



**Planning Division of the  
Community Development Department**

**ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (ADU) STANDARDS & GUIDELINES**

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In accordance with State Law [Government Code Sections 65852.2(a) and (e)], the City of Agoura Hills requires that a Building Permit be obtained for an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU).

**DEFINITIONS**

1. Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU): an attached or a detached residential dwelling unit that provides complete independent living facilities for one or more persons. It must include permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation on the same parcel that the primary dwelling is situated.
2. Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit (JADU): a unit that is no more than 500 square feet in size, and contained entirely within a single-family residence.

**SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL LOTS**

1. A new attached ADU shall have a maximum of 850 square feet for a studio or one-bedroom unit; or a maximum of 1,000 square feet for an ADU with more than one bedroom; or 50% of the primary residence's living area, whichever is less.
  - a. The height limit shall not exceed that of the attached primary residence; if the residence is less than sixteen (16) feet in height, the ADU shall not exceed sixteen (16) feet.
  - b. If an attached ADU is constructed above an existing attached garage, four (4) foot minimum side and rear setbacks apply.
2. Detached ADUs may have a maximum square footage of 850 square feet if there is one bedroom or less, and 1,000 square feet if there are two bedrooms or more; a maximum height of sixteen (16) feet, measured from any grade elevation around the perimeter of the ADU; and, minimum side and rear yard setbacks of four (4) feet. A detached ADU must maintain a minimum ten (10) foot separation from any main building on the lot.
3. The ADU's exterior building materials and colors shall match those of the single-family residence.
4. JADUs are less than 500 square feet in size and located within a single-family residence, with either separate or shared sanitation facilities with the single-family residence, and with an efficiency kitchen that includes cooking facilities, food prep counter, and storage cabinets. The JADU may include an addition of up to 150 square feet to accommodate separate exterior access only.

## **MULTI FAMILY RESIDENTIAL LOTS**

1. One ADU, or multiple ADUs equal to 25 percent of the number of existing multi-family dwelling units on a site, whichever is greater, is (are) permitted within the portions of the building that are not used as livable space, including, but not limited to, storage rooms, boiler rooms, passageways, attics, basements, or garages, if each unit complies with building standards for dwellings. The ADU(s) may each have a maximum square footage of 850 square feet if there is one bedroom or less, and 1,000 square feet if there are two bedrooms or more.
2. Up to two (2) detached ADUs are permitted when located on a lot with an existing multi-family dwelling, and may each have a maximum square footage of 850 square feet if there is one bedroom or less, and 1,000 square feet if there are two bedrooms or more; a sixteen (16) foot height limit measured from any grade elevation around the perimeter of the ADU; and, four (4) foot side and rear yard setbacks. A detached ADU must maintain a minimum ten (10) foot separation from any main building on the lot.

## **PROPERTIES IN FIRE ZONE**

1. No more than one (1) ADU or one (1) JADU is allowed on properties located in the City's Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (A map is included at end of this document).
2. All new ADUs or JADUs proposed within the City's Very High Fire Severity Zone shall comply with any applicable brush clearance requirements. Unless otherwise required by applicable City building and fire codes, in any residential zone where new ADUs or JADUs are allowed, if fire sprinklers are required for the primary dwelling unit then fire sprinklers are also required for new ADUs or JADUs.

## **PARKING REQUIREMENTS**

1. One (1) off-street parking space shall be provided for an ADU, in addition to the parking required for the primary residence. The required parking space for the ADU may be provided as tandem parking on an existing driveway.
2. An additional parking space is **not** required if:
  - a. The property is located with one-half mile walking distance of public transit or one (1) block of a parking area designated for a car share vehicle;
  - b. The ADU is part of the existing or proposed primary residence or built in an existing accessory structure;
  - c. The ADU is located in an area where on-street parking permits are required but not offered to an ADU occupant; or,
  - d. The development is a JADU.
3. Replacement Parking. When an existing garage, carport, or covered parking structure is demolished in conjunction with the construction of an ADU or is converted into an ADU, replacement parking for the main dwelling unit shall not be required.

