ADU Universal Checklist

Are you thinking about building an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)? This checklist will help ensure that your idea for an ADU aligns with the City's Zoning Code, and will help you prepare for building permit requirements. Homeowners, designers, and construction professionals should all understand how the items in this checklist may affect the ADU design and requirements, before creating any building plans.

Need help?

- To find your property designations, visit www.sjpermits.org and tap "Permits & Property Information"; enter your address; and on the next screen, click on your property and select "Property Information." A list of designations will appear.
- If you need further help, contact the ADU Ally at adu.ally@sanjoseca.gov or 408-793-5302.

Learn more about ADUs: www.sanjoseca.gov/ADUs

QUESTION	YES	NO
SECTION A. PROPERTIES THAT QUALIFY		
1. Zoning. Is the property in a residential zone that begins with R-1, R-2, R-M, or PD? Or, regardless of zoning, is the property in one of the following General Plan designations: - Residential Neighborhood or Mixed-Use Neighborhood or Mixed-Use Commercial - Urban Residential or Transit Residential or Rural Residential - Downtown or Urban Village Find zoning designation: www.sjpermits.org Find General Plan designation: www.sanjoseca.gov/GPdesignation Questions on PD zones: Speak with a Planner at 408-535-3555 to learn about unique PD zones. **> Outcome:** If no, an ADU is not allowed. If yes, see the table below:		

Property Type	*Qualifying Units*
Single-family	Subject to standards, one ADU and one JADU may be allowed -- see definitions, pages 2-4.
Duplex or Multifamily	Subject to standards (pages 2-4), two detached ADUs may be allowed. For a duplex, one attached ADU may also be allowed. For multifamily lots, a number of attached ADUs equivalent to up to 25% of existing units may also be allowed (for example, a building with 12 units may qualify for 3 attached ADUs).

SECTION B. PROPERTY DESIGNATIONS		
2. Easements. Does the property have a dedicated easement? Easements are described in the title report that came with the purchase of your home. Contact a title company if you need to obtain a report. Tract and parcel maps may show easements, but may be less accurate than a title report. Find these maps at the County Surveyor Record Index tool at http://bit.ly/2ZhGjXc. **> Outcome:** If yes, you must comply with the requirements of the easements, which may include no construction allowed within the easement area.		
3. Historic Designation. Is the property located in a Historic District identified on the California Register of Historic Resources? Find historic designations: www.sanjoseca.gov/HistoricResourcesInventory. **> Outcome:** If yes, simplified design standards will apply. Please speak with a Planner at 408-535-3555.		
4. Geohazard Zone. Is the property in a designated "geohazard" or "landslide" zone? Find designations: www.sjpermits.org **> Outcome:** If yes, you will need a Geologic Hazard Clearance. Call Public Works at 408-535-7802 or email pwgeneralinfo@sanjoseca.gov		
5. Flood Zones. Is the property in Flood Zones A, AE, AH, or AO? *Properties in D or X zones are excluded from these requirements.* Find designation: www.sjpermits.org Questions: Call 408-535-7803 or email floodzoneinfo@sanjoseca.gov **> Outcome:** If yes, see flood zone design requirements in Bulletin #211-ADU Plan Requirements, found at www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showdocument?id=39040		

continued >

SECTION C. DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS - Per Municipal Code Section 20.30.150: http://bit.ly/33Knz6c

A great way to ensure your proposed ADU complies with the Zoning Code Development Standards is to meet with a City Planner. This free consultation can help you avoid designing plans that will NOT be approved. Come to the Permit Center and bring a completed Universal Checklist and a rough sketch of your property showing dimensions and the location of the main home and location of the proposed ADU. See full instructions for this consultation at www.sanjoseca.gov/ADUs.

QUESTION	YES	NO

6. Location. Is your proposed ADU located as follows?

Property Type	*Location Requirements*
Single-Family	**Attached ADU**: Must share a wall with main residence OR share a roof structure with main residence and be separated by no more than 10 feet. For an attached ADU in the front yard, the front door cannot be on same street-facing façade as that of the primary residence, with some exceptions (learn more by speaking with a Planner at 408-535-3555). **Detached ADU**: Must be in the rear yard or 45 feet from the front property line. Must have a minimum 6-foot separation from the main dwelling unit. May be a converted detached garage or accessory building OR may be built attached to a detached garage or accessory building. **Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit (JADU)**: Must locate entirely within the main home's existing footprint. You may have a JADU and a detached ADU. Both a JADU and attached ADU are not allowed.
Duplex or Multifamily	**Attached ADU**: Location is limited to a conversion of existing non-livable space, such as converting an attic, basement, garage, storage room, boiler room, or passageway. **Detached ADU**: Must be in the rear yard or 45 feet from the front property line, with a minimum 6-foot separation from the main building. The ADU may be a conversion of a detached garage or accessory building, or attached to a detached garage or accessory building. **JADU**: Not allowed.

