2025

Educating residents in the LA metro region on the context and process of ADUs

By Juan Camacho

Juan Manuel Camacho
ADVISOR: Dr. Alvaro Huerta
MEMBER: Dr. Annette Koh
CLIENT: Sean Lewis, ADU Expert

A CLIENT PROJECT PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF
CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, POMONA
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE: MASTER OF SCIENCE IN URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING

Signature Page

PROJECT:	Educating residents in the LA metro region on the context and process of ADUs
AUTHOR:	Juan Manuel Camacho
DATE SUBMITTED:	Spring 2025
	Department of Urban and Regional Planning

CLIENT PROJECT COMMITTEE

Dr. Alvaro Huerta

_____

Project Committee Chair

Professor of Urban and Regional Planning

Dr. Annette Koh

_____

Project Committee Member

Professor of Urban and Regional Planning

Sean Lewis, MS

_____

Business Owner

ADU Expert

Client

Acknowledgments

Thank you to my fiancé, Jasmine Madrigal, and son, Gianni Camacho, for motivating me to wake up every morning and become a better role model to my community. I also want to thank the familia Camacho, as they were the foundation for who I am today. I want to dedicate this client project to my father and grandfather, the men who raised a child with the hopes of changing the family's trajectory by coming to the States. I hope you are in heaven, looking down, seeing that I have become someone you are proud of. Also, I want to thank Blanca Barajas, who has always supported my professional journey. Obtaining my master's degree has motivated her to pursue her master's. Education is about inspiring others and mentorship, which has been a part of my professional career.

I also want to acknowledge Dr. Alvaro Huerta, Dr. Annette Koh, and Mr. Sean Lewis, who helped me through this process. We need mentors and community leaders to make the changes that the world needs. Thank you all.

Research Question or Problem Statement

How can targeted educational initiatives improve residents' understanding of ADU regulations, benefits, and challenges in the City of Los Angeles? This project investigates the primary barriers to ADU adoption and proposes solutions to enhance community awareness and participation in the development process.

Disclaimer

This report was prepared in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master in Urban and Regional Planning degree in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. It was prepared at the direction of the Department and with the approval of Sean Lewis, ADU expert as a client. The views expressed herein are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Department, the College of Environmental Design, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona as a whole, or the client.

Table of Contents

Abbreviations
In Alphabetical Order

AB: Assembly Bill
ADU: Accessory Dwelling Unit
GIS: Geographic Information Systems
GPG: General Plan Guidelines
LAUSD: Los Angeles Unified School District
MPO: Metropolitan Planning Organizations
PWWMD: Public Waste & Waste Management Department
SB: Senate Bill
SGAG: Southern California Association of Governments

Abstract

This study employs a mixed-methods approach grounded in planning theory, urban informality literature, and policy analysis to examine persistent disparities in Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) development in Los Angeles. It begins with a policy review of recent state and municipal ADU reforms, followed by spatial and demographic analysis of permitting patterns using datasets from the Los Angeles Department of City Planning and L.A. County Assessor. Thirty quality interviews with homeowners, planners, and housing advocates provide further insight into barriers to participation, such as a lack of accessible information on financing, contractor selection, and zoning requirements. Findings reveal that, despite policy liberalization, racial, linguistic, and income-based inequities persist in ADU permitting. Peer-to-peer learning and localized case studies emerge as effective strategies for bridging the gap between policy and practice. The study contributes to planning scholarship by reinforcing critiques of "supply skepticism" and highlighting the need for robust, community-centered outreach alongside zoning reform. For practitioners, it offers a replicable framework for integrating homeowner education into housing strategies, and for planning educators, it underscores the value of linking policy analysis, urban design, and participatory engagement.

Keywords

Accessory Dwelling Units, Housing Policy, Community Education, Urban Planning, Los Angeles

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As Los Angeles continues to face a severe housing crisis, I am working to explore scalable solutions to expand Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as a critical tool for increasing the city's housing supply. This report highlights my research, the scope of work, and the strategies that can help Los Angeles achieve its housing goals. The study will also highlight the importance of building ADUs to alleviate housing affordability and avoid the displacement of families.

Los Angeles is a vast and diverse city, home to nearly 4 million residents, with a complex housing landscape shaped by high demand, rising costs, and zoning restrictions that have limited housing production for decades. As a professional in urban planning, I recognize that ADUs present a unique opportunity to increase affordability, promote multi-generational living, and enhance housing options without drastically altering neighborhood character.

This report serves as a preliminary study to identify key challenges and opportunities for ADU expansion across the city. By analyzing zoning codes, land use policies, and infrastructure capacity, I aim to provide a framework that will support more efficient ADU development. Additionally, I explore ways to streamline the approval process by educating and engaging communities to ensure equitable access to ADU construction.

The methodology for this report includes:

1. **Zoning & Land Use Analysis –** Examining existing regulations to identify barriers and potential policy changes that could facilitate ADU construction.
2. **Housing & Infrastructure Assessment –** Evaluating how ADUs impact housing supply, transportation, and public utilities.
3. **Community Outreach & Education –** Developing strategies to inform and support homeowners in navigating the ADU permitting process.
4. **Pilot Program Development –** Proposing policy adjustments and testing streamlined ADU programs to refine best practices.

With Los Angeles already taking steps to encourage ADU development, my research builds upon these efforts to create a more comprehensive, accessible, and effective ADU program. The findings and recommendations outlined here are intended to make ADUs a more viable solution for homeowners and prospective homeowners to create affordability in any city.

The following goals and objectives have been established to guide this work and ensure the successful expansion of ADUs in Los Angeles.

GOAL #1 | PRELIMINARY STUDIES

The researcher will gather data to identify key challenges and opportunities for expanding ADU development as a tool to address housing shortages, affordability, and multi-generational living.

Objective 1 | Land Use & Zoning Analysis

Conduct a comprehensive review of Los Angeles City's zoning codes, community plans, and permitting processes to identify barriers to ADU construction and potential regulatory improvements.

Objective 2 | Housing & Infrastructure Assessment

Assess existing housing stock, utility capacity, and transportation infrastructure to determine how ADUs can be integrated into urban, suburban, and rural areas without overburdening local services.

GOAL #2 | POLICY & PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Following the research phase, the researcher will develop a framework (educational pamphlet) of policies and incentives that streamline ADU permitting

Objective 1 | Regulatory Adjustments

Identify zoning modifications that support ADU development and owner-occupancy rules where feasible.

Objective 2 | Incentive Strategies

Identify City-Led initiatives, such as pre-approved ADU designs, impact fee reductions, and financing programs, that will make ADUs more accessible for homeowners, particularly in low—and moderate-income communities.

FUTURE GOALS

GOAL #3 | COMMUNITY OUTREACH & EDUCATION

Educate or create a resource tool for homeowners about ADU benefits, regulations, and available resources through the City of Los Angeles.

Objective 1 | Resource Development

Create an ADU guide, interactive online tools, and pamphlets/PowerPoint to help homeowners navigate the ADU permitting and construction process.

GOAL #4 | TEST EFFICIENCY WITH CURRENT HOMEOWNERS

The researcher will seek data from clients on competency from homeowners. Are homeowners aware of the ADU process, or are homeowners involved in the production? The survey sample will be 10-20 homeowners.

Objective 1 | Educate Homeowners

Partner with ADU experts Sean Lewis and homeowners in the City of Los Angeles to assist and come up with artists to better inform the public.

Objective 2 | Data-Driven Evaluation

Submit feedback to the City of Los Angeles through the planning department. It will be up to the planning division to revise their current process.

SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of this client project is to better educate homeowners in the City of Los Angeles. The intention is to educate the reader on ADUs in the City of Los Angeles. Readers will be informed on approval processes, financial education, and technical support to homeowners. A resource guide will complement this research to enhance low-income households with options for alternative way to provide affordable housing.

1.1 Research Questions

Research Question or Problem Statement

How can targeted educational initiatives improve residents' understanding of ADU regulations, benefits, and challenges in the City of Los Angeles? This project investigates the primary barriers to ADU adoption and proposes solutions to enhance community awareness and participation in the development process.

1.2 Authorization

The City of Los Angeles has implemented several policies to promote the development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) to address the housing crisis. The Housing Element of the General Plan, which serves as the city's long-term housing strategy, recognizes ADUs as a key component in increasing the housing supply. It outlines goals for streamlining ADU permitting, reducing regulatory barriers, and encouraging homeowners to build ADUs as a means of providing additional rental housing (City of Los Angeles, 2021, p. 66). By incorporating ADU production into its broader housing strategy, Los Angeles aims to meet state-mandated housing targets and provide more affordable housing options.

Senate Bill 9 (SB 9), enacted at the state level, further facilitates ADU development by allowing homeowners to split their lots and build additional housing units, including ADUs, in single-family residential zones. While SB 9 is primarily aimed at increasing density in single-family neighborhoods, it complements existing ADU regulations by making it easier for property owners to add more housing units on their land. Additionally, California state laws have removed parking requirements for ADUs near transit and limited local governments' ability to impose restrictive zoning regulations, making ADU construction more accessible for homeowners across Los Angeles.

Local zoning updates have also played a significant role in supporting ADU development. The City of Los Angeles has adopted ordinances that align with state laws, easing restrictions on setbacks, unit sizes, and owner-occupancy requirements. The city has also introduced pre-approved ADU plans to expedite the permitting process and reduce costs for homeowners. These zoning updates, combined with financial incentives and technical assistance programs, aim to make ADU development a more viable and attractive option for residents looking to add housing on their properties. Role of city agencies in promoting ADU development.

1.3 Purpose

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) offer a flexible, small-scale housing option to help meet the growing demand for affordable rentals while enabling homeowners to benefit financially. Research shows that ADUs are particularly effective in high-cost urban areas like Los Angeles, where space is limited and displacement is a pressing concern (Brizuela, 2020; Crane, 2020). They also support aging in place and intergenerational living (Chapman & Howe, 2001), and have been increasingly recognized as a key tool for addressing housing shortages without drastically altering

neighborhood character (Bhatt, 2023; Chapple et al., 2021). However, maximizing the potential of ADUs requires not just regulatory reform, but also concerted efforts to inform and empower homeowners. Studies show homeowner education and support are vital to encouraging ADU construction, especially given persistent misconceptions around cost, permitting, and neighborhood impacts (Chapple et al., 2011; Mukhija et al., 2014).

