



## CITY OF AGOURA HILLS

BUILDING & SAFETY DIVISION

30001 LADYFACE COURT  
AGOURA HILLS, CA 91301

Email: [Permits@AgouraHillsCity.org](mailto:Permits@AgouraHillsCity.org)

PHONE: (818) 597-7334

[www.AgouraHillsCity.org](http://www.AgouraHillsCity.org)

### PRE-APPROVED ADU PLAN PROGRAM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

*This FAQ is provided as an aid only and the City strongly recommends that applicants review applicable state law and relevant portions of the Agoura Hills Municipal Code before applying.*

#### 1. What Pre-Approved ADU plans does the City of Agoura Hills have?

There are 3 types of plans (550 sf Studio, 750 sf one-bedroom, and 1,000 sf two-bedroom) with 3 architectural styles (Cottage, Ranch, and Spanish) each with options for slab on grade or raised foundation (with crawl space).

#### 2. What are the advantages of the Pre-Approved ADU Plans Program vs. Standard ADU permit review?

The Pre-Approved ADU Plans Program process saves property owners time and money in the initial phase of constructing an ADU. Since the plans are pre-approved, it expedites staff review and approval of a building permit.

#### 3. What permits do I need to obtain?

The applicant/owner must obtain a building permit from the Building and Safety Division for the construction of the PRE-APPROVED ADU. In most cases, the use of the PRE-APPROVED ADU Plans will eliminate the need for a Building and Safety Division building plan check review fees. Other permits, such as a grading permit, may be required as determined on a case-by-case basis, which is discussed in more detail below.

#### 4. Can the pre-approved plans be permitted without doing any additional work?

No. The pre-approved plans are only about 80% complete and will always require property-specific modification and documentation. In addition to the building plans, site-specific land use information will need to be completed on Sheet G-01 by the applicant (with the assistance of city staff), and a complete site plan (Sheet AS-102/202/or 302) must be provided.

The site plan must show the property layout with the footprints of all existing and proposed structures, electrical services, fences, walls, gates, setbacks, parcel areas, easements, driveways, slopes, drainage for stormwater, and other features. See Sheet AS-101/201/ or 301 for a sample. Pre-fab truss calculations and Photovoltaic (solar) plans are also needed and can be submitted and permitted after the permitting for the ADU but must be installed before the issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy.

When applicable, grading plans, septic design, and other plans and calculations must be created and also submitted with the pre-approved plans in order to obtain a building permit.

#### 5. How long will it take to get my PRE-APPROVED ADU Permit?

Upon submission of a PRE-APPROVED ADU application and upon payment of the application fee, the timeframe for review of a PRE-APPROVED ADU application will be approximately five business days for the first review, and five business days for a second review. This timeframe may vary depending on each individual property, site conditions and the adequacy and accuracy of information provided on the site plan.



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### 6. Are the Pre-Approved Plans designed as All-Electric Buildings?

The Pre-Approved ADU plans are designed as All-Electric buildings to align with the City's recently adopted Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) to reduce Green House Gas (GHG) emissions. The installation of gas infrastructure for the ADU will not be permitted.

### 7. Can I make changes to the PRE-APPROVED ADU plans?

Minimal changes to the PRE-APPROVED ADU plans (i.e., substitution of light or plumbing fixtures, and addition of outlets) may be acceptable without requiring additional building plan check review and fees. Reversing the plan to fit with an existing lot configuration is also acceptable. However, any structural changes, changes in size (i.e., additional floor area), or reconfiguration of the floor plans will not be eligible for the Pre-Approved Plans Program (streamlined review or reduced plan check fees) and submittal will not be accepted.

### 8. What if I want to use a different roof or exterior material color?

Alternative roof and exterior materials color may be used only with approval from City Planning; however, they should maintain consistency with the architectural style of the chosen plan and elevation. If the replacement roofing material adds weight, or load, to the structure, additional plan review and fees may apply.

### 9. Are Fire Sprinklers Required?

Maybe. State law requires fire sprinklers for an ADU if the existing primary dwelling has or is required to have fire sprinklers. A separate fire sprinkler plan must be submitted to the Los Angeles County Fire Department for review, approval, and permit. Installation and final inspection by the Los Angeles County Fire Department are required before the building is final for occupancy.

### 10. Are there other Los Angeles County Fire Department requirements I should be aware of?

Depending on the property, Fire Department requirements may include:

- **Fire Access.** For larger lots (e.g., in rural areas), a fire apparatus access road/driveway is required for proposed ADUs where any portion of the proposed structure is more than 150 feet from the street property line. Please contact the Los Angeles County Fire Department for specific requirements at (818) 880-0341.
- **Very High Fire Severity Hazard Zones.** Most properties in the City are in a High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone as determined by the State. If the ADU will be on a property that is within a High / Very High Fire Severity Zone, fuel modification may be required. Please contact Los Angeles County Fire Department at (818) 880-0341 for specific requirements.

