



NEWPORT BEACH ADU GUIDEBOOK



A complete guide to planning an accessory dwelling unit in Newport Beach
newportbeachca.gov/adu

Welcome!



This guide was created as a resource to help residents of Newport Beach through the entire process of building an accessory dwelling unit (ADU)—also known as granny flats, backyard cottages, in-law units, or basement/garage apartments.

These pages include a step-by-step approach to your ADU project (from ADU 101 all the way to move-in) and provide links to helpful resources and tools along the way.

NEWPORT BEACH ADU ONLINE

Our ADU website at newportbeachca.gov/adu includes this Guidebook, plus interactive tools and exercises to guide you through the ADU process.

GUIDEBOOK newportbeachca.gov/adu-guidebook

EXERCISES newportbeachca.gov/adu-exercises

CITY ADU RULES newportbeachca.gov/adu-rules

GLOSSARY newportbeachca.gov/adu-glossary



NEWPORT BEACH PLANNING DIVISION

1st Floor Bay C, 100 Civic Center Drive,
Mon-Thu 7:30 - 5:30, Fri 7:30 - 4:30.
Planning and Zoning Info: 949-644-3204
ADU Assist form for initial inquiries:
newportbeachca.gov/aduassist

MORE CONTACT DETAILS IN THE DIRECTORY, FINAL PAGE.



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EXERCISES



This guidebook includes interactive exercises to help you plan your ADU project. Exercises are available as a [downloadable PDF](#).

GETTING STARTED

- Identifying Goals & Concerns
- Recording Your ADU Goals
- Making a Rough Property Sketch

LEARNING THE RULES

- Documenting Property Information
- City Staff Meeting Worksheet

BUDGETING & FINANCE

- Budgeting Exercise

DESIGN

- Initial Design Exercise
- Design Ideas Exercise
- Designer Considerations Exercise

PERMITTING

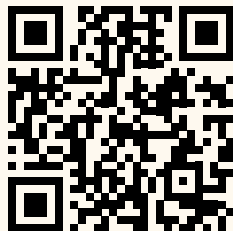
- Permit Application Planning and Organization

MOVE-IN

- Identifying What You Want in a Lease



Use the buttons and QR codes listed throughout this Guidebook to access the Exercises PDF.





ADU 101

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) come in many shapes and sizes but are always a self-contained home that is smaller than the main house and legally part of the same property. They must have a kitchen, bathroom, and place to sleep, and can range from efficiency-size studios to 1,000-square-foot homes with multiple bedrooms.



ANOTHER OPTION: JADUS

Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JADUs) are smaller units of up to 500 square feet of space within or attached to a single-family home (including an attached garage). JADUs must include an efficiency kitchen (sink, stove, fridge, and counter). Some JADUs have their own bathroom and some share with the main house. Construction costs for JADUs are typically much lower. In most cases, the property owner must live in the primary unit or the JADU.

State law now allows homeowners to have both a JADU and a regular ADU on their property.

Benefits of ADUs

Building and renting an ADU is truly a community service — ADUs often provide homes for the local workforce and small families who have difficulty finding local housing that meets their needs.

For homeowners, there are many reasons to build an ADU — rental income, safe and convenient housing for relatives, flexibility over time, and many others. Here are some of the reasons to build an ADU:



HOUSING FRIENDS & RELATIVES

Space for adult children, aging relatives, or loved ones with special needs.



RENTAL INCOME A steady source of income or funds for a rainy day.



A HOME AS YOU AGE A home for a caregiver or an accessible and comfortable option for aging adults.



SAFETY An extra set of eyes on the property for security, travel, and more.



ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Small-scale living and reduced commutes for local workers.

Photo left: buildinganadu.com; Photo right: iStock

TYPES OF ADUS

Local ADU regulations are based on these ADU types. See the Learning the Rules section for more details.



JADUS: Converted or new space within or attached to an existing or new home, up to 500 square feet (see previous page)



INTERNAL: Converted space in an existing home or accessory building (garage, pool house) OR a unit in a new development



ATTACHED: New structure (may include some converted space) sharing at least one wall with a home/building



DETACHED: New freestanding structure, such as a backyard cottage



MULTI-UNIT CONVERSION: Converted space in an existing multi-unit building (storage, attics, or other non-habitable space)



SITE-BUILT/TRADITIONAL means the ADU is custom-built on your property with typical construction methods.



PREFABRICATED/PANELIZED/MODULAR means sections of or the entire ADU are built off-site and delivered to your property.



The ADU Process

 **HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE?**

PROJECT TIMING

Building an ADU is an investment of time. Most projects take one to two years to complete, with interior conversions being the fastest.

Stages of the process include:

- **GETTING STARTED** 1-3 months
- **DESIGN** 1-6 months
- **PERMITTING** 1-6 months
- **CONSTRUCTION** 6-12 months

ADU PROCESS AT-A-GLANCE



The following page has a general overview of the steps you can expect as you build your ADU. Many homeowners find that their project does not follow a straight line, but rather involves a learning and revision process.

VISIT [OUR WEBSITE](#) FOR TOOLS AND RESOURCES ASSOCIATED WITH EACH STEP OF THE PROCESS.

TIMELINE FOR BUILDING AN ADU

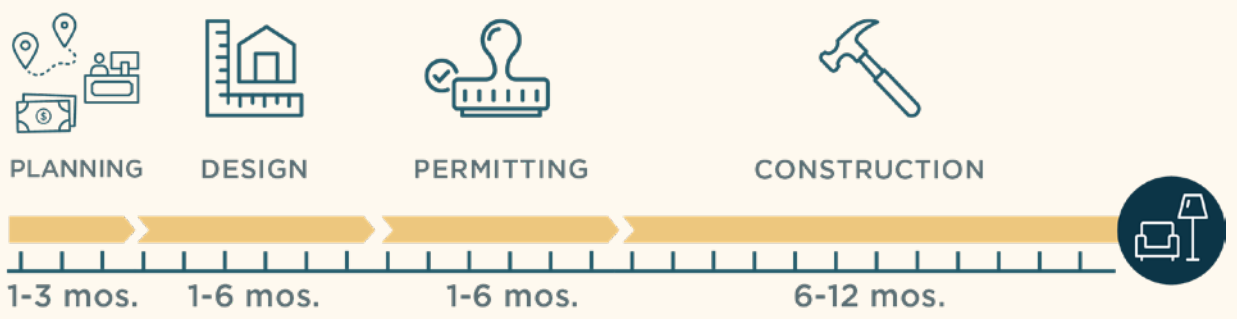


Photo: San Mateo Second Unit Center

ADU Process At-A-Glance

Newport Beach ADU is here to help you through the ADU building process. Please contact the Planning Division at 949-644-3204 and visit our website at newportbeachca.gov/adu for more information.

1 GET STARTED

- **Think about what you want**, including the goals and concerns for your project
- **Look for inspiration** - visit our [ADU website](#) to see ADU floorplans and case studies.
- **Make an informal sketch of your property** and what space is available - the [interactive exercises](#) on our ADU website can help.
- **Estimate costs** and possible rental income using the [Orange County ADU Calculator](#).



2 LEARN THE RULES

- **Learn about your property**, relevant service providers, and restrictions that might apply using the [Newport Beach Address Finder](#).
- **Learn what you can build** in this guidebook book and [City ADU Rules](#).
- **Meet with city staff** to discuss the rules that apply to your property and proposed ADU and the deed restriction requirements.
- **Adjust your project budget** as needed and create a plan for financing your project.



3 DESIGN YOUR ADU

- **Consider using one of our pre-approved ADU plans**, which can ease the process.
- **Hire your team** - we recommend hiring a licensed architect or designer to design your ADU and a licensed contractor to construct it, or a design/build team. Whoever you hire will help with permitting.
- **Create your initial design** and discuss it with planning staff. You can visit the Permit Center during business hours or call to make an appointment.
- **Finalize your design** for permitting.



4 APPLY FOR PERMITS

- **Prepare your application package** for [Plan Check](#) and a [Building Permit](#). Coastal Zone properties may first need to receive a [Coastal Development Permit](#).
- **Submit your application** at the Permit Counter. Plan Check fees are due at submission. Materials are typically reviewed within 10-20 business days.
- **Revise your application** - ADU applications typically require 2-3 reviews, each taking 10-20 days. Check permit status in the City's [CiViC Portal](#). Building Permit fees are due upon approval.*



6 MOVE IN!



5 CONSTRUCT YOUR ADU

- **Ensure all funding is in place** before beginning construction.
- **Monitor construction** (which typically takes 6-12 months) by checking in regularly with your contractors, making decisions about materials as needed and ensuring required inspections are moving along.
- **Pass final inspection** - your contractor will schedule inspections throughout the construction process by calling 949-644-3255. Once your ADU has passed the final inspection, it's ready for move-in!



* All City fees for ADUs are waived through at least 2023.



BRAD Converted rec room becomes flexible housing



I grew up in a sailing family – my father bought a sailboat within a year of coming home from World War II – and many of my first memories were of sailing in Newport Harbor. I sailed professionally when I was younger, back and forth across the Atlantic, and when I returned I started a boat charter business in Newport Harbor.