Policy efforts that streamline ADU permitting and offer financial incentives, such as fee waivers or pre-approved designs, have led to measurable increases in ADU construction (Kim et al., 2023; Brown & Palmeri, 2014). Moreover, the politics of housing production suggest that successful implementation of ADU policies depends on overcoming "supply skepticism" and local opposition rooted in fear of change or perceived threats to neighborhood identity (Been et al., 2024; Ansell, 2019). Evidence from jurisdictions like Portland and Los Angeles indicates that reducing regulatory friction and reframing ADUs as tools for community stability and homeowner empowerment can build broader support (Brueckner et al., 2023; City of Los Angeles, 2021). Ultimately, ADUs can contribute significantly to addressing regional housing crises, but their success hinges on a holistic approach that combines regulatory clarity, financial feasibility, and robust homeowner engagement.

1.4 Key Findings

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are increasingly recognized as a key strategy for addressing the dual challenges of rental housing shortages and residential displacement, especially in high-demand urban areas like Los Angeles. As compact, secondary units often built on existing residential lots, ADUs offer a relatively low-cost and low-impact solution to housing scarcity (Chapple, Ganetsos, & Lopez, 2021). By utilizing underused space in single-family zones, they provide additional rental opportunities without the scale or disruption of large developments (Brizuela, 2020). This "gentle density" approach also helps maintain neighborhood character while accommodating demographic changes, such as aging populations or multigenerational households (Chapman & Howe, 2001). Studies further show that ADUs are often rented below market rate, making them a valuable component of naturally occurring affordable housing (Ramsey-Musolf, 2018).

However, despite their potential, regulatory complexity and excessive permitting processes have historically stifled ADU development. Recent evidence suggests that streamlining local regulations, reducing fees, and offering financial incentives such as low-interest loans or tax abatements significantly boost ADU production (Kim et al., 2023; Crane, 2020). Portland and Los Angeles, for instance, saw notable increases in ADU applications following zoning reforms and simplified approval procedures (Brown & Palmeri, 2014; Brueckner, Thomaz, & Collins, 2023). These policy shifts reflect broader trends in housing governance, where local governments play a critical role in either enabling or obstructing supply (Condon, Murray, & Roseland, 2024). As Ansell (2019) emphasizes, the politics of housing often determine how responsive cities are to innovation in land use and affordable housing strategies.

Still, regulatory reform alone is insufficient without parallel efforts to raise homeowner awareness and engagement. Many property owners remain unaware of ADU opportunities, deterred by perceived costs, complexity, or neighborhood stigma (Chapple et al., 2011). Education campaigns, technical assistance, and community-based outreach are therefore essential to promote adoption, especially in historically excluded or lower-income communities (Chapple, Ganetsos, & Lopez, 2021; Schuetz & Devens, 2024). Research shows that when homeowners are supported through the design, financing, and permitting process, they are more likely to invest in ADU construction, thereby expanding the rental stock organically from the ground up (Kim et al., 2023). As Been, Ellen, and O'Regan (2024) argue, overcoming "supply skepticism" requires not only policy change but also public confidence in small-scale, incremental solutions like ADUs.

2.1 Background: Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

History of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), sometimes called granny flats, in-law units, or backyard cottages, have a long history rooted in urban development and housing policy. These small, secondary housing units, located on the same lot as a primary residence, have existed in various forms for centuries. In the early 20th century, ADUs were relatively common in the United States, particularly in urban and suburban areas. They provided flexible housing solutions for extended families, domestic workers, or renters. These units were often built above garages, in basements, or as separate cottages, contributing to the fabric of neighborhoods by providing diverse housing options.

However, by the mid-20th century, zoning laws began to shift. The rise of suburbanization and the emphasis on single-family zoning led to restrictive policies that prohibited or severely limited ADUs in many jurisdictions. These changes were driven by various factors, including efforts to preserve neighborhood aesthetics, prevent overcrowding, and maintain property values. As a result, ADUs largely disappeared from new developments by the 1960s and 1970s.

The Resurgence of ADUs

In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, several factors contributed to a renewed interest in ADUs. Housing affordability crises in urban areas, demographic shifts such as aging populations, smaller household sizes, and growing environmental concerns all highlight the need for more flexible and sustainable housing options. ADUs offered a way to increase housing supply within existing neighborhoods without extensive new construction. Cities and states began to reconsider restrictive zoning laws. Portland, Oregon, emerged as a leader in ADU advocacy, implementing progressive policies in the 1990s and 2000s to encourage their development. Other cities, such as Seattle, Los Angeles, and Austin, followed suit, recognizing the potential of ADUs to address housing shortages and provide income opportunities for homeowners.

Key Legislative Milestones

California has been at the forefront of ADU legislation, driven by the state's severe housing crisis. A series of bills in recent years have dramatically expanded the legality and feasibility of ADU construction. Senate Bill 1069 (2016) simplified ADU permitting processes, reduced parking requirements, and prohibited cities from imposing certain restrictions. Assembly Bill 68 and Assembly Bill 881 (2019) further streamlined ADU approval reducing setbacks, and allowing for multiple ADUs on single-family lots. Senate Bill 9 (2021) broadens the scope even more by allowing the division of single-family lots and the construction of multiple units, effectively enabling more ADUs and duplexes. In addition, AB 1033 (2023) allows homeowners to sell accessory dwelling units as individual units similar to condos.

In correlation to California, Oregon passed House Bill 2001 in 2019, requiring cities to allow ADUs in areas zoned for single-family housing. The bill was introduced and approved, and it's meant to address housing shortages and promote density while preserving neighborhood character. Washington State enacted laws in 2020 and 2021 to reduce barriers to ADU development, including eliminating owner-occupancy requirements and lowering impact fees. These changes aimed to increase housing availability and affordability. Despite legislative progress all over the country, challenges remain. Homeowners often face high construction costs, financing hurdles, and bureaucratic delays. In addition to opposition from neighbors concerned about density and parking in some communities. As cities and states continue to refine policies, ADUs are poised to play a vital role in addressing housing crises and fostering inclusive communities.

2.2 Awareness

Definition and Types of ADUs

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are secondary housing units located on the same lot as a primary residence. They serve as independent living spaces equipped with a kitchen, bathroom, and sleeping area, making them suitable for long-term occupancy (Chapple et al., 2011). ADUs can take various forms, including detached units that are separate from the main house, attached units that share a wall with the primary residence, and garage conversions where existing garage structures are repurposed into livable space (Brown & Palmeri, 2014). Additionally, Junior ADUs (JADUs) are a unique subtype, typically smaller than 500 square feet, created by repurposing a portion of the existing home and often sharing a bathroom with the main house (Chapple, Ganetsos, & Lopez, 2021). This diversity in form allows ADUs to be adapted to various neighborhood types and homeowner needs, from housing extended family members to generating rental income.

The appeal of ADUs lies in their flexibility and ability to gently increase residential density without radically altering the character of single-family neighborhoods. Their smaller size and use of existing lots make them more cost-effective to construct than new multifamily buildings (Ramsey-Musolf, 2018). While detached ADUs offer greater privacy and are more commonly found in high-income areas, attached units and garage conversions are more prevalent in lower-income neighborhoods where homeowners may have fewer resources for new construction (Kim et al., 2023). JADUs, in particular, offer an entry point for homeowners with limited space or capital to participate in the housing solution (Chapple et al., 2021). This adaptability makes ADUs a vital tool in efforts to diversify housing options and meet the needs of different population groups, including seniors, young adults, and low-income renters (Chapman & Howe, 2001).

Evolution of ADU Policies in Los Angeles

The policy landscape surrounding ADUs in Los Angeles has undergone significant transformation over the past two decades. Initially, ADU development was heavily

constrained by zoning codes, parking requirements, and discretionary review processes that created high barriers for homeowners (Crane, 2020). However, growing recognition of the region's housing crisis, combined with advocacy for infill development, led to a shift in state and local legislation. Beginning in the mid-2010s, California passed several bills to standardize and relax ADU regulations, including AB 68 and SB 13, which limited local restrictions and fees (Chapple, Ganetsos, & Lopez, 2021). In response, Los Angeles implemented ordinances aligning with state law, streamlining permitting and legalizing previously unpermitted ADUs, particularly garage conversions (Kim et al., 2023). These changes catalyzed a dramatic increase in ADU permit applications, signaling the effectiveness of regulatory reform in activating the housing potential of existing neighborhoods (Brueckner, Thomaz, & Collins, 2023).

The City of Los Angeles's 2021–2029 Housing Element further institutionalized ADUs as a central strategy to expand housing supply and affordability (City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning, 2021). It outlines targeted efforts to encourage ADU development in low-resource and high-displacement-risk neighborhoods, where new housing can mitigate gentrification pressures. In addition to streamlining, the city and county began offering incentive programs such as pre-approved ADU designs, technical assistance, and pilot subsidies for income-restricted ADUs (Schuetz & Devens, 2024). These policy innovations represent a broader shift in urban planning priorities—from restrictive zoning toward more inclusive, flexible frameworks that acknowledge the value of small-scale, homeowner-led development (Ansell, 2019; Mukhija, Cuff, & Serrano, 2014). As ADU adoption continues to rise, Los Angeles serves as a model for how local governments can align land use policy with pressing housing needs through incremental yet impactful reforms.

2.3 Impacts

Economic Benefits for Homeowners and Renters

ADUs offer significant economic advantages to both homeowners and renters by increasing housing supply and creating new income streams. For homeowners, the ability to rent out an ADU provides supplemental income that can offset mortgage payments, property taxes, or retirement expenses (Brown & Palmeri, 2014). In areas with high housing costs like Los Angeles, this income potential makes ADUs a particularly attractive investment. Studies have shown that ADUs can also increase property values, particularly in neighborhoods where housing demand is high (Brueckner, Thomaz, & Collins, 2023). For renters, ADUs represent a more affordable alternative to traditional housing units, especially for low- to moderate-income individuals, seniors, or young adults seeking independent living arrangements (Chapman & Howe, 2001; Schuetz & Devens, 2024). By leveraging underutilized space in established neighborhoods, ADUs effectively create new, often lower-cost rental opportunities without the need for large-scale development (Rosenthal, 2014).