## **RESIDENCY STANDARDS**

The following standards shall be stipulated in the “Covenant and Agreement” described further below.

1. The ADU or JADU may not be sold, transferred, or assigned separately from the residence.
2. The ADU or JADU may not be rented for a period of less than 31 consecutive days.
3. If the property contains a JADU, the JADU shall be a legal unit and may be used as habitable space only so long as either the primary residence, or the JADU, is occupied by the owner of record, unless state law is amended to prohibit local agencies from requiring owner-occupancy.
4. Such restrictions shall run with the land and be binding upon all future owners.

## **GENERAL ADU AND JADU STANDARDS**

1. ADUs are allowed in areas where residential uses are allowed (zoning districts RV, RL, RS, RM, and RH, and where residential uses are permitted in the CS-MU, MXD, and PD zoning districts). JADUs are permitted in single-family residential zones.
2. ADUs shall be located on the same lot as a detached or multi-family residential building. JADUs are permitted in single-family residential zones.
3. In the Old Agoura Design Overlay district, a detached ADU is allowed in the front yard, provided it does not exceed 25% of the minimum front yard area. For all other zoning districts, front yard setbacks shall follow the underlying district standards.
4. No setback shall be required for an ADU that is within an existing structure or constructed in the same location and within the same dimensions as an existing legally permitted structure.
5. No minimum setback is required for an existing detached garage or other accessory structure that is converted to an ADU, or a new structure that is in the same location and to the same dimensions as an existing accessory structure.
6. A covered balcony, porch or patio provided with an ADU shall count towards the total ADU square-footage allowance.
7. All new accessory dwelling units shall conform to the lot coverage requirements for the zoning district in which the ADU is located, except where the application of the lot coverage requirements would not permit construction of an 800 square-foot ADU that is sixteen (16) feet in height and located at least four (4) feet from the rear property line and four (4) feet from the side property line.
8. Independent exterior access is required for all ADU and JADUs.
9. All ADUs and JADUs must be connected to both public or private water and sewer facilities. Los Angeles County Health Department approval is required for the use of a private sewage disposal system.
10. Neither an ADU nor a JADU is considered a new residential use for the purpose of calculating utility connection fees or capacity charges.
11. Separate utility connections between the ADU and the utility shall not be required for conversions of accessory buildings.

12. A separate address will be assigned to each ADU and JADU for mail and emergency service purposes.
13. Fire sprinklers are not required if they are not required for the primary residence.
14. Compliance shall be maintained with all applicable provisions of the California Building Code, as amended from time to time, including the Energy Code, and the Agoura Hills Municipal Code.

## **SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS**

The following items are required to be submitted for an ADU/JADU. Incomplete submittals will not be accepted.

1. Completed Building Permit Application Form.
2. Applicable fees. For ADUs under 750 square feet, the City's impact fees (e.g., traffic impact fees) will not be imposed. For ADUs over 750 square feet, impact fees will be charged proportionally to the square footage of the primary dwelling.
3. Three (3) sets of 24" x 36" legible plans drawn to scale and with a north arrow that include: a dimensioned Site Plan of the property indicating the location, size, and setbacks of existing and proposed structures on the project site; a Floor Plan with dimensions identifying rooms; Building Elevation Plans of each side of the structure, indicating proposed and existing colors and materials and dimensions; Roof Plan; Electrical Plan; Plumbing Plan; Mechanical Plan; Energy Plan, including solar; and Structural Calculations if required by the Building Division.
4. Drainage and Grading plans, if applicable. Please check with the Public Works Division to determine if this requirement applies, prior to submitting your application. Reference the City of Agoura Hills handout for grading plans for more information about requirements.
5. A soils/geotechnical report may be required for a project that involves grading and/or subsurface work, at the discretion of the City. Check with staff prior to submitting your application. If applicable, such report must be part of an application submittal. Reports shall follow the Los Angeles County Public Works Department Manual for Preparation of Geotechnical Reports, which can be found here: <https://www.ci.agoura-hills.ca.us/home/showdocument?id= 22435>. The applicant shall provide the required fees/deposit to the City for the report to be reviewed by the City Geologic/Geotechnical Consultant.
6. Colored photographs of the subject site.
7. Completed form for the City Covenant and Agreement for an ADU.
8. Legal description of the lot on which the ADU would be constructed (to become "Exhibit A" of the Covenant and Agreement for an ADU).
9. Two copies of the Property Title Report (no older than one month) that also includes a plot plan showing the location of easements (utilities, services, connections, restrictions, etc.), on the property.