I bought this house in Newport Heights in 1986. It was a relatively large lot with a main home and a small 15'x20' building in the back, with no bathroom. It was basically a little better than a shed. In the late 1980s I upgraded the building by adding a bathroom, and it was permitted as a recreation room (which ensured no one was living there).

In 2020, I decided to convert the building into an ADU. I've been City Councilmember since 2016 but I was still surprised by how involved the process was – especially to bring the building up to code. We had to upgrade the foundation, replace the water heater, upgrade wiring, etc. It was a challenging process, but I would do it again.

My ADU is currently occupied by a young family member living in the unit while working and going to school, trying to save up a down payment to purchase their own home. Their situation has really informed me about how difficult it can be for young people to find local housing. They want independence and they're working hard, and we're glad we can help them with somewhere to live while they save.



“The real value of the ADU is the flexibility – you can rent it out, you can use it as a guest house, you can use it for various purposes.”



Location	Newport Heights
ADU Type	Converted Accessory Building
Price	\$12,500
Year Completed	2020
Time	12 months
Size	424 SF



SECTION 1

GETTING STARTED



THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT



MAKE A SKETCH



ESTIMATE COSTS



EXERCISES

- Identifying Goals & Concerns
- Recording Your ADU Goals
- Making a Rough Property Sketch

TIMELINE FOR BUILDING AN ADU

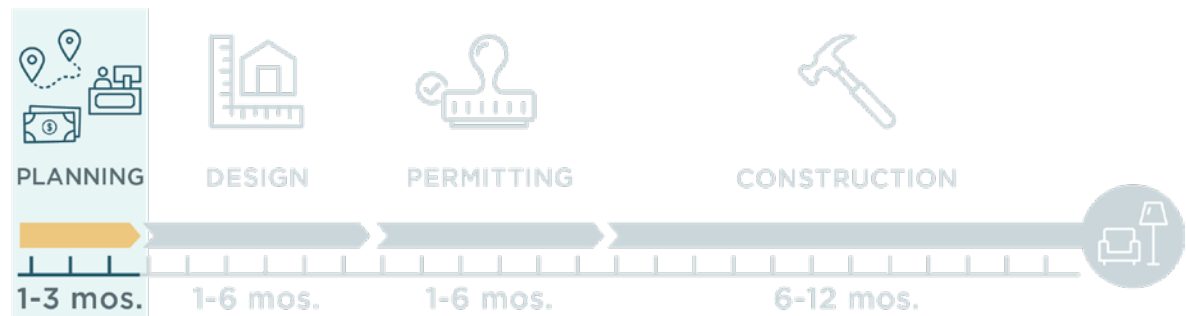


Photo: Blokable



Think About What You Want

HOW DO I GET STARTED?

Use the [ADU Assist form](#) for any of your initial questions for Planning staff.



EXERCISES

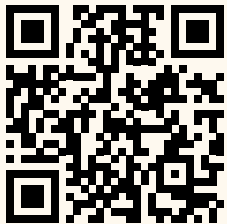
Identifying Goals & Concerns

Short- and long-term goals and concerns for your ADU project.

Recording Your ADU Goals

Focusing on the benefits of your ADU project.

 EXERCISES PDF



GOALS AND CONCERNS

Start by thinking about both your short- and long-term goals. One of the benefits of an ADU is that it can respond to your changing needs over time. At first, it might be rented for income, then turn into a children’s playroom, and eventually house aging parents or yourself. It is also important to think about your concerns, like cost, financing, and design. Ways to address these potential challenges are explored in this guide. Creating a list early in the process can help make sure they are addressed sufficiently.

LOOK FOR INSPIRATION

Learning about other ADUs helps you visualize how you might use one, decide what features and design elements matter to you, and get a feel for smaller living spaces.

ADU SPOTLIGHTS Read stories in this Guidebook about Newport Beach residents who have built ADUs (also featured on our [website](#)).

FLOORPLANS See a large selection of real-world ADU floorplans from across California on our [website](#).

NEWPORT BEACH PRE-APPROVED

PLANS Visit the City’s [Pre-Approved Plans program](#) to see the designs and floorplans already reviewed by our Planning and Building Divisions (see more details about this program in the Design section).

TALK TO FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS If you know people who have built ADUs, talk to them about what they like and what they wish they’d done differently. If you know any architects or contractors, have a casual chat about ADUs and their suggestions.

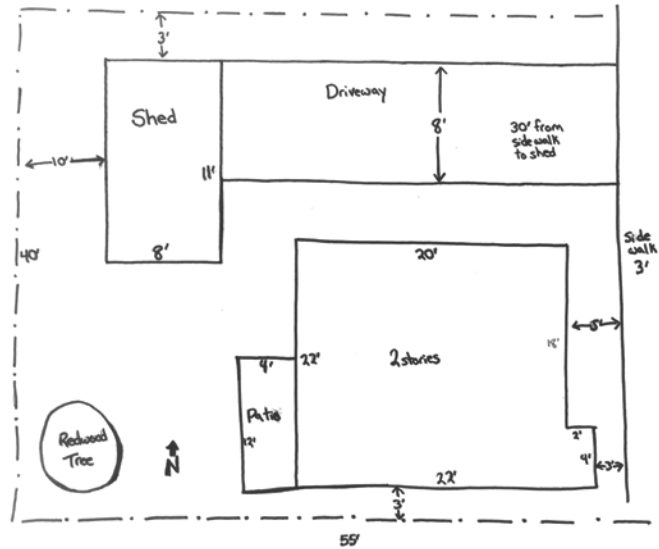
Typically, a studio is 220–400 square feet, a one-bedroom is 300–850 square feet, and a two-bedroom is 700–1,000 square feet.

Keep in mind that your ideas are likely to change after you learn more about your property and when you hire a professional team. Being flexible is key!



Make a Sketch

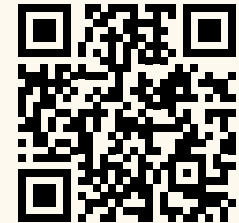
This is a good time to make an informal, rough sketch of your property, including existing structures, trees, driveways, and other major elements. You can continue to update/revisit this sketch as you learn more about your property and development rules. Use our Property Sketch exercise for instructions and tips.



EXERCISES

- Making a Rough Property Sketch
Guidelines for drawing a rough site map of your property

EXERCISES PDF



Estimate Cost

A very rough placeholder for you to use is \$250 per square foot, including construction and other costs (design, fees, etc.). The real number can vary widely and depends on many factors. [Orange County's ADU Calculator](#) is a great place to start when developing a budget. It provides a rough estimate of costs and income and will help you understand how choices can impact your budget over time, all customized to real local numbers.

There are further discussions of costs in the Design, Permitting, and Construction sections. See the Budget & Financing section for a detailed explanation of financing options.

Photo: Unsplash



Early Considerations

Things to think about early on to avoid problems down the road:

SPEAKING TO NEIGHBORS The City doesn't require neighbors to agree to your plans, but it is always a good idea to talk with your neighbors about changes to your property and building new housing for your community. Who knows – learning about the process through your experience may help them decide to build their own ADU!

HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS (HOAS)

If you live in an HOA, talk with your representative or board early. An HOA cannot prevent you from building or renting an ADU and cannot “unreasonably restrict” construction or design, but they may still have guidelines or standards to consider. HOAs may also ask to review your ADU plans, but proof of HOA review is not required by the City.

SHARING SPACE Consider what it will be like to be a landlord or to share your property with someone. The tenant may share a backyard or wall and utilities. You may want to consider soundproofing, ventilation for cooking smells, utility costs, and any shared maintenance tasks.

COASTAL ZONE ADUS If your property is in the Coastal Zone (you can verify this on the [Newport Beach Address Lookup Tool](#)), you may face some slightly different requirements for your project. Your ADU may require a Coastal Development Permit (CDP), a process that will lengthen your project timeline. See the Permitting section for more details.

DEED RESTRICTION All ADUs in Newport Beach are subject to deed restriction (conditions or rules that are added to your property's deed). See the Permitting section for more details. Before committing to building an ADU, homeowners should think about their goals and make sure that they align with these requirements.



SECTION 2

LEARNING THE RULES



LEARN ABOUT YOUR PROPERTY



LEARN WHAT YOU CAN BUILD



MEET WITH CITY STAFF



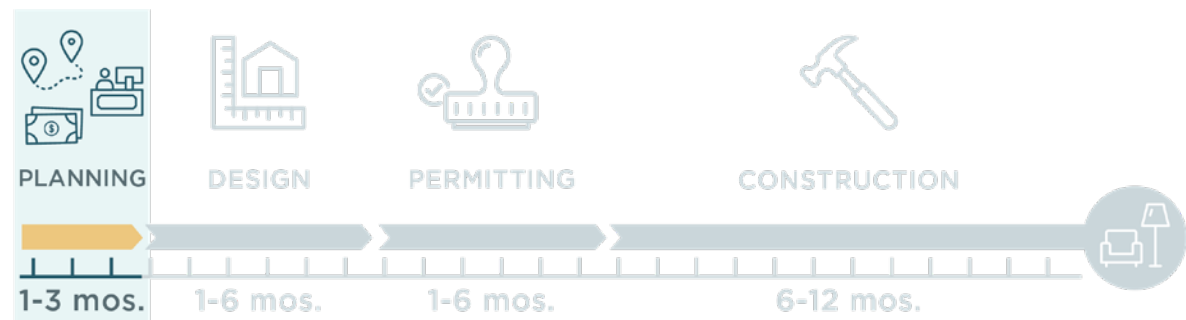
ADJUST YOUR PROJECT BUDGET

EXERCISES



- Documenting Property Information
- Planner Meeting Worksheet

TIMELINE FOR BUILDING AN ADU



MAKE SURE YOU DOWNLOAD OR VIEW THE CITY'S [ADU RULES](#)

Photo: Community Planning Collaborative



Learn About Your Property

LOT SIZE At many points in the process, you'll need to know the total square footage of your property. You may be asked to verify the number with an inspection or survey. Here are some ways to find the approximate size of your lot:

- **Newport Beach's [Address Search Tool](#)** Type your address in the search bar, then select your address from the suggestion drop down menu. Click "View Report" to find the approximate lot size recorded by the city.
- **Estimate** with width times depth if your lot is roughly rectangular. For example, a lot that is 40 feet wide by 60 feet deep is 2,400 square feet.
- **Real estate websites** often include approximate lot size.