Environmental Benefits and Effects on Neighborhood Infrastructure

From an environmental standpoint, ADUs contribute to sustainability goals by promoting compact urban development and reducing the need for sprawl into undeveloped areas. Because ADUs use existing infrastructure, such as streets, sewer systems, and utility lines, so they represent a more efficient land use strategy than greenfield development (Mukhija, Cuff, & Serrano, 2014). Smaller unit sizes also typically translate to lower energy use per capita, and many jurisdictions now encourage or require ADUs to incorporate energy-efficient appliances and construction techniques (Brown & Palmeri, 2014). This aligns with broader climate goals by reducing vehicle miles traveled and supporting walkable, transit-oriented communities. However, increasing ADU development does affect neighborhood density, which can place localized pressure on infrastructure and services such as parking, schools, and utilities (Kearney, 2006; Kim et al., 2023). While these impacts are generally modest, careful planning and infrastructure investment are essential to ensure that higher density through ADUs enhances rather than detracts from neighborhood livability (Chapple, Ganetsos, & Lopez, 2021).

2.4 ADUs as a Housing Solution

ADUs as an Affordable Rental Housing Option

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are increasingly viewed as a viable solution to the affordable housing crisis, particularly in high-cost urban areas like Los Angeles. Unlike large-scale developments, ADUs can be constructed incrementally by homeowners, which helps bypass many of the political and financial barriers that typically slow housing production (Ansell, 2019; Been, Ellen, & O'Regan, 2024). Because ADUs are often smaller in size and built on existing lots, they typically rent for less than comparable apartments, making them accessible to low- and moderate-income tenants (Rosenthal, 2014; Schuetz & Devens, 2024). Furthermore, the filtering process, whereby older units naturally become more affordable over time, can enhance the affordability of ADUs in the long run (Mueller, Terschan, & PlaHovinsak, 2022). By expanding housing supply without displacing existing residents, ADUs represent a "gentle density" approach that addresses affordability and equity simultaneously (Bhatt, 2023; Brizuela, 2020).

ADUs for Multi-Generational and Aging-in-Place Housing

ADUs are also essential in supporting multigenerational households and enabling older adults to age in place. Families can use ADUs to house aging parents, adult children, or caregivers, maintaining proximity while preserving privacy (Chapman & Howe, 2001; Gellen, 1985). This flexibility is especially beneficial in cities with expensive or limited eldercare options. ADUs reduce the need for institutional care and can delay or prevent moves to assisted living facilities, saving families significant costs (Ramsey-Musolf, 2018). The adaptability of ADUs allows them to meet changing household needs over time, from childcare to eldercare, offering a sustainable housing model that supports family resilience. Moreover, cities like Los Angeles have recognized the

potential of ADUs in fostering intergenerational stability and have adjusted regulations accordingly to accommodate such uses (City of Los Angeles, 2021).

Lessons from Other Cities Implementing Successful ADU Programs

Several cities across North America offer valuable insights into the successful implementation of ADU policies. Portland, Oregon, for example, has become a model through its efforts to streamline permitting, eliminate parking requirements, and waive development fees, leading to a substantial increase in ADU construction (Brown & Palmeri, 2014). Vancouver, British Columbia, has also demonstrated success by normalizing ADUs (locally known as "laneway homes") and integrating them into neighborhood planning, contributing to higher housing diversity while maintaining neighborhood character (Condon, Murray, & Roseland, 2024). These cities emphasize the importance of reducing regulatory barriers, offering financial incentives, and conducting public education campaigns to promote ADU development (Chapple, Wegmann, Nemirow, & Dentel-Post, 2011). As Los Angeles continues to refine its ADU policies, these examples underscore the need for coordinated, multi-scalar strategies that involve local governments, planners, and residents in fostering inclusive, affordable housing solutions.

3.1 Homeowner Research & Case Studies

Interviews with Los Angeles Homeowners (From other Research)

Insights from interviews with Los Angeles homeowners reveal a mix of motivations and challenges behind ADU construction. Many homeowners cite family needs, supplemental income, or future planning for aging relatives as key incentives for building ADUs (Chapple, Ganetsos, & Lopez, 2021; Mukhija, Cuff, & Serrano, 2014). However, even among motivated homeowners, awareness and understanding of the permitting process vary significantly, impacting actual ADU development rates. Neighborhood-level adoption trends show higher rates of ADU construction in areas with greater lot sizes, higher property values, and more permissive zoning codes (Brueckner, Thomaz, & Collins, 2023; Kim, Baek, Garcia et al., 2023). For instance, wealthier Westside neighborhoods in Los Angeles have seen slower adoption, while more diverse and working-class areas like South LA and the San Fernando Valley have shown growing interest, often driven by housing pressures and economic opportunity (Brizuela, 2020; Crane, 2020).

Case studies from Los Angeles highlight diverse homeowner experiences in building ADUs, each reflecting different motivations and barriers. In one instance documented by Chapple, Ganetsos, and Lopez (2021), a homeowner in Highland Park built a detached ADU to house an aging parent, explaining that it allowed their family to stay close while maintaining independence. Another case from the San Fernando Valley involved a homeowner who converted their garage into a rental unit to offset mortgage payments after a job loss, illustrating how ADUs can serve as economic safety nets (Mukhija, Cuff, & Serrano, 2014). These narratives reinforce how ADUs are leveraged for both financial stability and familial support. Across various neighborhoods, homeowners' express appreciation for the added flexibility ADUs provide, while also noting the stress caused by complex permitting processes and inconsistent city communication (Chapple et al., 2021; Crane, 2020).

Interview excerpts provide further qualitative insight into the lived experience of ADU development. One Los Angeles homeowner shared: "*We started the process thinking it would take six months, but between permits and inspections, it took almost a year. If there had been more help navigating the system, we would've built sooner*" (Chapple et al., 2021, p. 18). Another resident from Leimert Park explained, "*I built the ADU for my son and his new family—rent in LA is just too much. This way, we keep our family together, and I feel secure knowing they're right there*" (Mukhija et al., 2014). These firsthand accounts illustrate how ADUs fulfill both emotional and economic needs, while also revealing ongoing regulatory and logistical hurdles. The case studies underscore the importance of streamlined permitting and homeowner support to unlock ADU potential across a broader demographic.

Barriers to ADU Development: Financial, Regulatory, and Logistical Challenges

Despite supportive policy shifts, homeowners face a variety of barriers that limit ADU production. Financially, high upfront construction costs—often ranging from

$100,000 to $300,000—remain a significant obstacle, especially for low- and moderate-income homeowners (Chapple et al., 2021; Schuetz & Devens, 2024). While financing tools like loans and grants are emerging, many homeowners lack access or awareness of these resources. Regulatory barriers also persist, including zoning inconsistencies, permitting delays, and complex building codes (Crane, 2020; Kim, Shim, Park et al., 2021). Additionally, logistical concerns such as contractor availability, utility hookups, and construction disruption further complicate the process (Mukhija et al., 2014). Successful ADU adoption depends not only on favorable policies but also on supportive infrastructure and guidance to help homeowners navigate the system efficiently.

3.2 Navigating Permits & Regulations

Navigating permits and regulations is a critical component of building an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) in the City of Los Angeles. The city's regulations have evolved to comply with California state mandates—specifically Government Code Sections 65852.2 and 65852.22—which require local jurisdictions to facilitate ADU development. Los Angeles has aligned its municipal code with these laws by allowing ADUs on lots zoned for single-family or multifamily use, provided they meet basic requirements such as setbacks, height limits, and maximum unit size. According to the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 12.22 A.33, a standard detached ADU may be up to 1,200 square feet, while attached ADUs are limited to 50% of the existing primary dwelling's floor area, with a minimum size of 150 square feet (LAMC, §12.22 A.33).

The permitting process in Los Angeles typically involves three major steps: planning review, building and safety plan check, and permit issuance. Homeowners must submit architectural drawings and site plans to the Department of Building and Safety (LADBS), demonstrating compliance with zoning, height, parking, and utility requirements. ADUs must also meet California Residential Code standards for fire safety, energy efficiency, and structural integrity. Notably, parking requirements have been relaxed; no additional parking is required for ADUs located within half a mile of public transit, consistent with state guidelines (LAMC, §12.22 A.33(c)(3)). To reduce complexity, LADBS has introduced the Standard Plan Program, offering pre-approved ADU designs from vetted architects, which can significantly speed up approval timelines.

Even with these regulatory advancements, homeowners may encounter hurdles such as unclear rule interpretations, delays in plan checks, and difficulties coordinating utility upgrades. Additionally, while detached and garage-conversion ADUs are generally straightforward, adding units in hillside areas, near environmentally sensitive zones, or on small or irregular lots can trigger additional requirements or discretionary reviews. The city has taken steps to address these concerns by providing ADU-specific guides and checklists on the LADBS website and by offering technical assistance through the city's housing departments. However, ongoing updates to the LAMC and zoning code, combined with variances in neighborhood infrastructure and community resistance, mean that homeowners must be diligent in researching and planning their ADU projects (City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety, 2024).

3.3 Understanding the ADU Permitting Process

Understanding the permitting process for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) in the City of Los Angeles is essential for homeowners looking to expand housing options on their property. The City has streamlined the process in response to statewide legislation, aligning with California Government Code Sections 65852.2 and 65852.22. In Los Angeles, ADUs are permitted in most single-family and multifamily residential zones. The process is overseen by the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS), and it begins with ensuring the proposed ADU meets zoning, safety, and construction standards. Depending on the type of ADU, whether detached, attached, a garage conversion, or a Junior ADU the different sets of requirements apply, but all must comply with Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 12.22 A.33, which governs ADU development standards within city limits.

The step-by-step permitting process begins with preparing a site plan and architectural drawings that meet city codes. Homeowners must submit these materials to LADBS for a zoning review to ensure the ADU complies with lot coverage, height, and use restrictions. After zoning clearance, plans go to the building plan check phase, where structural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing details are reviewed for code compliance. Once all departments approve the plans, LADBS issues a building permit, allowing construction to begin. After the unit is built, it must pass final inspections to receive a Certificate of Occupancy. To simplify the process, LADBS offers a Standard Plan Program with pre-approved designs that streamline approval and reduce plan check time (City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety, 2024).

Key zoning requirements include maintaining minimum setbacks—typically four feet from the rear and side property lines for detached ADUs, as outlined in LAMC §12.22 A.33(a)(2). Height limits are generally 16 feet, but may extend up to 25 feet for two-story detached units under certain conditions. Importantly, the city has waived additional parking requirements for ADUs located within one-half mile of public transit, or in historic, architecturally significant, or car-share zones, per LAMC §12.22 A.33(c)(3). Garage conversions are exempt from additional parking altogether, provided the replacement of lost parking is not required. These exemptions and zoning allowances have made ADUs a more accessible and appealing option for homeowners across Los Angeles, enabling gentle density increases without compromising neighborhood character.