> Outcome: If yes, your planned location for the ADU is in compliance. If no, your plans will not be approved.

7. Size. Is the size of the proposed ADU within the maximum limits as shown in the tables below AND does the proposed size account for the Rear Yard Coverage Limitation?

SINGLE-FAMILY LOTS	
Lot Size	*Maximum Floor Area Allowed*
Up to 9,000 sf	Detached ADU: 1,000 sf maximum
	Attached ADU: Size can be up to 800 sf OR up to 50% of the primary residence area without exceeding 1,000 sf. Example: For an 1,800 sf home, a 900 sf attached ADU is allowed.
9,000 sf and greater	Detached ADU: 1,200 sf maximum
	Attached ADU: Size can be up to 800 sf OR up to 50% of the primary residence area without exceeding 1,200 sf. Example: For an 2,400 sf home, a 1,200 sf attached ADU is allowed.
Any lot with a JADU	JADU: 500 sf maximum
	Detached ADU: 800 sf maximum
	Attached ADU: not allowed with a JADU

DUPLEX & MULTIFAMILY LOTS	
Lot Size	*Maximum Floor Area Allowed*
Any lot size	Detached ADU: 800 sf maximum
	Attached ADU: 800 sf maximum
	JADU: not allowed

How to calculate allowable square footage (sf): The square footage of all living areas (existing or proposed) connected by a door or other opening counts toward the total allowable square footage of the ADU.

Rear Yard Coverage Limitation. The rear yard is the area that extends from the rear lot line to the rear of the main home across the full width of the lot. The cumulative coverage of the rear yard by structures — including coverage by the ADU, accessory buildings, sheds, gazebos, or other structures — may not exceed 40% of the rear yard or 800 sq.ft., whichever is greater. Does your project comply with this rule?

> Outcome: If yes, your ADU size is in compliance. If no, your plans will not be approved.

continued >

QUESTION	YES	NO

8. Setbacks. Does your proposed ADU comply with these rules for setbacks?

Property Type	*Location Requirements*
Single-family	**Attached ADU**: Same setback requirements as apply to the main dwelling unit. **Detached ADU**: - Must be set back 45 feet minimum from front property line. - Rear/side setbacks less than 3 feet may be subject to fire mitigation measures, see p. 4. - A second story OR new ADU with greater than 40% rear yard coverage must be set back 4 feet from both rear and side property lines.
Duplex or Multifamily	**Attached ADU**: Setbacks not applicable as the attached ADU is limited to a conversion of existing non-livable space. **Detached ADU**: - Must be in the rear yard or 45 feet from the front property line. - Rear/side setbacks: Minimum 4 feet, allows for up to 1-foot projection for eaves - A second story must be set back 4 feet from both rear and side property lines.
Corner lots	A 10-foot setback is required on the street side.
Lots ½ acre or greater along riparian corridors	Minimum 100-foot setback required.
Decks, unenclosed entry landings, and second-story balconies	Minimum 15-foot rear/side setback required. May not locate along building walls nearest to rear and side property lines.

> Outcome: If yes, the setbacks for your ADU are in compliance. If no, your plans will not be approved.

9. Height. Does your proposed ADU comply with these height limitations?

Property Type	*Location Requirements*
Single-family	**Attached ADU**: Same height limitations as apply to the main dwelling unit. **Detached ADU**: One story: 18 feet maximum. Two-story: 24 feet maximum If the property includes a JADU, height of a detached ADU is 16 feet maximum per state law.
Duplex or Multifamily	**Attached ADU**: Limited to a conversion of existing non-livable space and must maintain existing height. **Detached ADU**: 16 feet maximum per state law

Outcome: If yes, the height of your ADU is in compliance. If no, your plans will not be approved.

10. Sleeping Area. Up to two bedrooms are allowed, and the maximum bedroom size is 400 sf. Does the sleeping area or bedroom/s planned for the ADU or JADU comply with these standards?

> Outcome: If yes, your layout for the sleeping area is allowed. If no, your plans will not be approved

11. Kitchen, Bathroom, Storage. Does your proposed ADU or JADU comply with these rules?

Kitchen - ADUs must have a sink, food preparation counter, storage, cabinets, and permanent cooking facilities such as a range or cooktop and oven. JADUs may have the same OR a small efficency kitchen with plug-in appliances.