10. Evidence of septic system approval from the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health, or a plan showing connection to the sewer system (if the property is not already connected to the sewer system).
11. Clear, legible digital copy of all required items via a computer link. (Note that a digital copy of plans, once stamped and approved by the City, will also be required).

Additional permits may be required, including but not limited to, an Oak Tree Permit from the Planning Division, and/or Encroachment Permit from the Public Works Division, if work is to occur in the public right-of-way.

### **COVENANT AND AGREEMENT FOR AN ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT**

1. Fill in the information where indicated on the City “Covenant and Agreement for an Accessory Dwelling Unit” or “Covenant and Agreement for a Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit” template, and provide a clean, written legal description on a separate sheet, which will be an exhibit to the Covenant and Agreement.
2. Planning staff will prepare the formal Covenant and Agreement, and provide it to the applicant.
3. The applicant shall return the Covenant and Agreement to the City with a notarized signature.
4. After permit issuance, the City will record the fully executed Covenant and Agreement with the Los Angeles County Recorder’s Office.
5. Final inspection approval from the Building Division cannot be issued until the County-stamped Covenant and Agreement is returned to the City by the County Recorder’s Office.

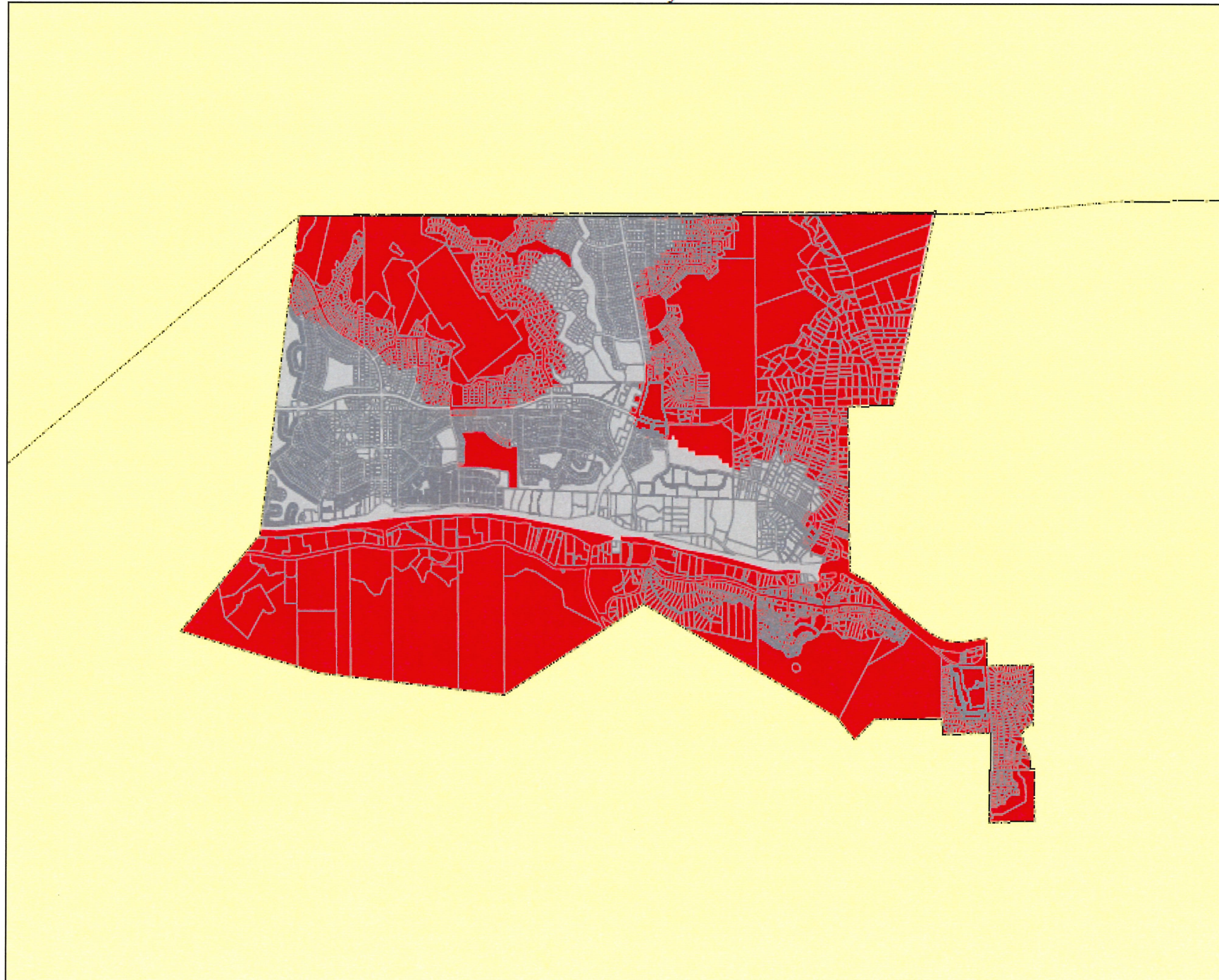
### **ADU ASSISTANCE**

Please contact the Planning Division at (818) 597-7337 with any ADU questions.

Planning Division, Community Development Department  
City of Agoura Hills, [www.ci.agoura-hills.ca.us](http://www.ci.agoura-hills.ca.us)

# Agoura Hills

## Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA As Recommended by CAL FIRE



### Fire Hazard Severity Zones


Local Responsibility Area      State or Federal Responsibility Areas

 VHFHSZ       VHFHSZ

 Non-VHFHSZ       Non-VHFHSZ

 City Boundary

 Parcels

 County Boundary

