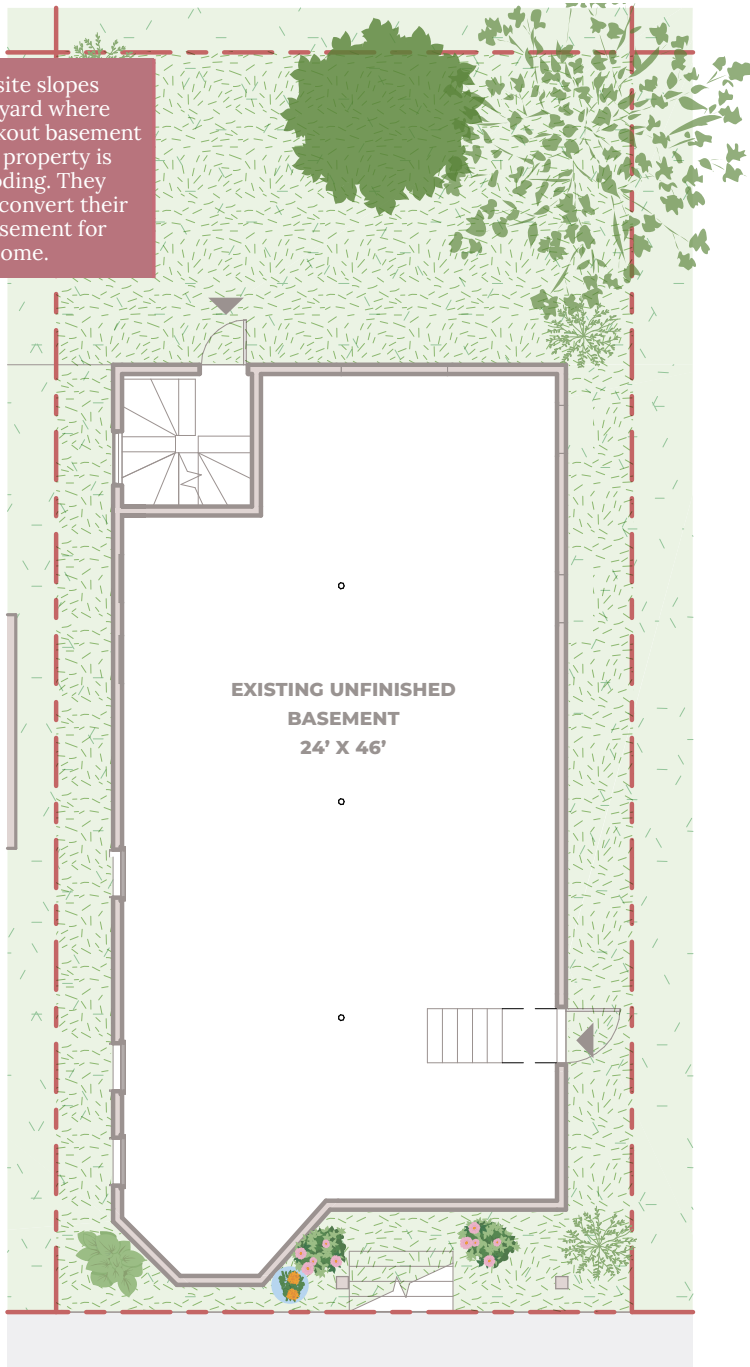


Many homes in Boston are located on sloped sites or built on elevated foundations. That means their existing basements have tall ceilings and the ability to add and expand windows. These basements have the potential to be converted into an ADU that can host a family member with more privacy, be rented out for income, or accommodate live-in care.