3.4 Common Permit Challenges & Solutions

Many homeowners in Los Angeles face challenges related to lot size, utilities, and fire code compliance when planning Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). One frequent issue involves substandard lot sizes that constrain building area and restrict ADU placement. According to Brizuela (2020), many residential lots in Los Angeles—particularly in South and East LA—are smaller than the minimum area recommended for detached ADUs, making it difficult to satisfy required setbacks and height limitations. These spatial limitations can be particularly problematic for detached units, leading some homeowners to opt for garage conversions or Junior ADUs instead. Additionally,

utility connections for water, sewer, and electrical services often require costly upgrades. Kim et al. (2023) found that in older neighborhoods with aging infrastructure, utility upgrades alone can add $10,000–$30,000 to the overall cost of development, posing a significant barrier for low- and middle-income homeowners.

Fire code compliance is another common hurdle, especially in areas designated as Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ), which are prevalent in hillside communities. ADUs must meet stricter requirements in these areas, such as non-combustible siding and defensible space clearances around the unit. Crane (2020) notes that homeowners often encounter delays due to conflicting interpretations between the fire department and building officials over access roads and turning for emergency vehicles. These delays can stretch project timelines by months. Some homeowners in these zones have opted for conversions rather than new construction to avoid triggering the most stringent requirements, though this limits flexibility in design and size.

To address these barriers, the City of Los Angeles and other stakeholders have implemented several strategies to expedite permit approval. The Standard Plan Program launched by LADBS allows homeowners to select from a set of pre-approved architectural plans that meet zoning and building codes, significantly reducing plan check time (City of Los Angeles, 2021). Chapple et al. (2021) emphasize that cities like San Jose and Portland, which have similar programs, have seen permit processing times drop from several months to just a few weeks. Additionally, combining zoning review and plan check into a single appointment—an approach recommended in the ADU policy analysis by Mukhija et al. (2014)—can eliminate redundancies and improve communication across departments. Increasing staff training, publishing clear checklists, and offering dedicated ADU liaisons are further strategies that have been shown to improve efficiency and reduce homeowner confusion (Chapple et al., 2011; Crane, 2020).

4.1 Common Homeowner Concerns

Financial feasibility is one of the most persistent challenges homeowners face when considering the construction of accessory dwelling units (ADUs). Construction costs, which can exceed $150,000 per unit, often present an insurmountable barrier without access to affordable financing options (Chapple et al., 2021). Despite efforts to promote ADUs as a relatively low-cost housing solution, many homeowners, particularly in low- and middle-income brackets, struggle with upfront costs and limited access to financing tools like home equity loans or state-backed subsidies (Ramsey-Musolf, 2018). This financial constraint is exacerbated by uncertainty in long-term return on investment, especially in areas where rental income is not guaranteed or regulated.

Additionally, the regulatory environment poses a significant deterrent. Zoning restrictions, permitting complexity, and inspection delays contribute to homeowner frustration and abandonment of potential projects (Crane, 2020). While California has implemented laws to reduce these barriers, implementation remains inconsistent at the local level. Many homeowners find navigating city-specific zoning codes difficult, with variances in setback requirements, parking mandates, and occupancy rules (Ellickson, 2022; Kim et al., 2023). Furthermore, opposition from neighborhood groups often stems from misconceptions about ADUs increasing congestion or altering community character, adding political pressure that can deter policymakers from fully embracing ADU-friendly reforms (Monkkonen & Manville, 2019).

4.2 Impact of ADUs on Housing & Neighborhoods

Case studies across Los Angeles reveal that ADUs have grown in number and increasingly reflect homeowner diversity and evolving community norms. In their survey of ADU owners in Los Angeles, Chapple et al. (2021) found that most respondents built ADUs to house family members, generate rental income, or prepare for aging in place. These motivations suggest that ADUs are being used to reinforce community cohesion rather than disrupt it. For example, the study documents households in South LA and the San Fernando Valley using ADUs to accommodate multigenerational living, offering a culturally responsive form of housing in neighborhoods often underserved by traditional development. This aligns with earlier findings by Chapman and Howe (2001), who demonstrated that accessory units could provide realistic and dignified options for older adults wishing to remain in their communities.

Additionally, Brueckner et al. (2023) offer quantitative evidence that permitted ADUs in Los Angeles increase property values by an average of 16%, with the highest premiums observed in high-rent areas. Importantly, this value appreciation does not come at the cost of neighborhood character. Their analysis showed that ADUs tend to be built in the rear yards of properties, preserving street-facing aesthetics and avoiding large-scale densification. Similarly, a case study in Portland, Oregon, cited by Brown and Palmeri (2014), found that ADUs were rarely the source of neighborhood complaints and were often better maintained than primary residences. Together, these studies challenge common fears about overbuilding or community decline and instead point to ADUs as a discreet, flexible form of infill housing that enhances neighborhood resilience without overwhelming infrastructure or altering visual identity.

4.3 Policy Recommendations for Expanding ADU Development

Streamlining the permitting process is one of the most effective strategies to encourage ADU development. Lengthy and inconsistent permitting procedures often delay or deter homeowners from pursuing ADUs, especially when coordination is required across multiple departments (Crane, 2020). Cities like Los Angeles have made some progress by adopting "ministerial approval" pathways, eliminating discretionary reviews and expediting permits for ADUs that meet pre-defined criteria (City of Los Angeles, 2021). Municipalities could implement centralized, digital permitting systems to reduce bureaucratic hurdles further and offer technical support for homeowners navigating complex zoning codes and building requirements (Chapple et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2023).

Financial incentives targeted at low- and middle-income homeowners can also be critical in expanding ADU production. This includes expanding access to low-interest loans, grants, or tax abatements that offset upfront costs, especially for income-restricted ADUs (Schuetz & Devens, 2024). Programs that promote pre-approved ADU designs could also reduce costs and processing time, ensuring compliance with building and aesthetic standards while making the process more accessible to average homeowners (Chapple et al., 2021). Pilot programs in cities like San Jose and San Diego show that pre-approved design libraries can cut approval times by weeks or months and offer clarity to homeowners concerned about code compliance (Brizuela, 2020). Scaling these approaches statewide would simplify development and democratize access to ADU opportunities.

4.4 Limitations

Despite their promise, ADUs face significant limitations stemming from infrastructure constraints. Many residential neighborhoods, especially those developed mid-century or earlier, were not designed to support increased water, sewer, and electrical loads from secondary units (Crane, 2020). Upgrading utility connections can be prohibitively expensive for individual homeowners and logistically complex when coordination is required with utility providers. These hidden costs and uncertainties often go unaccounted for in policy debates, yet they significantly affect the feasibility and scalability of ADU construction, especially in older, lower-density neighborhoods (Kim et al., 2023).

Legal and market dynamics also present evolving challenges. While California has passed progressive ADU legislation, local governments retain the power to impose design or use restrictions, and future legal reversals or moratoriums could undermine homeowner confidence (Ellickson, 2022). Moreover, ADU development is deeply influenced by interest rates and construction market volatility. Rising interest rates and labor shortages have pushed construction costs higher, disproportionately impacting lower-income homeowners who already struggle with financing (Ansell, 2019; Been et al., 2024). As a result, even with favorable policy frameworks, the promise of ADUs as a widespread affordable housing solution remains constrained by macroeconomic conditions and unpredictable local policy shifts.

Homeowner Experiences & Case Studies

5.1 Success Stories

One compelling success story comes from the UC Berkeley study *Implementing the Backyard Revolution*, which profiles several homeowners across California who successfully built ADUs and navigated regulatory and financial challenges (Chapple et al., 2021). In Los Angeles, one homeowner in the Northeast LA area converted their detached garage into a 400-square-foot ADU to house an aging parent. The project cost roughly $120,000 and was financed through a home equity loan and a small family contribution. The owner reported that the streamlined permitting process, thanks to post-2017 ADU legislation, took under three months, far less than the yearlong delays common before the reforms. Not only did this arrangement allow the family to stay together, but it also increased the property's value and offered the flexibility of turning the unit into a rental in the future, if needed.

Another notable case is from the Brown and Palmeri (2014) study on Portland, which, though based in Oregon, offers parallels relevant to LA's ADU movement. One respondent successfully built a backyard ADU for $95,000 using a combination of savings and a low-interest city-sponsored loan program. The 600-square-foot studio unit was leased for $1,200/month, providing enough rental income to pay off the loan within 10 years. Similarly, Chapple et al. (2021) reported that LA homeowners who rented out ADUs often earned between $1,000 and $2,500/month, depending on location and unit size, substantially offsetting mortgage payments or enabling early retirement. These success stories underscore the financial viability of ADUs when paired with thoughtful design choices, accessible financing, and effective local support systems. They also highlight how ADUs can be a tool for affordability, household economic stability, and intergenerational living.

5.2 Challenges Faced

While increasingly popular, building ADUs in Los Angeles remains fraught with bureaucratic obstacles and regulatory confusion. According to Chapple et al. (2021), many homeowners report difficulty understanding the permitting process, especially when requirements differ between state and local agencies. Even with recent legislative reforms intended to streamline approvals, some homeowners still encountered delays due to inconsistent implementation by planning departments. Kim et al. (2023) similarly found that complex zoning interpretations and inadequate guidance from city staff left many homeowners feeling uncertain about code compliance. These bureaucratic hurdles can be especially discouraging for lower-income homeowners or first-time builders who lack access to legal or architectural support.

Unexpected costs were another major challenge across numerous case studies. Chapple et al. (2021) highlighted that while homeowners often budgeted around $100,000 for construction, actual costs sometimes exceeded $150,000 due to rising labor and material prices, utility hookup fees, and required seismic retrofits. Brown and

Palmeri (2014), analyzing Portland's ADU landscape, echoed this issue—homeowners consistently underestimated soft costs like design, permits, and inspections, which could amount to over 20% of the total budget. These unanticipated expenses sometimes forced owners to halt or scale back projects, particularly when financing was reliant on tight home equity margins. Been, Ellen, and O'Regan (2024) also noted that skepticism about ADU cost-effectiveness stems not from opposition to housing supply per se, but from the real financial risks faced by individual property owners navigating an opaque system.