All information you gather about your property should be confirmed with the City before beginning design, especially if you get the information from informal sources like real estate websites.

Photo: ADU Marin

ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER (APN)

Every site or lot in California is assigned a unique APN, which is like a social security number for your property. Your parcel APN will be listed on your property tax bill and can also be found using Newport Beach's [Address Search Tool](#). On your property summary, the APN is listed in the top right.

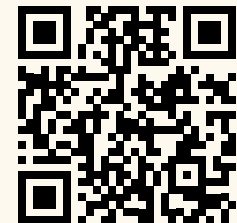
ZONING CODE DETAILS You may want to know about the maximum height, setbacks, floor area limits, and other details of how your property is zoned. See our Documenting Property Information exercise for details on how to find this information if you need it.

EXERCISES



- Documenting Property Information

Collect important data you'll need as you plan your ADU





Learn What You Can Build

This section provides an overview of key state and local laws, followed by a copy of the City's ADU Ordinance Summary. ADU laws are updated occasionally, and there were major updates of state ADU laws in 2020 and 2023. You can verify the most up-to-date City [ADU rules on our website](#) and when you meet with City staff.

CAN I BUILD AN ADU?

In almost all cases, yes! ADUs are allowed in all residential and mixed-use zones and there is no minimum lot size. Homeowners can build both an ADU and a JADU on their property, and multifamily building owners can build one or two ADUs, depending on the type of project (but no JADUs).

CAN I USE MY GARAGE? Homeowners can convert legally built structures (garage, barn, art studio, etc.) into an ADU. JADUs can be converted from an attached garage (but not detached). If you demolish your garage or other enclosed structure and build an ADU in its place, the ADU can be in the same footprint if it's the same size and height of the structure it's replacing.



AM I ALLOWED TO BUILD AN ADU?

As of 2023, the demolition permits for an existing detached garage can be processed at the same time as the ADU permits (rather than waiting for demolition to be complete before starting ADU permitting).



Photo: Valley Home Development



IMPORTANT ADU LAWS

OWNER OCCUPANCY Homeowners who build an ADU do not need live on the property; however, JADU owners must live in the JADU or the primary unit.

SHORT-TERM RENTALS ADUs cannot be rented for fewer than 30 days at a time.

SEPARATE ENTRANCES All ADUs must have their own exterior entryway (JADUs must also have an interior entrance if sharing a bathroom with the primary unit).

FIRE SAFETY Any walls and floors shared between the primary unit and the ADU must be rated for 1-hour fire safety. Fire sprinklers are only required if they're also required in the primary unit.

PARKING

- **JADUs** don't require new parking, but garage conversions must include replacement parking.
- **Internal ADUs** don't require new parking.
- **Attached and detached ADUs** do not require additional parking if:
 1. Within 1/2 mile walking distance to transit (including a ferry);
 2. Within an architecturally or historically significant district;
 3. On-street parking permits are required and not provided to the ADU occupant;
 4. Located within one block of car-share access;
 5. Constructed along with a new development.

Otherwise, you will need to add one parking spot, but it can be tandem (directly behind another spot in the driveway).

If your property is the Coastal Zone, you need to replace any parking lost by an internal or conversion ADU and you need to provide parking for an attached or detached ADU if building it along with a new single-family or multi-unit building.

HOW BIG CAN MY ADU BE?

FLOOR AREA

- Minimum size is based on state laws for efficiency units, which currently require at least one room of 190 or more square feet, plus a closet. JADUs can share a bathroom with the primary unit; ADUs require their own bathroom.
- **JADUs** can be up to 500 square feet within or attached to a single-family dwelling.
- **Internal and multi-unit conversion ADUs** have no limit on square footage, but note that adding any additional space to the envelope of the primary unit makes the ADU an attached unit, not internal (exception: when converting an existing accessory structure like a garage, you can add up to 150 square feet for ingress/egress).
- **Attached and detached ADUs** can be up to 850 square feet for studios and one-bedroom units, and up to 1,000 square feet for two-bedroom units.

ADU HEIGHT

- **Detached ADUs** can be up to 18 feet tall, plus two additional feet for a sloped roof.

A detached ADU above a garage can be whatever zoning code allows if the garage complies with setbacks and the primary unit complies with parking laws.

- **Attached ADUs** can be up to 25 feet tall or your zoning code – whatever is lower.

SITE COVERAGE/FLOOR AREA LIMIT

RULES determine how much of your property can be developed. These are unlikely to affect your ADU unless you're planning a large ADU on a small or full lot, but you should clarify this when you meet with City staff.

SETBACKS (distance to the edge of the property)

- **JADUs and internal and multi-unit conversion ADUs** have setbacks based on your zoning code.
- **Attached and detached ADUs** have rear and side setbacks of four feet or based on your zoning code, whatever is lower, and front setbacks based on your zoning code.

If you're demolishing an existing enclosed structure (like a detached garage) to build an ADU, it can retain the original structure's setbacks as long as it's the same size and height.

WHAT ABOUT BASEMENT ADUS?

ADUs and JADUs built below-grade are not counted toward the floor area limits for your property, as long as excavation and "daylighting" for exterior access is limited. Talk to Planning staff for more details.






YOU CAN BUILD IT!

Rules about front setbacks, floor area limit, and lot coverage cannot keep you from building an 800 square foot detached ADU.

Maximum height, setbacks, site coverage, and floor area limit are all found in the zoning rules for your property.



Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JADU) are regulated by Newport Beach Municipal Code Sections [20.48.200](#) and [21.48.200](#). Ministerial review of all ADUs and JADUs will occur through building permit plan check. A Coastal Development Permit may also be required for properties within the Coastal Zone. *Please consult with a planner prior to submitting an ADU/JADU project.*

	JADU	ADU WITH SINGLE- OR MULTI-UNIT DEVELOPMENT			ADU WITH EXISTING MULTI-UNIT DEVELOPMENT
ADU Type	 <p>JADU <i>Conversion¹ of an interior portion of an existing single-unit dwelling; or new construction within a proposed single-unit dwelling; or attached to an existing or proposed single-unit dwelling</i></p>	 <p>INTERNAL^{1,2} <i>Conversion of an interior portion of an existing single-unit or multi-unit dwelling, or an existing detached accessory building; or new construction within a proposed single-unit or multi-unit (2+) development</i></p>	 <p>ATTACHED¹ <i>Construction of a new ADU attached to an existing or proposed single-unit or multi-unit dwelling</i></p>	 <p>DETACHED <i>Construction of a new ADU as a detached accessory building</i></p>	 <p>CONVERSION <i>Conversion of an existing non-habitable (e.g., storage rooms, boiler rooms, passageways, attics, basements, or garages) portion of a multi-unit (2+) development</i></p>
Zoning	Allowed on all residential and mixed zoned properties that are improved with a single-unit dwelling	Allowed on all residential and mixed zoned properties that are improved with a single-unit or multi-unit dwelling			Allowed on all residential and mixed zoned properties that are improved with existing multi-unit dwellings
Number of Units	One	One	Single-unit Development: One Multi-unit Development: Two		At least one and no more than 25% of the existing unit count in the multi-unit development
Allowed with Other ADU ³	May also provide single-unit ADU	May also provide JADU as part of a <i>single-unit dwelling</i>			No
Minimum Lot Size	None				
Minimum Size	Shall comply with California Building Code Section 1208 (Interior Space Dimensions)				
Maximum Size (Square Feet)	500	No limit	Studio/One-Bedroom = 850 Two Bedroom = 1,000		No limit
Maximum Height	Per base zone	Per base zone	Per base zone	18 feet flat roof 20 feet sloped roof (min 3/12 pitch) ⁴	N/A
Front Setback ⁵	Per base zone				
Side Setback ⁵	Per base zone	Per base zone	4 feet or base zone, whichever is less		Per Base Zone
Rear Setback ⁵	Per base zone	Per base zone	4 feet (not abutting alley) or base zone, whichever is less		Per Base Zone
800 sf ADU Exception for Existing Development ⁶	N/A		Application of floor area limit, site coverage limit, or front setback shall not reduce an ADU below 800 square feet		N/A
Walkout Basement FAL Exception	Floor area of ADU/JADU may be excluded from the allowable floor area limit when located below grade within a basement and specific criteria is met. See Section 20.48.200(F)(5) and 21.48.200(F)(5)				