Government Code 51175-89 directs the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to identify areas of very high fire hazard severity zones within Local Responsibility Areas (LRA). Mapping of the areas, referred to as Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ), is based on data and models of **potential** fuels over a 30-50 year time horizon and their associated expected fire behavior, and expected burn probabilities to quantify the likelihood and nature of vegetation fire exposure (including firebrands) to buildings. Details on the project and specific modeling methodology can be found at <http://frap.cdf.ca.gov/projects/hazard/methods.htm>. Local Responsibility Area VHFHSZ maps were initially developed in the mid-1990s and are now being updated based on improved science, mapping techniques, and data.

In late 2005 to be effective in 2008, the California Building Commission adopted California Building Code Chapter 7A requiring new buildings in VH FHSZs to use ignition resistant construction methods and materials. These new codes include provisions to improve the ignition resistance of buildings, especially from firebrands. The updated very high fire hazard severity zones will be used by building officials for new building permits in LRA. The updated zones will also be used to identify property whose owners must comply with natural hazards disclosure requirements at time of property sale and 100 foot defensible space clearance. It is likely that the fire hazard severity zones will be used for updates to the safety element of general plans.

This specific map is based on a geographic information system dataset that depicts final CAL FIRE recommendations for Very High FHSZs within the local jurisdiction. The process of finalizing these boundaries involved an extensive local review process, the details of which are available at <http://frap.cdf.ca.gov/projects/hazard/btnet/> (click on "Continue as guest without logging in"). Local government has 120 days to designate, by ordinance, very high fire hazard severity zones within its jurisdiction after receiving the recommendation. Local government can add additional VHFHSZs. There is no requirement for local government to report their final action to CAL FIRE when the recommended zones are adopted. Consequently, users are directed to the appropriate local entity (county, city, fire department, or Fire Protection District) to determine the status of the local fire hazard severity zone ordinance.