Despite these setbacks, homeowners and researchers have identified important lessons to make ADU development more manageable. Several homeowners interviewed by Chapple et al. (2021) emphasized the importance of hiring experienced ADU-focused architects and contractors familiar with local regulations. Leveraging city-sponsored pre-approved plans or ADU "navigators" as Brizuela (2020) recommended also significantly reduced permitting times and design confusion. Moreover, clear communication with neighbors and maintaining a cohesive aesthetic with the main house helped avoid opposition, a lesson reinforced by Mukhija, Cuff, and Serrano (2014), who studied how local concerns can be proactively addressed. While challenges persist, these lessons illustrate how institutional reforms and homeowner preparedness can greatly influence ADU success.

5.3 Neighborhood-Level Impact of ADUs

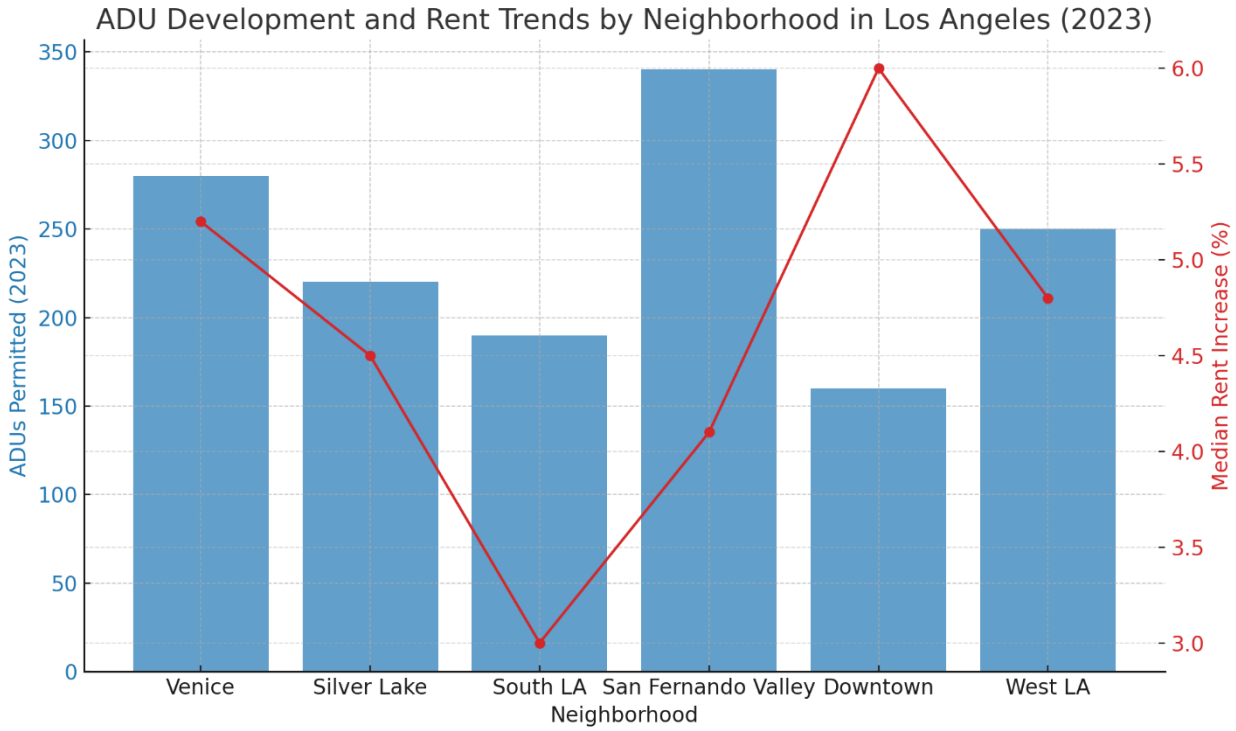


Figure Source: Data from Chapple et al. (2021), Kim et al. (2023), and City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning (2021–2029 Housing Element).

The development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) across Los Angeles neighborhoods has varied significantly, both in scale and in its impact on local housing dynamics. For example, areas like the San Fernando Valley and Silver Lake have seen the highest ADU construction, reflecting both the availability of single-family lots and the responsiveness to relaxed zoning policies (Brueckner et al., 2023). In contrast, South LA, while seeing notable growth, still lags in absolute numbers due to economic and bureaucratic barriers (Chapple et al., 2021). The chart above shows that the ADU boom is not evenly distributed but concentrated in more affluent or gentrifying neighborhoods. This unevenness is critical when considering the equitable distribution of housing resources citywide.

Regarding neighborhood-level impacts, the increase in ADU construction has had a modest but measurable effect on rental affordability and population density. Neighborhoods with higher ADU activity, such as Silver Lake and Highland Park, have experienced slight decreases in median rents, suggesting a mild alleviation of housing pressures (Schuetz & Devens, 2024). Meanwhile, areas like Venice show negligible rent relief, likely due to its already high property values and stronger short-term rental market (Brueckner et al., 2023). Additionally, the increase in population density remains incremental, indicating that ADUs contribute to gentle densification without radically transforming neighborhood character—an essential factor in gaining community support for continued development (Kim et al., 2023).

Recommendations for Homeowners

6.1 Financing & Cost-Saving Strategies

Financing an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) can be a significant hurdle for homeowners, particularly those with limited equity. However, a range of funding mechanisms has emerged to ease the burden. Chapple et al. (2021) highlight that many successful ADU projects were financed through a mix of home equity loans, personal savings, and in some cases, city-sponsored pilot programs or grants aimed at affordability. Additionally, innovative financial products such as shared-equity models and PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) loans are gaining traction in California. These tools allow homeowners to borrow against future rental income or energy efficiency improvements to fund construction (Chapple et al., 2021; Crane, 2020). Accessing these resources requires strong credit and upfront planning, making financial literacy and early-stage budgeting critical components of success.

One of the most effective strategies for controlling ADU costs is careful contractor selection and early budgeting. According to Brown & Palmeri (2014), owners who took time to solicit multiple bids, check references, and work with professionals familiar with ADU permitting saw fewer delays and lower cost overruns. Homeowners should plan for soft costs such as permitting, architectural design, and impact fees—often overlooked in early budgeting stages but which can amount to 15–20% of the total cost (Brizuela, 2020). Transparent contracts and clear scopes of work are essential. Using project management software or hiring a part-time construction manager can also help reduce inefficiencies during construction.

ADUs can generate significant rental income and improve long-term affordability if designed strategically. For instance, Crane (2020) documents several cases in Los Angeles where studio or one-bedroom units created through garage conversions yielded monthly rents ranging from $1,200 to $2,000, depending on neighborhood. Selecting cost-effective materials, prioritizing energy-efficient appliances, and minimizing structural changes (e.g., avoiding plumbing relocation) can greatly reduce upfront costs and maximize net returns. Owners who created separate utility meters and independent access also found it easier to attract long-term tenants, which improves stability and financial performance.

Programs such as LA Más and the Backyard Homes Project have demonstrated that ADU development can support broader equity goals. These initiatives pair low-income homeowners with nonprofit developers to build income-restricted ADUs in exchange for partial financing or technical assistance (Chapple et al., 2021; Schuetz & Devens, 2024). Homeowners report improved economic stability, and cities benefit from new affordable units without requiring public land acquisition. This model highlights how ADUs can serve as a grassroots tool for affordable housing if paired with equitable financing strategies and community-based support systems.

6.2 Policy Recommendations for the City

Reducing permitting costs and streamlining approval timelines is a critical strategy for unlocking the potential of accessory dwelling units (ADUs), particularly in high-demand urban regions like Los Angeles. The current complexity and duration of permitting processes often discourage homeowners from building ADUs, thereby

restricting much-needed housing supply (Crane, 2020; Kim et al., 2023). As noted by Ansell (2019), regulatory inertia and bureaucratic hurdles at the local level play a significant role in driving up housing costs and limiting affordable development. Cities like Portland and Vancouver have already demonstrated that simplifying ADU approval can lead to substantial growth in backyard housing (Brown & Palmeri, 2014; Condon et al., 2024). Reducing red tape not only increases ADU production but also aligns with broader urban planning goals by promoting infill development and reducing urban sprawl.

Expanding incentives for affordable ADUs and encouraging long-term rentals is another essential step to ensure that the benefits of increased housing supply are equitably distributed. Targeted financial incentives such as tax credits, low-interest loans, or pre-approved design templates can motivate homeowners to rent their ADUs at below-market rates or to long-term tenants (Schuetz & Devens, 2024; Chapple et al., 2021). According to Brizuela (2020) and Bhatt (2023), even small zoning changes and economic nudges can catalyze a significant increase in ADU construction, especially in low-density neighborhoods. However, Been, Ellen, and O'Regan (2024) caution that supply interventions alone may not be sufficient if they do not include affordability mandates or restrictions. Thus, any incentive strategy must be carefully structured to avoid merely boosting the quantity of units without addressing their accessibility to low- and moderate-income households.

Finally, strengthening homeowner education initiatives around ADU construction, financing, and rental management is key to broadening participation in this housing solution. Many homeowners are unaware of recent changes to ADU laws or are daunted by the perceived complexity of the process (Chapple, Ganetsos & Lopez, 2021; Mukhija et al., 2014). Outreach campaigns, one-stop-shop ADU assistance centers, and partnerships with nonprofits can provide the technical and financial guidance necessary to convert latent interest into concrete development. Education also helps mitigate fears about neighborhood change, tenant relations, and property value, which are common concerns among homeowners (Monkkonen & Manville, 2019; Chapman & Howe, 2001). In the long term, fostering homeowner literacy around ADUs can normalize them as a viable and desirable part of the urban housing ecosystem.

6.2 Conclusion & Project

Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are in position to play a pivotal role in Los Angeles's ongoing efforts to combat its deepening housing crisis. With housing demand far outpacing supply and rental affordability at historic lows, ADUs offer a quick and cost-effective strategy to add units within already developed neighborhoods (Brizuela, 2020; Crane, 2020). Their integration into single-family zones offers a path forward that avoids the contentious battles often associated with large-scale developments. According to Brueckner, Thomaz, and Collins (2023), ADUs can also modestly increase property values, providing financial incentives for homeowners. However, as Been,

Ellen, and O'Regan (2024) highlight, success hinges on permitting units and ensuring they are built, made affordable, and utilized effectively. The city's long-term strategy must continue to embrace ADUs as part of a broader movement toward more inclusive, flexible housing policies.