	JADU	ADU WITH SINGLE- OR MULTI-UNIT DEVELOPMENT			ADU WITH EXISTING MULTI-UNIT DEVELOPMENT
ADU Type	JADU	INTERNAL ^{1,2}	ATTACHED ¹	DETACHED	CONVERSION
Access	Exterior entrance required in all cases. JADUs may provide internal connection.				
Bathroom	May share with primary dwelling unit	Bathroom is required			
Kitchen	Efficiency ⁷	Full kitchen, including fixed cooking appliance with outside exhaust.			
Parking	None	None	One per unit		None
Parking Exception	N/A		Parking waived for the ADU if the property is: 1) within ½ mile walking distance to transit; 2) within an architecturally or historically significant district; 3) on-street parking permits are required and not provided to the occupant of the ADU; 4) within one block of a car-share vehicle pick-up/drop-off location; or 5) when ADU is constructed in conjunction with a new single-unit or multi-unit dwelling not located in the coastal zone.		N/A
Garage/Carport Conversion	Allowed; Replacement parking required citywide	Allowed; Replacement parking required in the Coastal Zone	N/A		Allowed; Replacement parking required in the Coastal Zone
Deed Restriction	Prior to issuance of building permit, owner must record deed restriction (prepared by the City) noting the size of the unit, description of unit, prohibition on short term rentals, prohibiting the sale of the ADU/JADU, and specifying owner-occupancy requirement. Additional restrictions required in the Coastal zone.				
Owner-Occupancy	Owner shall live in either unit	N/A			
Short-Term Lodging	Short-term lodging is prohibited.				
Utility Connection	A separate utility connection is not required	The City may require a separate utility connection. (See Utilities Director 1/9/21 Memorandum for single water and sewer service allowances)			
Fire Sprinklers	Only required if fire sprinklers required and provided on primary unit. (See State Fire Marshall Informational Bulletin 21-005 for exceptions)				
Separate Conveyance	ADUs and JADUs may not be sold separately				

¹ Internal is either: 1) conversion of existing floor area within the envelope of an existing single-unit dwelling (including garage); or 2) development of an ADU within the footprint of a proposed single-unit or multi-unit dwelling (excluding garage) that complies with all applicable development standards. Construction of a new ADU that extends beyond the envelope of an existing single-unit or multi-unit dwelling or beyond the footprint of a proposed single-unit or multi-unit dwelling shall comply with the standards applicable to *Attached ADUs*.

² Conversions of existing accessory structures are permitted a 150 sq. ft. addition to accommodate ingress/egress. Conversions within principal structure not entitled to 150 sf addition.

³ Current adopted code is out of date. AB3182, effective January 1, 2021, allows an ADU and a JADU on the same lot with a proposed or existing single-family dwelling, regardless if the ADU is detached, attached, or internal. This change will be incorporated into future Title 20 and Title 21 amendments.

⁴ Exception: Base zone height limit applies for an ADU constructed above a garage that complies with setbacks and principal unit complies with parking.

⁵ For conversion of existing enclosed floor area, garage, or carport, no additional setback required. For replacement of an existing enclosed structure, garage, or carport, no additional setback is required beyond the existing setback. Additional setback maybe required for coastal resource protection per IP.

⁶ An ADU constructed concurrently with a new development shall comply with the total maximum allowed floor area limits, lot coverage limits, and front setbacks applicable to the property. In the case where the floor area, lot coverage, or front setbacks of existing development doesn't allow the development of an 800 sf ADU and no other compliant alternatives exist, then the ADU may exceed the floor area or lot coverage limits, and/or encroach into the front setback to the minimum extent necessary to accommodate the 800 sf ADU provided it meets all other applicable standards.

⁷ An efficiency kitchen may include a basic plug-in cooking appliance such as hot plate or microwave. A sink, food preparation counter and storage cabinets of reasonable size required.



Meet with the City

One of the best things you can do is to talk to staff early in the process about potential issues and rules that might apply to your specific property and project. Newport Beach has a Permit Center where you can ask questions without an appointment, or you can call and ask about setting a specific meeting (for hours and contact information, see the Directory on the final page). This conversation should cover specifics on your lot and the size, location, and type of ADU you want to build. It should also cover additional design guidelines, parking requirements, fees, and utilities as relevant. Consult the City Staff Meeting Worksheet in our interactive exercises for a list of questions to ask.

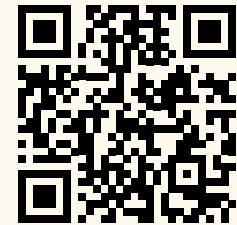
EXERCISES



City Staff Meeting Worksheet

Questions to ask and space to take notes.

 EXERCISES PDF



Adjust Your Budget

Once you know more about the possible size and type of your ADU, revisit your budget estimates as needed. This is a good time to create a plan for financing your project – see our Budgeting & Finance section for more details.



SECTION 3

BUDGET & FINANCE



ESTIMATE PROJECT COST



ASSESS FINANCING OPTIONS

EXERCISES



Budgeting Exercise

TIMELINE FOR BUILDING AN ADU

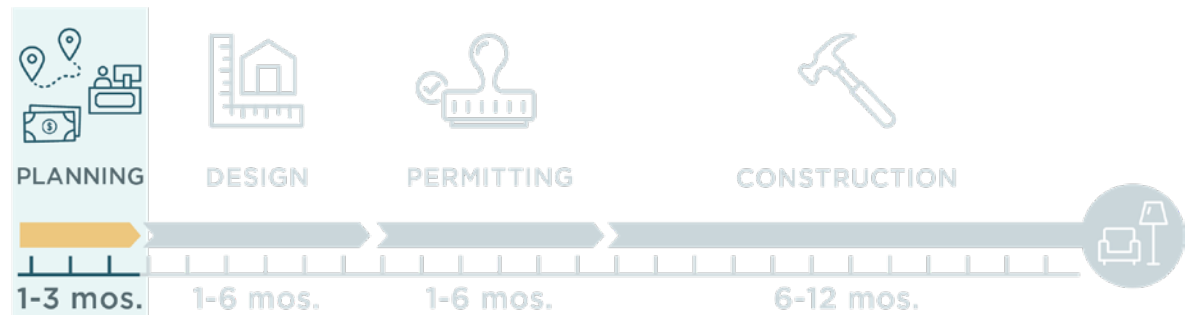


Photo: Valley Home Development



Estimate Project Cost

Your budget is one of the most important parts of your ADU project. You will need to balance design with what you can afford, but also consider potential rental income. A larger or higher-end unit will likely go for a higher rent, which may allow you a larger loan, but if you wish to rent your ADU at an affordable rent, you may need to compromise on size and/or design.

If you haven't already, now is the time to estimate your project costs.

A very rough placeholder for you to use is \$250 per square foot, including construction and other costs (design, fees, etc.). The real number can vary widely and depends on many factors. [Orange County's ADU Calculator](#) is a great place to start when developing a budget. It provides a rough estimate of costs and income and will help you understand how choices can impact your budget over time, all customized to real local numbers.

Keep in mind that initial budget estimates are likely to change and you can't know specifics until you talk to your professional team (designer, contractor, etc.).

WHAT WILL IT COST?

The Design, Permitting, and Construction sections contain more specifics about costs.

If you have a tax or financial advisor, it's a good idea to check in with them early.

EXERCISES

- Budgeting Exercise
Get started with financial planning for your ADU.

 EXERCISES PDF





Assess Financing Options

Many homeowners use a mix of options to finance their ADU, including savings, funds from family, and/or loans. **It is strongly recommended that your financing is in place before construction starts.** Be sure to factor in potential rental income since that will help you repay loans.



CASH OR OTHER EASY-ACCESS MONEY

Homeowners often use assets like cash or stocks to pay for some or all construction costs. Some may also withdraw retirement savings, which usually includes a penalty. While this can be a viable option, it should be considered with caution.



LOANS FROM FRIENDS OR FAMILY

Some homeowners borrow from friends or family. This can benefit everyone if the person lending gets a higher interest rate and the person borrowing pays less than they would on the market. An-other option is planning for friends or family to live in the ADU - they live rent free in exchange for contributing money for construction. In either case, you should come to a formal agreement and have a lawyer prepare a contract, not just with

a handshake. There are companies that can help formalize an agreement and administer payments, if you want - search online for terms like “friends and family loan payments.”



HOME EQUITY

Your equity in your home is the portion of your home’s value that you own outright. It is calculated by subtracting your current mortgage balance(s) from the value of your home. Homeowners with sufficient equity in their homes (at least 15-20%) can take out a second loan or line of credit.

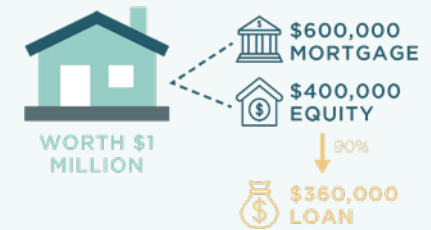


LOANS FROM A LENDER

If you think you may want to borrow, you’ll need to figure out how large a loan you qualify for (and feel comfortable with). Banks will generally require two things: equity from your home and enough income to make payments. A good option is to call a mortgage broker and/or a bank, explain that you are considering building an ADU, and ask about loan options. Brokers and lenders consider it a normal question and will be happy to talk. There is no obligation and no cost for an initial conversation.