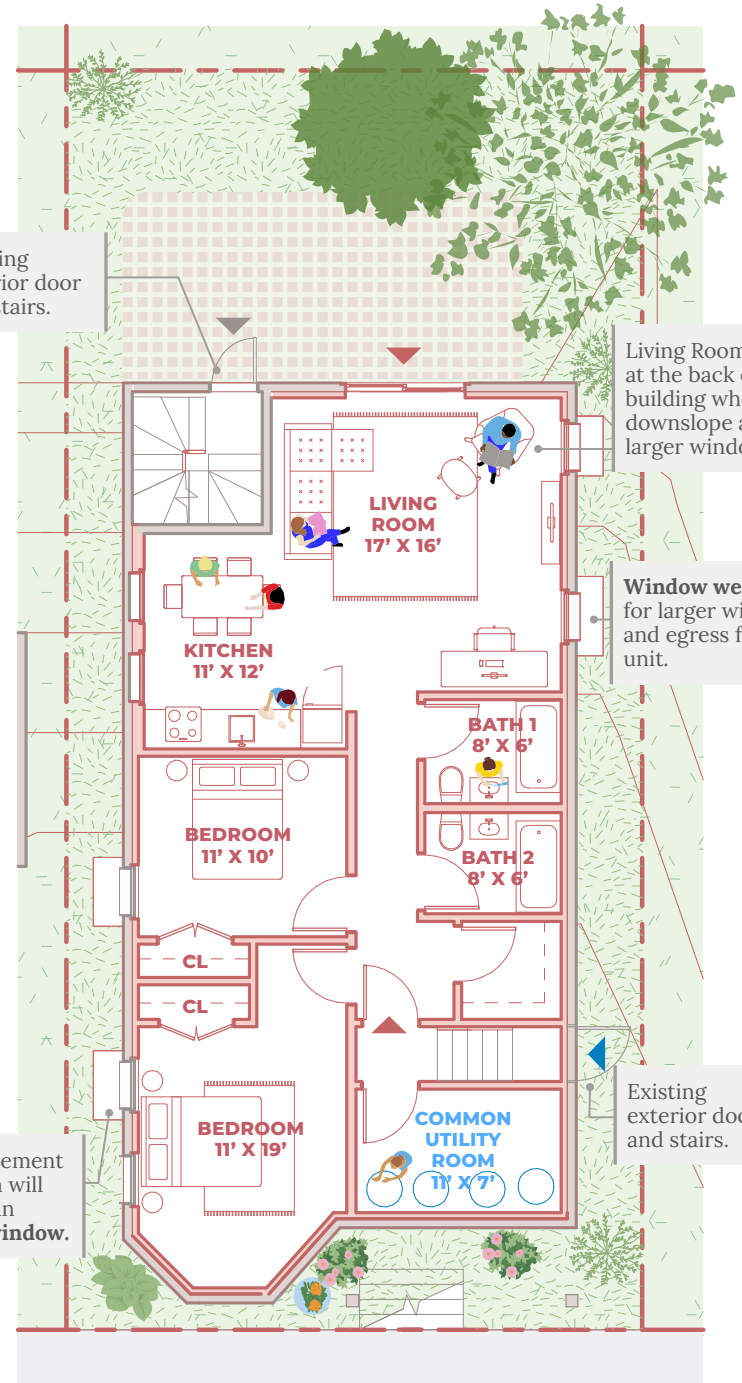
If you are considering converting your basement into an ADU, check if you have room for at least seven feet and six inches of clear space between the floor and ceiling. Building code will also require egress windows from all bedrooms located in a basement apartment. This type of ADU is not possible in any area vulnerable to flooding, such as within the Coastal Flood Resiliency Overlay.



This owner's site slopes down to backyard where there is a walkout basement door, and the property is safe from flooding. They would like to convert their unfinished basement for additional income.



ORIGINAL FIRST FLOOR PLAN — UNFINISHED CELLAR 3/32" = 1'-0"



Existing exterior door and stairs.

Living Room located at the back of the building where the downslope allows for larger windows.

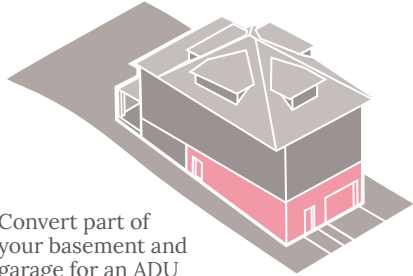
Window wells allow for larger windows and egress from unit.

Existing exterior door and stairs.

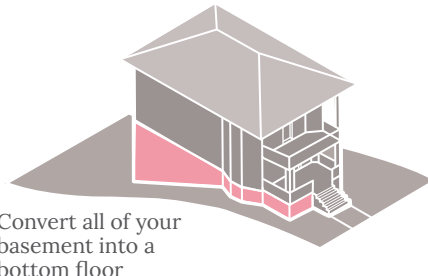
Each basement bedroom will require an egress window.

3/32" = 1'-0" BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN WITH ADU

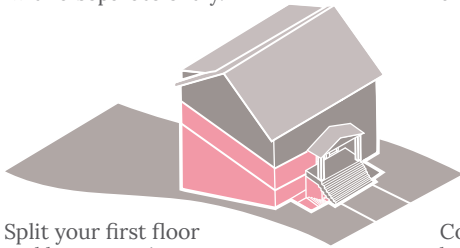
MORE WAYS TO CONVERT YOUR BASEMENT



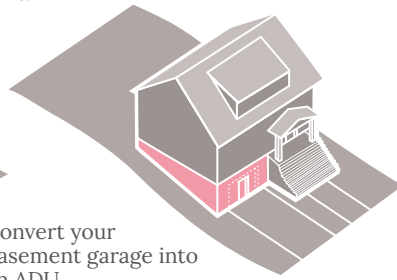
Convert part of your basement and garage for an ADU with a separate entry.



Convert all of your basement into a bottom floor unit.



Split your first floor and basement into one two-story unit.



Convert your basement garage into an ADU.

This approach to adding an ADU can be customized to fit your building and lot. In the example shown on the previous pages, the lot slopes downward from the front to the rear. Therefore, the living area is placed on the side of the basement that gets more natural light. If your lot slopes in the opposite direction, you may want to design the ADU with the living area on the side that faces the front of the lot to maximize natural light. This way, you can ensure that the most light-filled space is positioned where it will be most beneficial.

If you need to use space in the basement for storage or utilities, you can use a portion of the basement for the ADU and keep a portion for other uses. The key concepts will remain the same: you will need to ensure building code-required floor-to-ceiling height, provide code-required egress, update the exterior walls and site drainage to keep moisture out of the basement and upgrade the exterior walls and floor to meet existing energy codes.

At this house in Mission Hill, access to the basement has been incorporated at the front of the house.



This home, located on a sloping site in Somerville, has added large windows to the above grade portion of its basement facade.



Bedroom basement windows that are partially below grade will require windows wells like the one in this image.