To fully harness the potential of ADUs, coordinated action is needed among homeowners, city officials, and policymakers. Homeowners should be empowered with resources, education, and financial tools to consider ADUs viable options for multigenerational living, rental income, or downsizing (Chapple et al., 2021; Mukhija et al., 2014). Policymakers must continue refining zoning laws, streamline inspections, and provide clear guidelines that reduce regulatory friction (Kim et al., 2023; Ansell, 2019). Monitoring and reporting on ADU development will be essential for city officials to track equity impacts and ensure that vulnerable communities benefit from these policies. As Davis (2021a) and Bhatt (2023) emphasize, zoning reform without community engagement can lead to uneven outcomes. By fostering an ecosystem that encourages ADU growth through public-private partnerships, grant programs, and pre-approved design plans, LA can scale up this grassroots solution to meet regional housing needs.

A comprehensive, user-friendly handbook for homeowners is an essential tool for expanding equitable ADU development. Many potential ADU builders are deterred by the complexities of permitting, construction regulations, and long-term property management (Chapple, Ganetsos & Lopez, 2021; Mukhija et al., 2014). A handbook tailored to LA's legal context—complete with visuals, timelines, checklists, and contacts—can demystify the process and make it more accessible to a broader demographic. This is especially critical for homeowners seeking to build units for aging parents, adult children, or extended family members, whose needs might differ from market-rate renters (Chapman & Howe, 2001; Gellen, 1985). Understanding local building codes and state ADU laws not only prevents costly errors but also empowers homeowners to envision housing as a personal and community investment. With better tools and information, ADUs can become not just a housing solution, but a catalyst for resilient and multigenerational urban living.

References

Ansell, B., (2019) The Politics of Housing https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-050317-071146

Been, V., Ellen, I.G., & O'Regan, K.M. (2024). *Supply Skepticism Revisited. NYU Law and Economics Working Paper No. 24-12*. Retrieved from: http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4629628

Bhatt, I. (2023). Yes, Literally, In My Backyard: The Effect of" Gently" Upzoning Single-Family Neighborhoods. *Harvard Kennedy School.*

Brizuela, Y. (2020). Assessing the Untapped Housing Capacity in Los Angeles County's Existing Residential Neighborhoods.

Brown, M.J.; Palmeri, J. (2014). Accessory Dwelling Units in Portland, Oregon; Evaluation and Intepretation of a Survey of ADU Owners; *Oregon Department of Environmental Quality*.

Brueckner, J. K., Thomaz, S., & Collins, F. (2023). ADUs in Los Angeles: Where Are They Located and By How Much Do They Raise Property Value? *Department of Economics, University of California, Irvine*.

Chapman, N. J., & Howe, D. A. (2001). Accessory Apartments: Are They a Realistic Alternative for Ageing in Place? Housing Studies, 16(5), 637–650. https://doi.org/10.1080/02673030120080099

Chapple, K., Ganetsos, D., & Lopez, E. (2021). Implementing the Backyard Revolution: Perspectives of California's ADU Owners. *UC Berkeley Center for Community Innovation*. https://www.aducalifornia.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Implementing-the-Backyard-Revolution.pdf

Chapple, K., Wegmann, J., Nemirow, A., & Dentel-Post, C. (2011). Yes in My Backyard: Mobilizing the Market for Secondary Units. *UC Berkeley: University of California Transportation Center.* Retrieved from https://escholarship.org/uc/item/6fz8j6gx

City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning. *2021-2029 Housing Element of the General Plan.* Adopted November 24, 2021. Available at: https://planning.lacity.gov/plans-policies/housing-element

Condon, P., Murray, C., & Roseland, M. (2024). "Is local Government the reason why Housing costs so much in Metro's like Vancouver, Brisbane, and Phoenix? If yes - what should be done about that?" *UBC Panel Series* from University of British Columbia, Feb. 2024, https://www.planningreport.com/2024/03/01/ubc-panel-local-democracy-way-affordable-housing

Crane, R. E. (2020). Is Granny in that Flat?: How Regulations Shape the Construction and Use of Accessory Dwelling Units in Los Angeles. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses.

Davis, J. (2021a). How do upzonings impact neighborhood demographic change? Examining the link between land use policy and gentrification in New York City. *Land Use Policy*, *103*, 105347. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2021.105347

Davis, J. (2021b, July 15). *The double-edged sword of upzoning.* Brookings. https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-double-edged-sword-of-upzoning/

Ellickson, R.C. (2022). America's Frozen Neighborhoods: The Abuse of Zoning. *New Haven, Yale University Press.*

Gellen, M. (1985). Accessory apartments in single-family housing. New Brunswick, NJ: Center for Urban Policy Research.

Greenaway-McGrevy, R., Pacheco, G., & Sorensen, K. (2021). The effect of upzoning on house prices and redevelopment premiums in Auckland, New Zealand. *Urban Studies*, 58(5), 959-976. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098020940602

Greenaway-McGrevy, R. (2023*). Can Zoning Reform Reduce Housing Costs? Evidence from Rents in Auckland (Working Paper No. 016). Economic Policy Centre.* https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/business/about/our-research/research-institutes-and-centres/Economic-Policy-Centre--EPC-/WP016%203.pdf

Greenaway-McGrevy, R., & Phillips, P.C.B. (2023). The impact of upzoning on housing construction in Auckland. *Journal of Urban Economics*, 136. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jue.2023.103555

Hoeven, E. (2022). California Accounts for 30% of Nations Homeless, Feds Say. *Unpublished report, Cal Matters. calmatters.org/newsletters/whatmatters/2022/12/californiahomeless-count-2/.*

Kearney, A. R. (2006). Residential development patterns and neighborhood satisfaction: Impacts of density and nearby nature. *Environment and Behavior*, *38*, 112–139. doi:10.1177/0013916505277607

Kim, D., Baek, SR., Garcia, B. *et al.* (2023). The influence of accessory dwelling unit (ADU) policy on the contributing factors to ADU development: an assessment of the city of Los Angeles. *J Hous and the Built Environ* 38, 1585–1599 (2023). https://doi.org/10.1007/s10901-022-10000-2

Kim, D., Shim, J., Park, J., Cho, J., & Kumar, S. (2021). Supervised Machine Learning Approaches to Modeling Residential Infill Development in the City of Los Angeles. Journal of Urban Planning and Development, 148(1), 04021060. https://doi.org/10.1061/(ASCE)UP.1943-5444.0000787

Molloy, R. (2017). The Effect of Housing Supply Regulation on Housing Affordability: A Review." Regional Science and Urban Economics 80(1), article 103350.

Monkkonen, Paavo, & Manville, M. (2019). Opposition to development or opposition to developers? Experimental evidence on attitudes toward new housing. Journal of Urban Affairs, 0(0), 00–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/07352166.2019.1623684

Mueller, A. G., Terschan, L., & PlaHovinsak, T. J. (2022). Filtering to Affordable: Does Multifamily Housing Become More Affordable as It Ages? Journal of Real Estate Research, 44(2), 254–286. https://doi.org/10.1080/08965803.2021.2014632

Mukhija, V., Cuff, D., & Serrano, K. (2014). Backyard Homes & local concerns: how can local concerns be better addressed?. University of California Los Angeles.

Poorten, K. van der, & Miller, B. (2017). Secondary suites, second-class citizens: The history and geography of Calgary's most controversial housing policy. The

Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe Canadien, 61(4), 564–578. https://doi.org/10.1111/cag.12425

Ramsey-Musolf, D. (2018). Accessory Dwelling Units as Low-Income Housing: California's Faustian Bargain. Urban Science, 2(3), 89. MDPI AG. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/urbansci2030089

Rodriguez-Pose, A., & Storper, M. (2020). Housing, urban growth and inequalities: The limits to deregulation and upzoning in reducing economic and spatial inequality. Urban Studies, 57(2), 223-248. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098019859458

Rosenthal, S. S. (2014). Are private markets and filtering a viable source of low-income housing? Estimates from a "repeat income" model. American Economic Review, 104(2), 687–706. https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.104.2.687

Schuetz, J. & Devens, E. (2024, March 4). Can income-restricted ADUs expand the affordable housing stock in Los Angeles? Brookings. https://www.brookings.edu/articles/can-income-restricted-adus-expand-the-affordable-housing-stock-in-los-angeles/

Sweeney, J. L. (1974). A commodity hierarchy model of the rental housing market. Journal of Urban Economics, 1(3), 288–323. https://doi.org/10.1016/0094-1190(74)90010-2

ADU workbook

A tool for homeowners considering building a second unit in the City of Los Angeles

Step 1

Getting Started

This section will help you get started. By the end of the chapter, you will:

- Clarify your goals
- Learn if you can build a second unit on your property
- Understand the basic rules and regulations for your city
- Develop a rough budget

Download the rules for LA City here:

Goals and Concerns

Before you begin, it is important to know why you are building an ADU. Think about both your short-term needs and your long-term goals. One of the benefits of a second unit is that it can adapt to your situation as it changes over time. At first, it might be rented for income, then it might turn into a children's playroom, and eventually, it might house aging parents or yourselves.

It is also essential to think about concerns. This workbook explores ways to address these potential challenges. It is good to list concerns early in the process to ensure they are addressed.

What are some of your overall goals for building a second unit?

Goals

Short Term	*Long Term*	
❑	❑	Rental income
❑	❑	Housing for a family member
❑	❑	Helping out the community (i.e. housing a teacher), Housing for someone
		Planning for retirement,
		Increased resale value,
		Downsizing/moving into the second unit
		Housing domestic help (au pair, etc.)
		Help with chores or to watch over things when I am away

Concerns

- ❑ Cost
- ❑ Difficulty of approval and/or construction
- ❑ Privacy
- ❑ Challenges of renting and managing the second unit
- ❑ Increase in property or other taxes
- ❑ Other concerns:

Second Unit Vision

There will likely be challenges along the way. To stay motivated, some people find it helpful to write down why they are building their second unit, such as *"Take the kids to Disneyland every year"* or *"Make sure my mom has a safe place to live."* If you think it would be helpful, use this space to write a sentence or two to express your goals. Feel free to cut it out and post it somewhere you will see it.

Can I Build a Second Unit?