### 11. Is PV Solar required on my ADU?

Yes, a PV Solar system is required under the 2022 California Energy Code section 150.1(c)14 for newly constructed detached ADU's with some exception for very small structures. The solar system can be installed on the ADU or the main house. If the main house has an existing solar system, the required ADU solar system can be added to the existing system. Mobile home ADU's do not require a PV Solar system and are subject to Title 25. A separate permit must be applied for the required ADU PV solar system.



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### **12. Is a grading plan required?**

In general, if anticipated grading quantities are greater than 50 cubic yards, a grading plan signed by a licensed engineer and grading permit will be required. If grading is limited to quantities below 50 cubic yards, the Engineering Department, at its discretion, may waive the requirement for a grading plan and grading permit. At a minimum, the site plan prepared for submission to the City for review of the PRE-APPROVED ADU application needs to show grade elevations, and site drainage patterns/drainage flow (refer to PRE-APPROVED ADU sample site plan).

### **13. Does the creation of an ADU require the applicant to provide public improvements (e.g., curb, gutter & sidewalk improvements)?**

As provided in the California Department of Housing and Community Development Accessory Dwelling Unit Handbook (updated July 2022), “No physical improvements shall be required for the creation or conversion of an ADU. Any requirement to carry out public improvements is beyond what is required for the creation of an ADU, as per state law. For example, an applicant shall not be required to improve sidewalks, carry out street improvements, or access improvements to create an ADU. Additionally, as a condition for ministerial approval of an ADU, an applicant shall not be required to correct nonconforming zoning conditions. (Gov. Code, § 65852.2, subdivision(e)(2).)”

However, if the ADU is proposed in conjunction with a new primary residential dwelling on an existing undeveloped property, the dedication of right-of-way and public improvements may be required for the new primary dwelling.

### **14. What other (Public Works) Engineering requirements should I be aware of?**

In rare instances, property conditions and project circumstances may require the submittal of a water quality management plan (WQMP), hydrology study, and/or storm-water bio-retention features to the City’s Public Works Department for review.

### **15. What are the requirements for sewer and/or septic?**

If sewer is provided to the primary dwelling on the property in which the ADU is proposed, then the ADU will be required to connect to the sewer and be subject to a sewer connection permit and fee. For sewer requirements, please contact the Las Virgenes Water District at (818) 251-2100. If no sewer is available, a new or upgraded septic system may be required. New or upgraded septic systems are subject to approval by the City’s Building and Safety Division, (818) 597-7334, and the Los Angeles County Department of Environmental Health, (818) 880-3410.

### **16. Can I rent or sell my ADU?**

A detached ADU may be rented separately from the primary dwelling. The property owner does not have to occupy one of the homes on the property. An ADU cannot be sold or conveyed separately from the primary dwelling, and ADUs must be rented for terms longer than 30 days (Gov. Code, §65852.2, subdivision (a)(6) and (e)(4)). A covenant is required to memorialize this information for detached ADUs less than 800 square feet.



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#### **17. Are Development Impact Fees required for an ADU?**

It depends on the size of the ADU. An ADU that is less than 750 square feet in size is exempt from incurring impact fees from local agencies, special districts, and water corporations. For ADUs that are 750 square feet or larger, impact fees shall be charged proportionately to the square footage of the ADU to the square footage of the primary dwelling unit.

In addition to the Planning Division's Pre-Approved ADU review fees, and building permit issuance and related fees, ADUs that are 750 square feet or larger are subject to some but not all of the development impact fees and utility connection/capacity fees that also apply to a new single-family residential dwelling. Total fees will depend on the specific circumstances of your property and the scope of your project.

#### **18. Can school districts charge impact fees?**

Yes. School districts are authorized to levy impact fees for ADUs greater than 500 square feet under Section 17620 of the Education Code. ADUs less than five hundred square feet are not subject to school impact fees. For School District contacts and fee information, please contact the Las Virgenes School District at (818) 880-4000.

#### **19. How do I obtain a separate address for an ADU?**

An ADU address, separate from the address of the primary dwelling unit, is required for mail delivery and emergency response, and may be obtained from the Building & Safety Division.

#### **20. What is the Maximum size of an ADU?**

Detached ADUs may be up to a maximum of 1,000 square feet per the City's ADU standards (the largest PRE-APPROVED ADU plan available, is the 2 Bedroom, Plan 3, which is 1,000 square feet).

#### **21. Can the City recommend a contractor?**

The City is unable to make recommendations for specific contractors; however, at a minimum, construction needs to be performed by a contractor licensed by the State of California.