Banks will typically offer a loan that is 90 percent of the equity a person has in their property. For example, if you have a \$1 million home and a \$600,000 mortgage, since you own \$400,000, the bank can offer you \$360,000 (.90 x \$400,000).

EXAMPLE EQUITY LOAN



At the time of publication, the California Housing Finance Agency (Cal HFA) ADU Program provides grants of up to \$40,000 to qualified homeowners for the reimbursement of ADU pre-development costs, including impact fees. To qualify, a homeowner must be low or moderate income. See their [website](#) for details.

Getting a Loan

FINDING A BROKER OR BANK

If you are going to get a loan, you will need to decide to work with a mortgage broker or bank to find your loan. You don't need to make this decision right away. The product that best fits your financial situation will depend on your income, home equity, and credit score. Like many other aspects of building an ADU, it's important to talk to different brokers and lenders to find the best fit for you.



MORTGAGE BROKERS shop to find the best option for you and are not affiliated with a specific bank or lender. They are required by law to offer you products that are in your best interest. There are great benefits to using an independent broker since they work with a variety of lenders and loan providers.

To find a mortgage broker, start by asking friends, neighbors, or people in your social network for recommendations. You can reach out to local real estate agencies since they usually have lists of mortgage brokers who have done work for their clients. The [California Association of Mortgage Brokers](#) has an online member directory and the California Department of Real Estate and California Department of Corporations maintain a [listing of all brokers with valid licenses](#) where you can crosscheck recommendations.



BANKS OR CREDIT UNIONS provide a variety of loans to finance your ADU by using your home equity. There are benefits to going directly to a bank especially if you have an existing relationship with one. For instance, they may be able to offer you a rate or products that cannot be offered by a broker or other banks.

To find out more about what banks can provide, start by talking with your current mortgage company or bank. It's also a good idea to contact other banks about what they can offer. Don't forget to consider local banks and credit unions that may be more familiar with financing options for small homes, including ADUs.

LOAN TYPES

Generally, you don't have to worry too much about the different loans available because your bank or mortgage broker will walk you through the various options. Common loan products are summarized below.



CASH-OUT REFINANCE Homeowners with more than 15% equity in their property can refinance their mortgage to pull cash out. This replaces your existing mortgage with a new one. This is best done when rates are lower or comparable to the current rate.



HOME EQUITY LOANS OR HOME EQUITY LINES OF CREDIT (HELOC)

Homeowners with sufficient equity in their home (at least 15%) can take out a second loan or line of credit. These types of loans work well if you prefer to take out a second, smaller mortgage instead of refinancing at a higher interest rate. Typically, these loans are variable rate mortgages (meaning the interest rate changes) and have no initiation fees. To qualify, you'll need to show you make sufficient income to cover the cost of your current debts plus the additional debt you'll be taking on. One advantage is the homeowner does not start paying interest until the money is spent.

CHOOSING A BROKER OR BANK

	Potential Pros	Potential Cons
<p>Mortgage Brokers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They will have access to more financial products and can work with various companies or lenders. • Legally they must find the best deals available for you. • They may have more creative financing options available if your financial situation is unique, such as lower income or equity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They can only work with their available financial products and portfolio. • They do not have to disclose how much money they are making from your loan.
<p>Banks or Credit Unions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They may have access to different financial products not available to mortgage brokers. • One place for all your accounts like mortgage and retirement if they currently manage your portfolio. • The loan process all happens through one institution. • An existing relationship can feel more comfortable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They can only work with their available financial products and portfolio. • They do not have to disclose how much money they are making from your loan. • Depending on your financial situation, such as lower income or equity, they may be more conservative in what they can offer.

FINANCING OPTIONS TO CONSIDER

	High Income	Low Income
High Home Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash savings • Cash-out refinance • Home equity loan/HELOC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash-out refinance • Home equity loan/HELOC
Low Home Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash savings • Renovation loan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financing typically unavailable • Loans from friends or family

Taxes and Resale

? HOW WILL IT AFFECT MY TAXES?

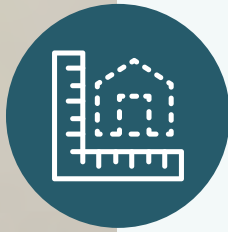
Adding an ADU will likely affect your property taxes and the resale value of your home. However, your primary house will not be reassessed, and your property taxes will only increase based on the added value of your ADU. For example, if you build an ADU that adds \$150,000 to your property value, and your tax rate is 1%, your taxes will increase by $1\% \times \$150,000$, or \$1,500 per year.

Building a JADU will have a significantly smaller impact on assessed value. In some cases, your taxes will not increase at all. Home sharing will also not increase the assessed value of your home. Generally, garage conversions will not raise your tax bill as much as new construction, but they will also not add as much value.

Each property will require a one-on-one analysis to determine the added value of an ADU, so contact the Kern County Assessor Recorder Office at 661-868-3485 or send an email to assessor@kerncounty.com once you have an idea of your plan. They will be able to provide you with a rough estimate of tax implications.

Adding an ADU may impact your income taxes as well. This can be rather complicated, and it's best to discuss these with a tax advisor. The rental income you receive for your ADU is taxable, but you can deduct the cost of allowable maintenance and depreciate the cost of construction, which can often reduce or eliminate any tax increase. You may also have capital gains tax related to the increased value when you sell your property.

Note that your unit could be assessed in different ways for different purposes. If you are trying to get a loan, the bank might be more conservative and assume the value of your home will increase less.



SECTION 4

DESIGN



CONSIDER OUR PRE-APPROVED PLANS



HIRE YOUR TEAM



CREATE THE INITIAL DESIGN



FINALIZE DESIGN



EXERCISES

- Initial Design Exercise
- Designer Considerations Exercise
- Design Ideas Exercise

TIMELINE FOR BUILDING AN ADU

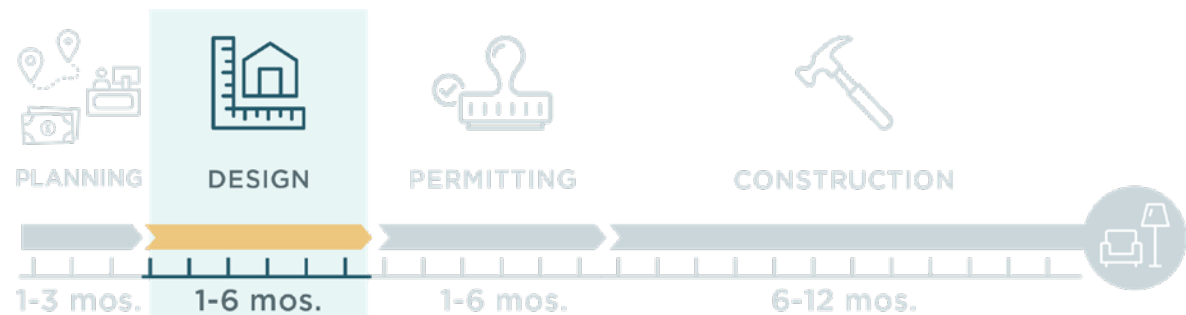


Photo: Abodu

GETTING INSPIRED

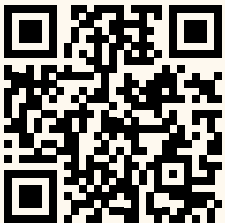
Good sources for ADU design inspiration include the Stories in this Guidebook and [on our ADU website](#), Newport Beach's [pre-approved ADU plans](#), and the gallery on the [Casita Coalition website](#).

EXERCISES



- Initial Design Exercise
Notes and questions to start the design process.
- Design Ideas Exercise
Initial thoughts on finishes and fixtures.

 EXERCISES PDF



BEFORE YOU BEGIN DESIGN

It is helpful to have a clear sense of what you want early in the process. If you have not made some basic decisions, like the type of ADU and how many bedrooms, it is difficult to start the design process. An architect or designer can help you brainstorm, but they cannot start designing until these decisions are made.

Also, make sure you and your design team have reviewed all applicable development rules. See the Learning the Rules section for more details. It saves a lot of time and frustration in design and permitting to have met with City staff first to discuss your property and all the applicable rules.

