

## REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

**DATE:** JANUARY 10, 2024

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** NATHAN HAMBURGER, CITY MANAGER

**BY:** DENICE THOMAS, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR  
LUKAS QUACH, BUILDING OFFICIAL

**SUBJECT:** ADOPT RESOLUTION 24-2054 AND APPROVE THE PRE-APPROVED  
ADU (ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT) PLANS PROGRAM FOR USE BY  
THE PUBLIC IN OBTAINING PERMITS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF AN  
ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT PER CITY REQUIREMENTS

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The purpose of this memo is to present to the City Council the Pre-Approved ADU (Accessory Dwelling Unit) Plans Program (Program) for the City of Agoura Hills. In 2017, Governor Brown signed a housing package aimed at addressing California's housing shortage and high housing costs, including the Building Homes and Jobs Act (SB 2). The funds established by this bill would be allocated to local governments via planning grants intended to help jurisdictions accelerate housing production, streamline the approval of affordable housing development, and facilitate housing affordability. Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are affordable to construct and provide flexible housing options for homeowners to share the independent living area with family members, allow seniors to age in place, or rent the units, and can be counted toward meeting the City's Regional Housing Needs Assessment ("RHNA") allocation. The City applied for and was awarded funds designated for facilitating ADU production through any required updates to the Zoning Ordinance, the development of useful guides, and possible prototypes that facilitate homeowners undertaking the construction of an ADU and expedite the permitting process.

To fulfill the City's obligation to the California Department of Housing and Urban Development for the grant, City staff committed to developing pre-approved ADU standard plans that are available to the public. This would help expedite the permitting, as well as, reduce the soft costs associated with development for the homeowners and hence, should accelerate affordable housing production. Staff retained the services of a qualified architecture design firm with experience and technical qualifications to prepare complete ADU plans. RRM Design Group (RRM), a multidisciplinary design firm with over 45 years of experience, and has planned and designed hundreds of affordable, ADU, multifamily, and mixed-use housing units in California.

As part of the program, the City obtains the rights to the building plans from RRM and will make them available to the Agoura Hills residents free of charge as an incentive to promote the construction of ADU housing. Staff worked with RRM to look at best practices and examples from other communities, as well as, the existing character of Agoura Hills to develop a variety of plan size, type, and architectural style options that would be suited to,

and fit the needs and character of Agoura Hills. RRM completed the preliminary design stage and developed preliminary floor plans and elevations (architectural styles) for three ADU prototypes, which were presented to the City Council last year, and from which final construction drawings have been prepared.

The Pre-Approved ADU Plans (Plans) consist of a total of three (3) different floor plan options that range in size from a 550-square-foot studio unit plan to a 1,000-square-foot, 2-bedroom plan. Each floor plan includes three (3) architectural style options. The plan and architectural style options are as follows:

Design-Mix Matrix			
	Cottage Style	Ranch Style	Spanish Style
Studio (550 sf)	1	1	1
1-Bedroom (750 sf)	1	1	1
2-Bedroom (1000 sf)	1	1	1

The Program is promoted on the City’s website with instructions on how to apply. While the Plans are fully code compliant (i.e., compliant with building structural, fire, electrical, and mechanical codes), the Plans set includes a standard site plan template sheet that will require a property owner to prepare and submit to the City a Site Plan showing existing structures, proposed ADU, setbacks, utility information, etc., and/or grading/drainage plan, as is necessary, given each property’s unique configuration and condition. The property owner (with the assistance of Planning staff, as needed) will also need to complete the Title Sheet with property information and related specific project information.

The objective of the Program is to streamline the permitting process to enable starting construction as soon as possible. To achieve that end, a Pre-Approved ADU Plans Permit Guide is provided as an informative “how-to” guide that can be used by those who are interested in adding an ADU to their property using the Plans. The Permit Guide also includes an overview of the Program and includes floor plans and elevations illustrating the architectural styles for all the ADU plan options that are available to the public.

The Permit Guide provides simple step-by-step instructions on how to get started as below:

1. Select ADU Style
2. Select ADU Size
3. Select ADU Foundation Type
4. Obtain Title Report
5. Obtain a Site Survey
6. Prepare Site Plan - (See sample & checklist on AS-0101)
7. Complete information on Sheet G-001, G-002, or G-003
8. Complete Building Permit Application
9. Sign Hold Harmless/Indemnification Agreement
10. Compile submittal package
11. Request Appointment or submit for streamlined Plan Review.

To address common questions that may arise, a Pre-Approved ADU Plans Program FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) is also included as a part of the Permit Guide packet. Some of the following issues are clarified in the FAQs:

- Fees:
  - Plan Check fees reduced (only Planning Review fee, No Building Plan Check fee)
  - Permit fees required
- All Electric – No gas infrastructure is allowed
- Fire sprinkler required if required of primary (main) house
- Photovoltaic (Solar) required, but deferred under a separate permit
- Public Improvement requirement - limited
- Impact Fees – Limited as specified by State Law
- Grading plans – May be required on a case-by-case basis.

