

August 21, 2025

TO: Staff

FROM: Amy J. Bodek, AICP
Director of Regional Planning



ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (ADU) ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

The Board of Supervisors adopted the ADU Ordinance Amendment on July 29, 2025. The Amendment will become effective **August 28, 2025**. This informational memo provides an overview of policy changes enacted by the Amendment. For more details, please refer to the new ADU Ordinance (attached) and the updated ADU Ordinance Summary. Please be advised of the following:

Location-Based Policies

- **High Fire Risk Areas:** The Amendment allows statewide exemption Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JADUs) and ADUs on lots in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZs), regardless of vehicular access, to conform with State law. These statewide exemption JADUs and ADUs are described in Government Code section 66323 and integrated into Subsection H of the ADU Ordinance (22.140.640).
- **Proximity to Animal Keeping:** All ADUs and JADUs are now exempt from the 35-foot minimum distance requirement from animal-keeping areas previously mandated by County Code Section 11.16.090.

Use Restrictions

- **Home-Based Occupations:** The Amendment clarifies that only one home-based occupation is permitted per primary residence, regardless of the number of ADUs or JADUs on the lot. The home-based occupation may be in any unit.

Changes to Development Standards

- **Conversion of Structures:** Unpermitted structures may be converted to JADUs or ADUs.
- **Front Yard Setbacks:** An ADU of 800 square feet or less may encroach into a required front yard setback if it cannot be built anywhere else on the ground level of the property.
- **Size Limits:**
 - Attached ADUs are subject to a uniform 1,200 square foot size limit.
 - Detached ADUs on lots with multifamily uses are limited to a maximum of 1,200 square feet.
- **Height Limits:** The Amendment sets a uniform 25-foot height limit for ADUs on properties with multifamily uses, unless a more restrictive height is imposed by a community or planning area standards district, specific plan, or other local

community-based plan. A height of at least 16 to 20 feet must be allowed, depending on project and location details.

- **Parking in High Fire Risk Areas:** For ADUs within a VHFHSZ, one off-street parking space is required unless the project meets specific exemption criteria, such as being located within a half-mile walking distance of public transit.
- **Residential Design Standards:** Please note that JADUs and ADUs permitted under the County's local standards are subject to the Residential Design Standards Ordinance (County Code Section 22.140.520). Statewide exemption JADUs and ADUs (as set forth in section 66323 of the Government Code) are not subject to these design standards.

ADU Quantities and Types

- **Single-Family Properties:** A maximum of one JADU, one attached ADU, and one detached ADU are allowed on a single-family property.
- **Multifamily Properties:** The maximum number of interior or attached ADUs is equal to 25% of the primary units on a lot. Attached ADUs are now permitted concurrently with the construction of a new multifamily development. New construction attached ADUs (additions) are also now permitted with existing multifamily properties.
 - Note that SB 1211 (2024) permits up to eight detached ADUs on lots with existing multifamily dwellings, provided that the number of detached ADUs does not exceed the total number of existing residential units on the lot. For more details, please refer to the [SB 1211 Informational Memo on Accessory Dwelling Units](#) dated November 25, 2024.

Historic Resources

- **Objective Standards:** The Amendment introduces new objective development standards that ADUs must meet when located on properties with historic resources. Statewide exemption JADUs and ADUs are not subject to these standards.

Application Review

- **Denied Applications:** For any denied JADU or ADU application, a full set of comments must be provided to the applicant.
- **Deferred Decisions:** The Amendment allows for decisions on ADUs and JADUs to be deferred when they are proposed concurrently with new construction projects.
- **Conditional Use Permits:** For properties that have a Conditional Use Permit, a ministerial Revised Exhibit "A" is now required for ADU and JADU proposals to ensure they receive the appropriate review.

If you have any questions regarding this memo, please contact Tina Fung in the Housing Policy Section at (213) 974-6417 or tfung@planning.lacounty.gov.

AJB:CC:ER:KW:lj

Attachment:

1. ADU Ordinance, as amended July 2025