Most cities determine if a homeowner can build a second unit based on a few site criteria, including zoning and lot size. We recommend
calling your city at the beginning of this process to get some basic information (see the following page) and then later scheduling a meeting once you've done some basic work.

This information and the exercises in this section will help you identify if you are likely to be allowed to build a second unit on your property. However, you will need to meet with your city planning staff to confirm your conclusions and review any other standards or conditions that may apply.

A word of advice: even if a second unit is permitted on a site in theory, there may be other limitations based on what has already been built. For example, many cities limit how much of the lot you can build on. If your main house is over this limit, you might not be allowed to add a second unit (but you could convert interior space!).

New Rights Under State Law

Building a New Second Unit

New state laws have made it easier than ever for homeowners to build a second unit! In most cases, parking requirements have been reduced or waived entirely and cities need to approve or deny applications more quickly without a public hearing.

Additionally, cities cannot completely prohibit the construction of ADUs.

Converting Existing Space into a Unit

Recent changes to state law have also given homeowners the right to convert many types of existing space into a second unit. These rules take priority over local rules. The state law covers garages, other accessory buildings (like an art studio) or even part of the main house, including attics and basements. To qualify, your property must meet the following criteria:

- The house must be located in a single family zone
- The house must have been built legally initially
- The second unit must have a door that provides direct access to the outside. This door can be added during construction if it is not there in the existing building.
- The existing house must be far enough away from the property line to not be a fire hazard (see page #)

Water or sewer providers are not allowed to charge a connection fee when building second units that meet these rules.

It may feel scary to contact the city, but remember city staff are there to help you.

The city is not going to inspect your property or look for code violations if you inquire about building a second unit.

Gathering Information

One of the first steps when building a second unit is to gather important information about your property. Generally, it's easiest and most accurate to collect this information by calling your city. Contact information is in the rules sheet you downloaded. Before you call, it's recommended that you first read through this section to familiarize yourself with the concepts. Alternatively, you can gather the information yourself as described on the following pages and on the rules sheet.

Property Information Summary

My APN is:

My zoning

My lot size is:

Maximum permitted

Minimum lot size in my

Permitted zones:

My zone's lot coverage

Other information:

Zoning

The first step in determining if you can build a second unit is figuring out your zoning. Some cities have online zoning look-up sites. If they do, it is noted on the one-page summary of rules available at

To look up your zoning, you must know your Assessor's Parcel Number (APN). Every parcel in California is assigned a unique APN number, like a Social Security number for your property. You can look this up using your address on the County Assessor's website -

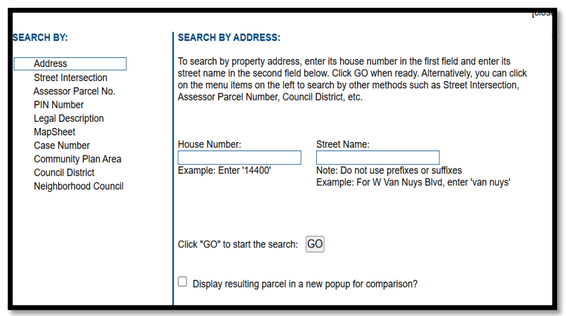
http://www.smcare.org/apps/ParcelMaps - (or do a web search for San Mateo County APN). Make sure to select "Number, Street, City" to search by address. When using this system,
the APN appears before the hyphen. Some addresses have maps linked to them, and if they do, you should download and print it out.

Real estate websites, like Zillow™ or Trulia™, often list APN numbers as well, sometimes calling it a Parcel Number.

Parcel Map Search

https://zimas.lacity.org/

The website to look up your APN number will look like the picture to the right.



If using unofficial records, like real estate websites, be sure to confirm the information before getting too far in the process.

Lot Size

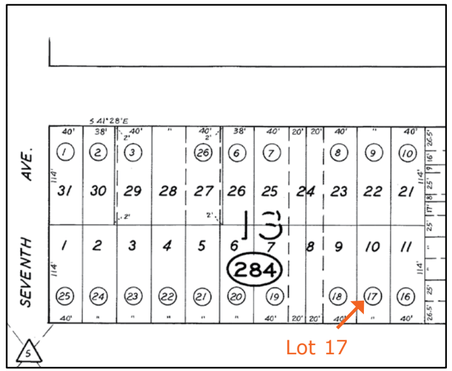
The next step is to figure out your lot size. You will need the total square footage initially, but later you will need to draw a site plan that has all the measurements. There are several options to find this information:

County Assessor's maps – One good option is to use the County Assessor's website, listed in the "Zoning" section. After finding your property, it is likely there will be a map that you can download by clicking on your property address.

City records – Some cities list the lot size and have maps on their website when you look up the zoning. You could also ask the city when you call.

Real estate websites – These websites often list lot size.

Measure it - Assuming your lot is rectangular, lot size is the width times the length. For example, a 40-foot wide by 60-foot deep lot is 2,400 square feet.



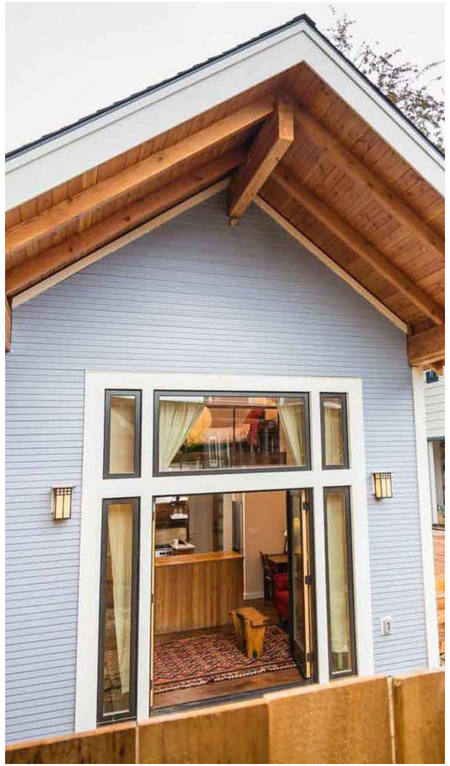
County Assessor Maps

https://maps.assessor.lacounty.gov/m/

The map you download from the County Assessor's website will look similar to the above. You can use the map to determine your lot size. For example, lot 17 (the circled number) is 40 feet by 114 feet or 4560 square feet.

Other Standards

If cities have identified other lot restrictions, they are listed on the one page standards handout under lot restrictions. For example, San Carlos limits second units based on proximity to other units. Several cities have additional rules near the coast. Your city will be able to tell you if there are additional rules.



The site plan needs to be drawn to scale eventually, but to start you should use scratch paper.

If the site plan is feeling too stressful, you can skip it for now. It's better to meet with the city earlier than getting everything exactly right.

Putting Pen to Paper: Drawing a Rough Sketch of Your Property

An essential step, both for your own planning and to get city approvals, is to draw a site plan. A site plan shows your property line and key information like buildings. Some people hire a professional to produce the final version, but having a rough sketch to start is often helpful. At this stage, you will draw in the major elements like building footprints, driveways, and trees.

Start by sketching out your property lines on scratch paper. Measure your property lines and mark them accordingly. Now add any existing or structures. Don't worry about the exact dimensions at first, just get the basic shape.

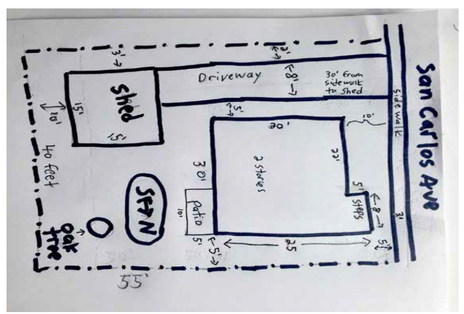
You don't need to worry about the inside floor plan; you just need to capture the footprint and whether it is one-story or two-story. Also note special features like porches, trellises, and exterior stairways.

Next, add in the driveway. Be sure to measure the length and width of the driveway. Pay attention to other significant features, like trees. When you are done, you will have something that looks like the sketch to the right.

Now, try drawing to scale. Depending on your lot size, a good scale might be one inch equals ten feet. If easy, try having your north arrow direction go directly up the page. Besides drawing the lines, make notes about the exact length as well. Be sure to use a pencil.

You'll want to copy your site plan or take a photo with your phone, because you will

probably end up drawing on it several times as you explore ideas.



Add a north arrow and scale here

Important Vocabulary

Zoning/Zoning Code: City rules that determine what can be built on a site. All lots in the city will be assigned a zone (i.e. R-1) and each zone has different rules. The zoning code governs many aspects of development including how tall buildings can be, where buildings can be located on a lot, etc. Most cities only allow second units in certain zoning areas.

Building Code: Rules that ensure buildings are built safely. The building code is made up of various sections (plumbing, electrical, etc.).. These are supplied by the State, but cities sometimes make minor alterations.

Deed Restrictions: Conditions or rules that are added to a house's deed. For example, some cities require homeowners to add language that specifies that the main house and the second unit will not be rented at the same time.

Discretionary Permit: Permission to build a second unit or take other action that requires a public hearing. Generally, second units do not need discretionary permits. The opposite of a discretionary permit is a use that is allowed by right, meaning a homeowner can build their second unit as long as it meets all the rules.

Ministerial Review: A basic review by the city to see if the application meets all the requirements. There is no discretion or judgement involved on the reviewer's part, and generally no public hearings.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR): The number of square feet of habitable space divided by the size of a lot. The zoning code will specify the maximum FAR.

Lot Coverage: The percentage of a property that has buildings on it. The zoning code will specify the maximum lot coverage.

Open Space Requirements: Rules that require a certain amount of yard area to be suitable for active or passive recreation (i.e. kids playing ball or a family having dinner). This requirement is identified in the zoning code.

Setbacks are rules that govern how close a building or second unit is allowed to be to the front, side, or back property lines. A 5-foot side setback means the second unit must be at least 5 feet from the side property line. This requirement is identified in the zoning code.

Single Family/Multifamily: Single-family refers to a one home located on one lot (as opposed to an apartment building, for example). Most cities only allow second units in single-family zones.

Be sure to ask your city if they have a chart that summarizes the zoning rules.