The Program will address the requirement of the recently passed Assembly Bill 1332. The State requires each local agency to develop a program for the pre-approval of ADU plans, whereby the local agency accepts ADU plan submissions for pre-approval and approves or denies the pre-approval applications, by January 1, 2025.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

The project is exempt from CEQA per Section 15061.b.3 “Common Sense Exemption” as the Pre-Approved ADU plans are informational tools to assist the public in obtaining permits for the construction of an ADU in compliance with State and City requirements. As such, the use of Pre-Approved ADU plans do not affect any City regulation, or ordinance, and does not permit the construction of an ADU on any property within the City; therefore, it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant negative impact on the environment.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no additional fiscal impact to the City Council 2023-24 adopted Budget as funds were appropriated for this item in the Community Development Department’s Building and Safety Contract Services.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the City Council adopt Resolution 24-XXXX and approve the City of Agoura Hills Pre-Approved ADU Plans Program for use by the public to obtain building permits for the construction of an ADU per City requirements.

Attachment:

1. Resolution No. 24-2054

## RESOLUTION NO. 24-2054

### A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AGOURA HILLS, CALIFORNIA, APPROVING THE PRE-APPROVED ADU (ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT) PLANS PROGRAM FOR USE BY THE PUBLIC IN OBTAINING PERMITS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF AN ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT PER CITY REQUIREMENTS

**WHEREAS**, With the recent adoption of the City's 2021-2029 Housing Element, and as part of the City of Agoura Hills's efforts to plan for the housing needs of the community, the City is working on ways to accommodate a variety of housing in Agoura Hills. One way is by offering Pre-Approved ADU (Accessory Dwelling Unit) plans to residents, making it easier to build ADUs in Agoura Hills; and

**WHEREAS**, in March of 2019, the State of California released a Notice of Funding Availability for the Senate Bill 2 (SB2) Planning Grants Program; and

**WHEREAS**, SB2 was part of a 15-bill housing package aimed at addressing the State's housing shortage and high housing costs. Specifically, it establishes a permanent source of funding intended to increase the affordable housing stock in California; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2020, the City applied for and was awarded SB2 funds for City projects and programs to streamline housing production, which included funding for the Pre-Approved ADU Plans Program; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has been assigned a Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) Allocation of 318 units, including 199 units for Lower Income Household, as established by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) and the Southern California Association of Government (SCAG).

**WHEREAS**, with SB2 Grant funds, the City contracted with an architectural firm, RRM Design Group, to prepare the Pre-Approved ADU plans; and

**WHEREAS**, the SB2 Grant funded effort includes the preparation of code-compliant ADU construction plans that the City can promote and provide to property owners for their use in obtaining building permits to construct an ADU; and

**WHEREAS**, the Pre-Approved ADU plans are intended to incentivize, streamline, and minimize costs to homeowners wishing to build an ADU; and

**WHEREAS**, RRM Design Group has completed ADU designs, which were presented to the City Council and from which, final construction drawings were prepared; and

**WHEREAS**, the Pre-Approved ADU plans consist of a total of three different floor plan options that range in size from a 550 square-foot studio unit plan to a 1,000 square-foot, 2-bedroom plan, with each floor plan having three architectural style options; and

**WHEREAS**, the Pre-Approved ADU plans provide a wide variety of plan options to Agoura Hills homeowners in a way that they can choose an option that best suits their property configuration, needs, and budget; and

**WHEREAS**, City Staff presented the ADU plan designs at a City Council Meeting held on January 25, 2023, and from which, final construction drawings were prepared; and

**WHEREAS**, Assembly Bill 1332 requires each local agency, by January 1, 2025, to develop a program for the preapproval of accessory dwelling unit plans, whereby the local agency accepts accessory dwelling unit plan submissions for preapproval and approves or denies the preapproval applications, as specified.

**WHEREAS**, The proposed Pre-Approved ADU plans are informational tools to assist the public in obtaining permits for the construction of an ADU in compliance with City requirements, do not affect any City policy, regulation, or ordinance, and do not permit the construction of an ADU on any property within the City, they do not require legal public notice and a public hearing; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed Pre-Approved ADU plans are exempt from CEQA per Section 15061.b.3 "Common Sense Exemption" as the Pre-Approved ADU plans are informational tools to assist the public in obtaining permits for construction of an ADU in compliance with City requirements. As such, the use of Pre-Approved ADU plans does not affect any City regulation or ordinance, and does not permit the construction of an ADU on any property within the City; therefore, it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant impact on the environment.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AGOURA HILLS DOES HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:**

That the City Council approves the City of Agoura Hills Pre-Approved ADU Plans Program for use by the public to obtain building permits for the construction of an ADU.

**PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED** this 10<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2024, by the following vote to wit:

AYES:            ( )  
NOES:            ( )  
ABSENT:         ( )  
ABSTAIN:        ( )

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Illece Buckley Weber, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Kimberly M. Rodrigues, City Clerk