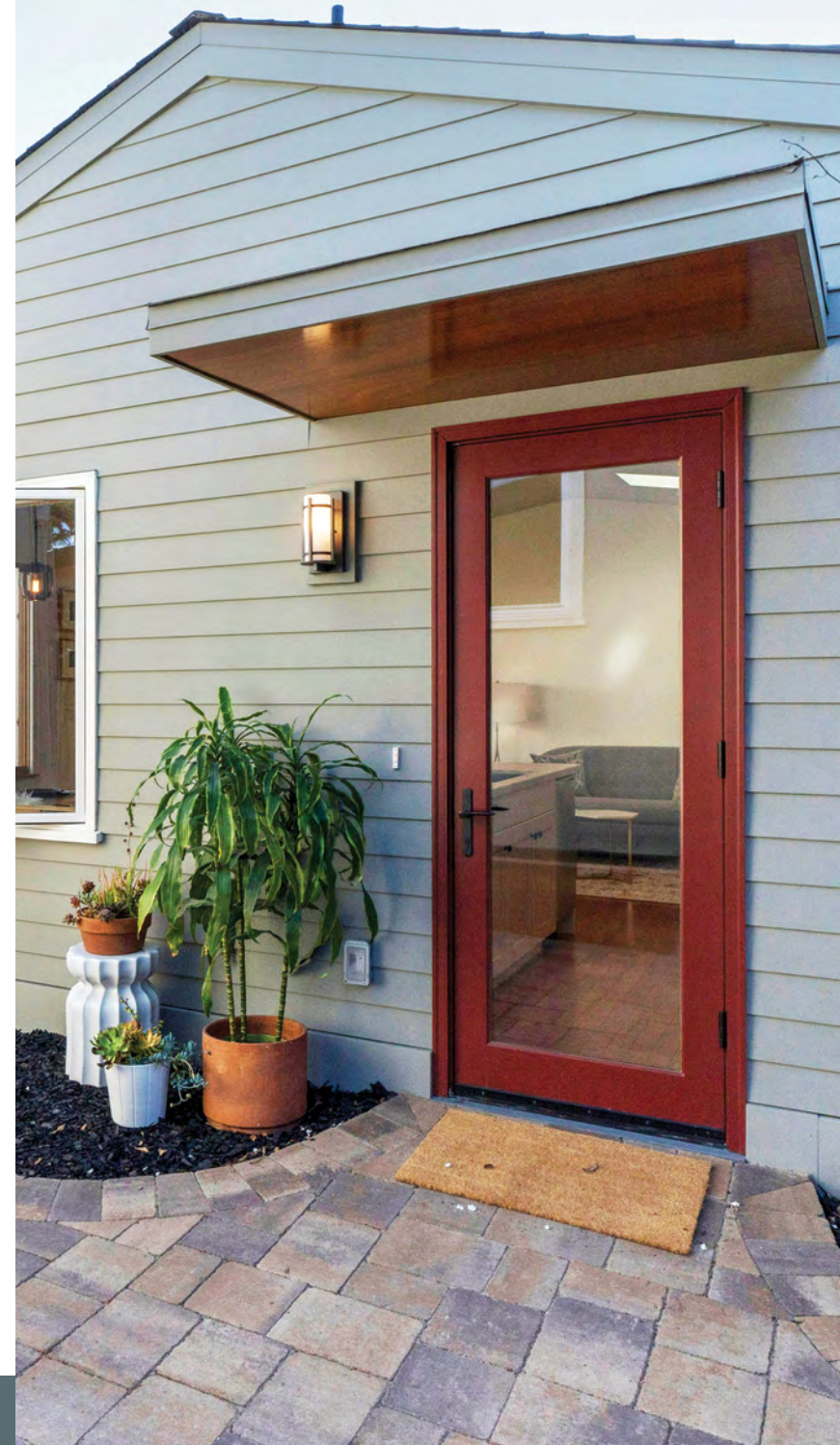


Photo: McDunn ADUs



Consider our Pre-Approved Plans

The City offers a selection of ADU plans – studio and 1-bedroom floor plans in three different architectural styles, plus plans for a 1-car or 2-car garage conversion. These plans have been reviewed in advance by the Planning and Building Divisions for code compliance, bringing you one step closer to full approval. Pre-approved plans still need to be tailored for your site by the designer or company working on your ADU (including creation of a site plan) and will still need to be submitted to the City for permit approval, but using these plans saves significant time and money and can help streamline the design process. You may still need to pay the designer or building company a professional fee to customize plans and assist during the permit process. Each set of plans includes structural requirements and options for architectural styles.

[Add details here: where plans can be found, how to move forward, rules for using them, etc.]

**DETAILS, LINKS, IMAGES WILL BE UPDATED
HERE**





Hire Your Team

The City of Newport Beach does not require an architect to design residential projects. However, hiring a professional to design and build your ADU is highly recommended.

Although you can build an ADU as an owner-contractor, we strongly recommend hiring a licensed architect or designer and a licensed contractor, or a design/build team, and most homeowners do.

Bringing on a professional early on is often key to getting your ADU approved quickly, managed efficiently, and built cost-effectively. Relevant experience and fit are critical and it's important to look at their past work and check references.

Typically, you'll start by hiring an architect or designer and then a contractor to complete construction (unless you're using a design/build company that performs both roles). However, contractors often book early and can have helpful thoughts about the cost impacts of design features, so you may consider adding them to your team early on. It's also okay to pay one contractor for consultation during design but then hire another for construction after you've received bids (see the Construction section for more details).

Photo: Valley Home Development



ADU PROFESSIONALS

ARCHITECT A design professional who has passed a licensing exam by the state. Architects take legal responsibility for their work and provide a range of services, including full-service support from start to finish. They tend to bill at a higher rate than designers, but their expertise can save money (and stress) in the end.

DESIGNER A design professional that either has architectural training but is not licensed, is self-taught, or like most, falls somewhere in between. The term is not regulated, and anyone can call themselves a designer. Services provided vary, so be sure to ask about their experience and if they've designed ADUs before.

CONTRACTOR A firm licensed by the state who specializes in construction. They will work with your designer or architect to finalize plans, budgets, and permits, then manage the construction once it begins.

DESIGN/BUILD A company that will design your ADU, manage the process, and build it. The term is not regulated, but most often they are run by a licensed contractor who has designers or architects and builders on staff.

MODULAR/PREFAB A company with preset designs of modular or prefab homes. Some or most of the ADU is built off-site, then shipped to your property and installed by a contractor.

FINDING YOUR DESIGNER

Because a major portion of a designer's job is walking you through a unique project (especially with the challenges of ADUs), it's very important to find someone who has experience and a communication style that fits with yours. Personal connections can help, especially since designers are busy - talk with neighbors or friends who have completed an addition or renovation and ask if they know any designers they'd recommend, and consider if you have any designers (or contractors) in your community (e.g., work, neighbors).

A potential architect or designer will start the process by visiting your home and talking to you about your ideas and goals. If it seems like a good match, they will prepare a proposal detailing their services and fees. Designers typically charge for an initial consultation or proposal. The American Institute of Architects recommends you meet with three to five options before making a hiring decision.

HOW DO I FIND A DESIGNER?

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) provides helpful information for homeowners and maintains a [local chapter website](#) where you can find professionals accepting new work.

COSTS AND CONTRACTS

Design costs vary with every project, but a rule of thumb is that it will cost 10-20% of the total construction budget. Typically, designers use one of three methods:

FIXED FEE They will give you a maximum price based on project needs. If the project takes more or less time to complete, their prices do not change.

TIME AND MATERIALS They will bill you for their hours, which works best if there are too many unknowns early on. To protect yourself and comply with California State Law, these contracts must identify the total contract amount, start and stop dates, and a payment schedule with details on completed work in dollars and cents.

NOT TO EXCEED They will bill you for their hours but also agree upon maximum amounts for each phase. To protect yourself and for architects to comply California State Law, make sure you receive a written contract. You may want to have a lawyer review it to make sure all your concerns are covered before you sign.

SAMPLE DESIGN COSTS

	Basic Studio	High-End 2-BR	% of Total
Concept/Schematics	\$1,600	\$3,200	15%
Refinement & Permits	\$3,200	\$6,300	30%
Construction Drawings	\$4,200	\$8,400	40%
Bidding, Negotiation, & Construction	\$1,600	\$3,200	15%
TOTAL	\$11,000	\$21,000	100%

These represent typical costs, but every project is different and costs will vary. All costs are derived from design costs in 2022.



Graphic: Smallworks



Create the Initial Design

Once you have your team in place, you will work with them to design your ADU. Together you will consider size, use, layout, specific project needs (storage, laundry room, etc.), architectural style, and privacy.

CONCEPTUAL DRAWINGS Your designer will take measurements of your property and develop concept drawings, including the type of ADU, floorplan, and its relationship to the main house and outside areas. Drawings are usually quick and inexpensive and can help you figure out what you want. Construction costs and [ADU development rules](#) should be discussed at every stage, so if your designer does not bring them up, you should.

REFINED DRAWINGS Once you have concept drawings, the designer will refine their work. They will ask more questions about your goals, and you will have to start choosing components, like doors and windows. At the end of this stage, there will be a drawing done to scale that covers the layout and all the major systems like heating and electrical.

GETTING ADVICE ON YOUR DESIGN

Once you have a design, it's a good idea to discuss it with staff so they can point out any issues before submitting your permit application. Your designer can attend this meeting to clarify drawings and help you understand requirements. You can visit the Permit Center during business hours or call to make an appointment (see the Directory on the final page).

Homeowners are often surprised by building code requirements for fire separation (walls and floors shared between the primary unit and the ADU must be rated for 1-hour fire safety) and noise attenuation (between floors) with attached ADUs. Odor-proofing may also be a good investment.



CONTACTING SERVICE AGENCIES

This is a good time to reach out to the agencies that provide vital services like water, sewer, gas, and electricity to see if their requirements need to be incorporated into your design. Your design team will know how to navigate these logistics, so make sure they're involved as well. This is also a good chance to confirm connection and service fees.