Bathroom/s - For ADUs, up to two bathrooms are allowed, requiring a sink, toilet, and shower and/or bath facilities. For JADUs, sharing the bathroom with the main residence is allowed or one bathroom or a half bathroom is allowed.

Storage - A closet or other enclosed storage area cannot exceed 60 sq. ft.

> Outcome: If yes, your design is in compliance. If no, your plans will not be approved.

12. Second Story Window Sill Height. Sill height for any openings must be a minimum 5 feet from the floor for walls nearest to rear and side property lines. Does your project comply with this rule?

> Outcome: If yes, this window design is allowed. If no, the plans wills will not be approved.

13. Parking Requirements. Does your proposed ADU either provide a parking space OR qualify for an exemption?

Exemptions: Many ADUs qualify for a parking exemption in accordance with state law. Please see the Parking Requirements page at www.sanjoseca.gov/ADUs for a list of the exemption criteria.

Parking space location: If you are required to provide a parking space, it must be located on a surface free of mud or dust. It may be located within the front and side setbacks of the property, with a minimum driveway length of 18 feet.

Parking requirements after a garage conversion: If you converted a garage to an ADU, replacement parking for the main home is no longer required.

> Outcome: If yes, your proposed project is in compliance. If no, your plans will not be approved.

continued >

SECTION D. FIRE SAFETY & EMERGENCY ACCESS		
We will review your ADU project for compliance with the California Fire Code (CFC) so that projects are built for safety and ease of access during an emergency. For questions, call the City's Fire Prevention Bureau: 408-535-7750		
QUESTION	**YES**	**NO**
14. Hydrant Water Flow. Is a minimum flow of 1,000 gpm at 20 psi available at the closest hydrant? Ask your Water Company for this information. Send an email with WATER FLOW REQUEST in the subject line and present this information: ▪ Your name ▪ Street name and address of the project ▪ Nearest cross street to that location Submit the letter from the Water Company that contains this water flow data with your building permit application. **DON'T WAIT!** A top reason for permit issuance delays is not having this letter. Your water company will respond, so contact them today. Find Water Company contact information at the ADU Fire Requirements webpage: https://www.sanjoseca.gov/business/development-services-permit-center/accessory-dwelling-units-adus/adu-fire-requirements) **> Outcome:** If the flow is other than 1,000 gpm at 20 psi, Fire staff will review flow data and will evaluate if additional fire safety measures are required.		
15. Hydrant Proximity. Are all exterior walls of the ADU within 600 feet of a fire hydrant? On the Site Plan Vicinity Map for plan submittal, mark one or more locations of fire hydrants closest to the project. Indicate the distance from the hydrant/s to the farthest exterior wall of the ADU, using the minimum 3-foot clear path of travel. **> Outcome:** If no, your project may require a Fire Variance that entails additional safety measures. Call 408-535-7750 for direction. Find the Variance application at: www.sanjoseca.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=9343		
14. Fire sprinklers. Is the primary residence protected by fire sprinklers? **> Outcome:** If yes, the ADU must have a fire sprinkler system.		
15. Fire sprinklers and attached ADUs. Is the project an attached ADU greater than 500 square feet AND does the overall gross floor area with the main unit exceed 3,600 square feet? **> Outcome:** If yes, the entire house and ADU are required to be protected with a fire sprinkler system.		
16. ADU Address. Does the ADU have its own address and is the address visible and legible from the street? Premises Identification guidelines: www.sanjoseca.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=9323. On the Site Plan for plan submittal, show the address location on the primary dwelling unit and on the ADU. **> Outcome:** If no, please complete Form #302, found at: www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showdocument?id=25943		
17. ADU Access. Is the distance from the street curb of the lot to all portions of the proposed ADU no greater than 200 feet as measured along a minimum 3-foot clear path to all sides of the ADU? On the Site Plan for plan submittal, show the distance along the minimum 3-foot clear path from the front property line to the ADU's farthest exterior side or projection (such as eaves), whichever is farthest. **> Outcome:** If no, your project may require a Fire Variance that entails additional safety measures. Call 408-535-7750 for direction. Find the Variance application at: www.sanjoseca.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=9343		
SECTION E. MISCELLANEOUS		
18. Tree Removal. Will constructing an ADU require removal of an ordinance-size or heritage tree? **> Outcome:** If yes, please see the City's rules for removing trees: www.sanjoseca.gov/treepermit		

ADU ALLY - HERE TO HELP YOU

Our ADU Ally is a staff member that will answer your questions; connect you to other staff who may be of assistance; and schedule your appointment for ADU plan submittal and review.

Email: adu.ally@sanjoseca.gov

Phone: 408-793-5302