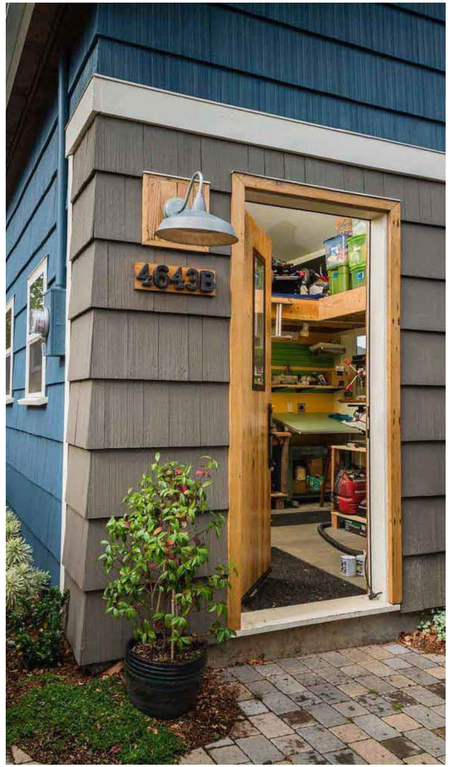
What Exactly Can I Build?

The following pages will help familiarize you with some common zoning terms and concepts.

After reading this and making a sketch of your property, you will be ready to meet with the city. Many cities use two key concepts to regulate development: Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and Lot Coverage. Both of these regulations compare what is already built on your particular lot to a standard in the zoning code.

Sometimes different parts of the zoning code will indicate different standards – for example, FAR may allow a 1,200 square foot second unit, while the city limits the size of a second unit to 800 square feet. You must meet all the rules, with the more restrictive rule always taking precedence.

When it is time to submit an application, some cities will rely on official records to determine your existing FAR, lot coverage or other existing conditions, while some will ask you to show them the calculations.



Floor Area Ratio is a rule that limits how many square feet of building are allowed on a site. It is a ratio of the number of square feet of built space (the floor area) compared to the size of the lot. For example, a 2,000-foot home on a 4,000 square foot lot would have a FAR of 0.5 (2000 divided by 4000). In this example, if your site's zoning permits a FAR of greater than 0.5, and assuming you meet all the other rules, you could build a second unit. If your site's FAR is 0.5 or less, converting existing space to a second unit would be the only option.

The FAR is not just a yes/no calculation; it may also limit the maximum size of your second unit. In the above example, if the maximum permitted FAR were 0.8, your second unit could not be more than 1,200 square feet.

FAR x lot size = max floor area
0.8 x 4,000 = 3,200

max floor area - existing floor area = allowable second unit size
3,200 - 2,000 = 1,200

Every city has slightly different rules about what is included in the floor area. Some measurements are from the interior walls, and some measurements are from the exterior walls. Most include all living space and finished basements or attics. Some include garages, porches, unfinished attics, basements and sheds, and some do not.

Initially, it is simplest to ask your city if they have an official record of your existing Floor Area. If they do not, ask them what spaces are included in the calculations.

Lot Coverage means how much of your lot is covered by a building. As with Floor Area Ratio, it compares your current building footprint with a maximum that is allowed according to the zoning code. Most cities include garages in the lot coverage calculations. Some include overhangs and porches.

For example, if your building is 40 feet wide and 50 feet long, it has a footprint of 2,000.
If your lot was 4,000 feet, your lot coverage would be 50% (2,000 divided by 4,000). In this example, if the zoning allows a lot coverage of greater than 50%, assuming you meet all the other rules, you could build a new second unit. If not, you might be limited to converting existing space or building a separate second story (though some cities do not allow new additions for sites over their lot coverage). Lot coverage, like FAR, is not just a yes/no calculation, but also may limit how much you
can build. If the lot coverage limit for your zone is 60%, your second unit would be limited to 400 square feet.

FAR and Lot Coverage Calculations

Use the following to calculate the FAR and lot coverage for your property.

_____		_____		_____		_____		_____
Lot size	**x**	*Permitted FAR*	=	*Max sq ft*	-	*Current building(s)*	=	*Sq ft for second unit*

_____		_____		_____		_____		_____
Lot size	*x*	*Max lot coverage*	=	*Max building footprint*	-	*Existing footprint*	=	*New footprint possible*

Meeting with the City

One of the best things you can do is to talk to your city's planning department early in the process. The purpose is to obtain all of the known facts about its potential and restrictions for a second unit.

Most cities have a planning/zoning desk where you can ask questions without an appointment. Some smaller cities might require appointments. Many cities call second units accessory dwelling units or ADUs, so in this section the workbook uses that acronym.

Be sure to bring this workbook.

Questions to Ask the City Planner

1. **Am I allowed to build an ADU on my property?**
2. **Does the city have a handouts or additional information? Are ADU resources on the city's website?**
3. **Are there common pitfalls or mistakes to watch out for?**
4. **Can you explain the ADU approval process for this city?**
5. **How long does it take and how often do applicants typically need to resubmit their plans?**
6. **What is the FAR and lot coverage for my zone? Are there other important zoning standards that I should know about?**
7. **Does the city have a current estimate of my current floor area?**
8. **Did I calculate my lot coverage correctly?**
9. ***(If incorporating or demolishing an existing garage or accessory building)* How do I know if my garage was built legally?**

Notes

Use this page to take notes from your meeting with the city planner.

If you are planning on hiring a contractor, have the contract list everything that they will include, such as labor and materials. The chart below can give you an idea of the prices the contractor will charge. Never sign quotes, as it becomes a legal document stating that you are in agreement to pay the full amount.

Building Stages	Percentage	Cost
Measurements to start the Project		
Floor Plans-Blue Prints		
Site Preparation & Demo		
Foundation & Subfloor Framing		
Garage & Main house addition		
Upper Framing & Roof Deck		
Electrical & Plumbing Rough-in		
Interior Walls		
Flooring		
Bathrooms		
Kitchen		
Finished: Electrical & Plumbing		
Apply Exterior Stucco / Siding		
Install Roof		
Final Inspection		

How to check if contractor is legit: Go to the website and enter the Contractor License: https://www2.cslb.ca.gov/OnlineServices/CheckLicenseII/checklicense.aspx

Subcontracting might work best as you can work on your own terms and budget. You can get multiple quotes and write down the best quotes to understand the cost. This option is always cheaper but can be time-consuming.

Building Stages	Percentage	Cost
Measurements to start the Project		
Floor Plans-Blue Prints		
Site Preparation & Demo		
Foundation & Subfloor Framing		
Garage & Main house addition		
Upper Framing & Roof Deck		
Electrical & Plumbing Rough-in		
Interior Walls		
Flooring		
Bathrooms		
Kitchen		
Finished: Electrical & Plumbing		
Apply Exterior Stucco / Siding		
Install Roof		
Final Inspection		

Compare prices and go with the most beneficial to you

ADU SOW

1. Administrative/Prep Work
    a. Work hours Mon-Friday 8-4:30pm
    b. Temp fencing if needed
    c. Provide portable toilet for duration of project
    d. Demo, dumpster, and hauling off-site
2. Foundation, Framing, Exterior Finish
    a. Rough materials delivery onsite.
    b. Framing per plans
    c. Stucco finishes & Painting: window installs
3. Electrical
    a. Install all Electrical wiring for all new recessed lighting (Pull wire from existing 200 amp Panel) Ground existing panel
    b. Recessed light fixtures throughout, new switches & outlets covers.
4. Plumbing
    a. Install all new Pex waste lines & water supplies lines.
    b. Install new Tankless Water heater
5. Drywall, Insulation, and Painting
    a. Insulation installation for exterior walls in bedrooms (r-19 or r-21)
    b. Interior drywall installation and painting in Bedrooms (level 4 finished walls)
    c. Prime and paint interior all walls, 2 colors Level 4 finish
6. Mechanical
    a. Install mini-split system (2 zone system)
7. Windows and Doors
    a. White vinyl horizontal slider windows
    b. Solid core single panel shaker style doors, interior and exterior
    c. Install 3" door casing and baseBoard
8. Flooring
    a. Install LVP throughout the home including kitchen
        i. Rough material: nails, glue caulking, etc
        ii. Subfloor cleaning and preparation
        iii. Underlayment installation
    b. Install 3-5" baseboard
    c. Tile bathroom
9. Bathrooms
    a. Install - Bathtub or Shower (Standard bathtub with Tiles walls)
    b. Install - Shower Faucet and divider
    c. Install Waterproofing & Cement Board Installation in the Wet Area
    d. Install Finish - Wall Tile 3 Side Inside Shower
    e. Install Plumbing for - Vanity, Sink, Faucet
    f. Finish - Install Mirror
    g. Electrical - Install Light Fixture Over Mirror + LED Recessed Lights
    h. Finish - Apply Grout on Walls & Floors
    i. Plumbing - Install Toilets
    j. Install Standard shower Door or Shower Curtain
    k. Install Tissue Paper Holder, hand towel and towel racks (?)
10. Kitchen
    a. Install New Cabinetry per design plan Layout
    b. Install New Sink, Faucet and Disposer
    c. Install Backsplash (per clients request)
    d. Install Appliances (No appliances, Washer/Dryer not Included)
    e. Install Cabinet Handles
    f. Install 6. Kitchen Floor Tile
    g. Remove existing wall or walls to create an open kitchen concept (build to Design plans specs)

Inclusions and Exclusions: Materials

1. Inclusions:
    a. Luxury vinyl tile and baseboard
    b. Tile flooring
    c. Kitchen cabinetry
    d. Countertops
    e. Vanities
    f. Backsplash
    g. Toilet
    h. Shower or bathtub
    i. Tile surround
    j. Shower faucet set
    k. Shower doors
    l. Sink and faucet
    m. Water heater
    n. Hardware - vanity and cabinets
    o. Windows
    p. Doors and door casing
    q. All rough-in materials
    r. Framing, Drywall
    s. Plumbing: Remove existing Cast iron Pipe and replace with Pex

2. Exclusions:
    a. Solar plans, system, and installation (if required)
    b. 3rd party vendors required by the city (soils report, civil engineer, etc..)
    c. City fees including permitting fees

Stage of Construction	Task	Description
Site Work	Preparing the site	This includes clearing the land, grading the site for proper drainage, and setting up utilities connections.
Foundation Construction	Building the foundation	Depending on the design, this could involve digging and pouring a basement, setting footings, or laying a slab. (No foundation work will be needed)
Framing	Building the skeleton of the structure	This involves putting up the basic structural components of the building, such as walls, floors, and the roof.