ADUs do not require separate water and sewer connections, but the Public Works Department and the Building Division may require homeowners to upsize service and/or meters to meet capacity requirements ([see details here](#)).

Some utilities (water, sewer, and waste) are coordinated by the City, while others (electricity and gas) are coordinated by outside agencies. Contact information for these agencies is listed in the Directory on the final page.

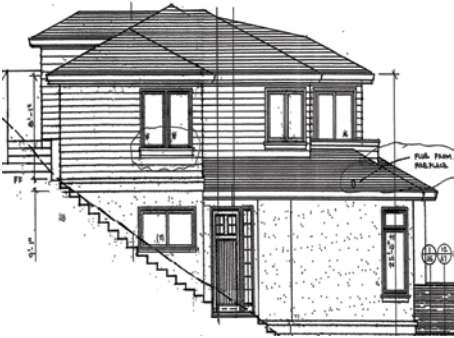
Garage conversion ADUs may require significant moisture barriers to meet building codes.



Finalize Your Design

Based on your meeting with City staff, you and your team will work through any required changes and prepare the permit application (see Permitting section for full details).

Many homeowners also get construction drawings from their designer that provide all the detail needed for a contractor to bid on the project (see Construction section). Potential contractors will likely want to visit the site along with seeing the drawings.





SECTION 5

PERMITTING



PREPARE YOUR APPLICATION PACKAGE



SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION



REVISE YOUR APPLICATION



RECEIVE YOUR PERMITS



EXERCISES

- Permit Application Planning and Organization

TIMELINE FOR BUILDING AN ADU

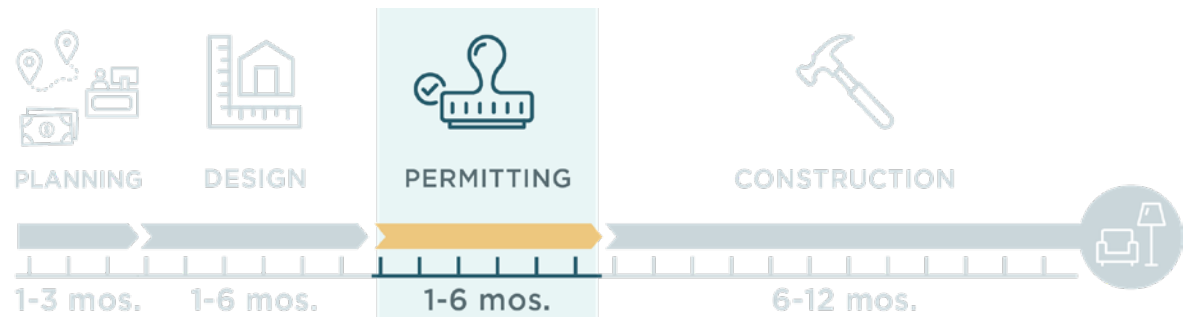


Photo: buildinganadu.com



Prepare Your Application Package

EXERCISES



- Permit Application Planning and Organization
Collect and organize details for your application.

PDF EXERCISES PDF



Once your ADU plans are finalized, you and your designer or contractor will submit your application package to the City for approval. You should have an idea of how permitting and approval works from your conversations with planning staff, and your designer should be familiar with the process as well.

Your team will lead the process to prepare a combined application package. You will submit information for plan check and a Building Permit, along with a variety of other documents that come up along the way (many are described below).

TALK WITH CITY STAFF Before submitting your application, it's a good idea for you and your designer to meet with staff so they can review it and provide advice. To schedule a meeting, contact the Permit Center (see the Directory on the final page). While not required, this step can make sure you get your permit as soon as possible. This is a great time to ask about the possible need for a Coastal Development Permit.

USE A PROFESSIONAL TO HELP

The permitting process can be complex and require a lot of technical knowledge to go smoothly. California Law allows homeowners to submit an owner-builder application, but many who start down this path have a hard time. They are also liable if anything goes wrong. Generally, it is better to have a professional on your side to provide guidance, which is why most homeowners choose to work with one through the permitting process.

Photo: San Mateo Second Unit Center





Submit Your Application

See later in this section for a complete overview of application elements. In most cases, your team will submit a combined application package with the required documents to the Permit Center. At the time of publication, the City's new [City Virtual Connect \(CiViC\) portal](#) can accept some submissions online - otherwise, all submissions are accepted in person at the Permit Center.

Some fees are due at the time of submission (see details later in this section). The City will review your complete application and send it to any other departments or agencies that need to review it, including Building, Planning, Public Works, and the Fire Department (when relevant).

PUBLIC HEARINGS: THE EXCEPTION Most ADUs will not require a public hearing, but if your ADU does not comply with the normal rules, like exceeding size or height limits or requires a special permit, it may need an additional review.

COASTAL COMMISSION HEARINGS

ADUs within the Coastal Zone may require a hearing with the California Coastal Commission, which is usually only necessary if the ADU is part of a development that requires a hearing (like construction of a new home). These hearings are often straightforward, and conversion ADUs are eligible for a streamlined exemption process that only require a public notice. While a hearing is unlikely, they can add approximately 30 days to the timeline, so be sure to work closely with your professional team and planning staff to navigate the process for your property.

Title 24 regulates minimum energy efficiency for new construction in California, like how much insulation is required and the types of light fixtures that can be used. All new ADUs need to demonstrate compliance with Title 24, which usually requires hiring a consultant that costs less than \$500. Newly constructed freestanding ADUs generally require new solar panels to meet the rules.

Photo: Valley Home Development





Revise Your Application

Staff will review your complete application usually within 10-20 working days. If changes or additional details are needed (which is usually the case), you and your professional team will receive notification from Planning Division staff. During this process the status of your application can be viewed online through the [CiViC Portal](#). On the main website page, follow “Plan Check Status Guide” for instructions.

After receiving comments, you and your designer will revise and resubmit your application. Most ADUs require two to three rounds of review and the city will usually return new comments within 10-20 working days each time. Be prepared that staff may bring up new comments in later reviews.



Receive Permits

Once your application is approved, staff will let you know that your permit is ready and provide you with information on Building Permit fees, which are due before you receive your permits. You or your contractor (as identified on the application) may pick up the permit and begin construction. Permits are valid for 180 days (which extends an additional 180 days after each inspection, up to 3 years).

GETTING AN ADDRESS FOR YOUR ADU

This is a great time to request an address assignment for your new unit. Send an email written to your project planner with the following information: 1) your name, 2) relationship to the property, 3) mailing address and contact information for the letter, 4) requested address assignment, and 5) reason for the address request (i.e., a new JADU or ADU). The Planning Division will respond with a formal address assignment letter that you can share with utility agencies and U.S. Mail.

State law no longer allows cities to comment on pre-existing zoning issues unrelated to the ADU. For example, you should not receive comments about the main house or a fence, unless there is an obvious public safety issue.



SPOTLIGHT

NAME & NAME **Headline here probably going onto two lines**

“A quote goes here about how great the ADU is great and what it means to this person.”

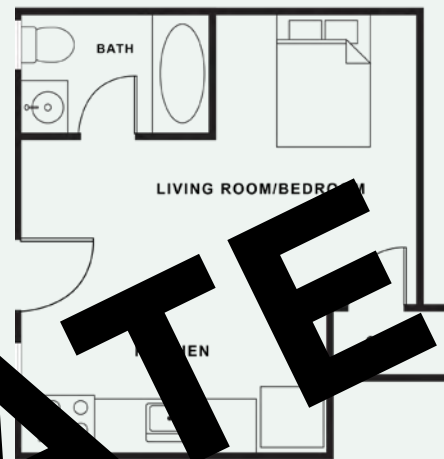
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TEMPLATE

Location	Neighborhood
ADU Type	Sample
Price	\$sample
Year Completed	sample
Time	sample
Size	XXX SF



Application Overview

IF NEEDED, COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT

If your property is within the Coastal Zone (check on the [Address lookup tool](#)), you may need to submit an application for Coastal Development Permit (CDP). Confirm with planning staff that you need a CDP before starting. Review of the CDP application can partially happen at the same time as your permit application, but it's a good idea to start the CDP process before submitting the rest of your application in case it requires you to make substantial changes to your plan. The entire CDP process can take more than eight weeks, so make sure to include that in your planned timeline. Planning Division staff can help you navigate this process. See more details in these [Coastal Development Permit instructions](#).

Keep in mind, replacement parking is required for JADUs and ADUs located within the Coastal Zone.

If you need to demolish a garage to replace it with an ADU, your demolition permit application will be processed at the same time as your ADU permit application. Talk to Planning staff for more details.

PLAN CHECK AND BUILDING PERMIT

Your team will guide you through the requirements for these submissions and will produce all the necessary technical documents related to your design and building plans. You can find more information about these applications and access a variety of forms that might be required at the [City's Building Permits and Plan Check webpage](#).

PLAN CHECK includes multiple divisions reviewing your construction plans for compliance with local code and flagging any safety or other issues. The required submissions for residential additions and new construction plan check are [listed online](#). You can check the status of your Plan Check submission at the [CiViC Portal](#).

Plan check fees are due at submission – see following for details – but are waived for ADUs through 2023.

BUILDING PERMITS give you official permission to start construction and will be provided when your entire application package is approved. There may be multiple forms for you to fill out, but all applications will include the [Worksheet for Combo Building & Solar Permit Application](#).

Building permit fees are due when approved – see following for details – but are waived for ADUs through 2023.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

After your application is submitted, you will receive a request for these items (blank copies provided as relevant):

- **Grant deed** to verify ownership and legal description of your property.
- **Housing Questionnaire** This form asks you questions about how your ADU will be used and projected annual rent (if you're renting out the unit).
- **Deed restriction** All ADUs must include a deed restriction, which prevents property owners from selling the ADU as a separate property from the primary home or from using the ADU for short-term rentals (such as Airbnb or short-term rentals). For a JADU, you'll also need to include that the property owner



Photo: LaneFab Design

will be living in the primary unit or JADU. Planning staff will provide you with a deed restriction template and help you customize it for your property.

You'll need to print, date, and sign this form and physically bring it to the Permit Center. Note this requires a notarized signature and acknowledgment.

Permitting Fees

ADUs incur a variety of fees from the City, the State, and other agencies. Some fees are based on the details of the project while others are fixed. Surprisingly, the city does not control many of the most expensive fees, like school and water fees, which are assessed by other agencies and dependent on the size or location of your ADU. The fees below are often required. For more information about fees for your project and what to expect, speak with planning staff.

At least through the end of 2023, the city has waived all City fees for new ADUs (including Building Permit and Plan Check fees). This does not include agency or state fees – school impact fees, water and sewer fees, State of CA fees, and others are still in place. See the [original 2022 waiver](#) for details.

ESTIMATING FEES The total amount of fees depends on your property and plans. The [Orange County ADU calculator](#) can provide an estimate of fees for your project and the City's new [CiViC Portal](#) may soon have this functionality as well.

EXEMPTIONS ADUs under 750 square feet don't have to pay impact fees (for things like roads and parks), and ADUs under 500 square feet don't need to pay school district fees. Water and sewer providers cannot charge connection fees for an ADU converted from existing space.

TYPICAL FEES

PLAN CHECK FEES are paid directly to the City for application processing and review and are due when the application is submitted. The fee is anywhere between \$850 and \$1,700, based on valuation for conversions and floor area for new construction. **These fees are waived for ADUs at least through the end of 2023.**

BUILDING PERMIT FEES are paid directly to the City to cover application review and are due when the application has been approved and the permit is issued. The fee is anywhere between \$850 and \$2,100, based on valuation for conversions and floor area for new construction. **These fees are waived for ADUs at least through the end of 2023.**

TRAFFIC FAIRSHARE AND TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR FEES

are paid directly to the City to support transportation services. These impact fees are charged for 750+ square foot ADUs and are usually several thousands of dollars.

Traffic Fairshare fees are City fees waived for ADUs at least through the end of 2023.

These fees are calculated as follows, using rates on the [Planning Fee Schedule](#):

Traffic Fairshare Fee =

(ADU square footage / primary unit SF) x Res-Medium (SFA) rate

Ex.: (900 SF ADU / 1,900 SF primary unit) x \$2,177 = \$1,031

San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor Agency Fee = (ADU SF / primary unit SF) x ZONE A OR B (MFR) rate

Ex.: (900 SF ADU / 1,900 SF primary unit) x \$4,814 = \$2,280

COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FEES

are paid directly to the City if your project requires a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) and are due when you submit your CDP application. These fees increase annually – in 2022, the application review fee was \$2,407 and the public notice cost was \$518.

SCHOOL DISTRICT IMPACT FEES

are paid to the City (and routed to the school districts) to support the schools in your area and are charged for ADUs larger than 500 square feet. Fee amounts are different depending on which school district you live in (the [Newport Mesa School District](#) or the [Santa Ana School District](#)) – you can find your using the [Address Lookup Tool](#). In 2022, Newport Mesa School District fees were \$1.84 per square foot, or roughly \$920-\$1,840 for a moderately sized ADU. Santa Ana School District fees were \$4.79 per square foot, or roughly \$2,395-\$4,790.

OTHER DEPARTMENT FEES (including state fees) are paid directly to the City and vary by project. Staff will let you know if any apply to your ADU during the application process.

UTILITY FEES include costs to establish service connections and ongoing service and are paid directly to the agencies. These vary by the size and location of your ADU, so contact utility agencies early on to plan a budget for both initial set up and ongoing maintenance. Contact information for all utility service providers is included in the Directory on the final page.



Photo: Valley Home Development

Cost Examples

Here are some examples of construction valuations (not actual construction costs) and fees from real-world ADU projects permitted between 2019-2022. Fees include building permit, plan check, inspection, state, school district, waste management, and other typical fees invoiced by the City.



376 SF GARAGE CONVERSION JADU

\$5,433.44 fees **CURRENT FEES WOULD BE \$2.00***
\$30,000 construction valuation



430 SF DETACHED ADU

\$7,381.34 fees **CURRENT FEES WOULD BE \$16.02***
\$77,400 construction valuation



663 SF ATTACHED ADU BUILT WITH NEW HOME

\$10,509.71 fees **CURRENT FEES WOULD BE \$1,467.94***
\$115,100 construction valuation



769 SF ABOVE GARAGE ADU

\$7,381.34 fees **CURRENT FEES WOULD BE \$1,557.65***
\$180,000 construction valuation



1,000 SF DETACHED ADU

\$9,770.76 fees **CURRENT FEES WOULD BE \$2,136.86***
\$205,000 construction valuation

* In 2022 dollars and with current fee waivers



SECTION 6

CONSTRUCTION



HIRE YOUR CONTRACTOR



MONITOR CONSTRUCTION



GET INSPECTIONS

TIMELINE FOR BUILDING AN ADU



PLANNING

1-3 mos.



DESIGN

1-6 mos.



PERMITTING

1-6 mos.



CONSTRUCTION

6-12 mos.



Photo: Timbre Architecture



Hire Your Contractor

HOW DO I FIND A CONTRACTOR?

DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS RESOURCES

The California Department of Consumer Affairs is a great resource when it comes to selecting a contractor. They have resources on hiring, checking the license status, negotiating a clear contract, and resolving disputes. Peruse the resources on [their website](#).

Beware of unrealistically low bids! An unreputable contractor might give a low bid to get the work and then demand more money for “unforeseen circumstances.”

If you are not using a design/build firm, you will need hire a contractor for the construction phase of your ADU. They will not only complete skilled construction work, but also about manage the construction process – hiring subcontractors, coordinating construction and inspections, troubleshooting delays and changes, etc.

BEING YOUR OWN GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Often, people who are their own general contractors have a difficult time. Building an ADU is more like building an entire home than a renovation – there are many opportunities to make costly or time-consuming mistakes. Having an expert manage contract negotiation, payment schedules, quality checks, project timing, and working with the Newport Beach Planning Division and other agencies can be incredibly valuable. While it may cost more up front, it’s very possible you’ll save significant money by reducing delays and change orders, and you may be able to start getting rental income more quickly.

GETTING BIDS

Start with getting bids from your construction drawings. Ask your designer and community for recommendations of good local professionals and make a list of candidates. It’s great if the options have ADU experience, but it’s not necessary.

Be specific about what is and is not included in the bid. Also ask for license, insurance information, references, work examples, and a proposed schedule.

You’ll want at least three bids for comparison. Make sure you understand all the details of the bids and ask all necessary clarifying questions. Your designer may be able to help you compare bids and select your contractor.

Generally there is a trade-off between experience and cost; less expensive contractors will have less experience, while those with more experience may charge more. Check their references and ask to see photographs of past projects. Also consider their communication style, if you think you’ll work well together, and whether they understand your goals.

DUE DILIGENCE

Before you hire your contractor, make sure to check their license and insurance. You can verify their license by calling the Contractors' State License Board at 800-321-2752 or checking their [website](#). You can verify insurance by requesting a certification of insurance or by calling their insurance agent. Make sure workers' compensation, property damage, and liability are included.

THE CONTRACT

Your contractor will most likely present you with a contract to formalize your agreement. Review the entire agreement carefully to make sure you understand it and are okay with everything. Also, make sure you understand how contingencies and added work will be handled. The contract should address the following:

- Contractor's license number, name, and address
- Total project cost and payment schedule
- Start date and timeline
- List of work to be accomplished and materials to be used
- Work to be subcontracted (if any)
- Specific terms about what constitutes substantial completion of work

- Special requests (saving scrap lumber, bricks, or homeowner "sweat equity")
- The terms of warranties
- Whether there is a cancellation penalty
- A provision requiring the contractor to obtain lien releases from all suppliers/subcontractors (protecting you if a subcontractor claims they weren't paid)
- Plan for cleanup and removal of material and debris
- Requirements for protecting property and landscaping
- Storage areas for materials
- Instructions regarding children or pets
- Costs that are not covered

The payment schedule should be a dated plan that shows when you will make payments based on construction completion milestones. For example, you might pay 20% after the building enclosure is complete, 25% once the exterior finish carpentry is complete, etc. California limits the up front payment to 10% or \$1,000, whichever is less – if a contractor asks for more, that's a red flag. It's also generally a good practice to withhold 10% of the total project cost until all work and inspections are completed.

Do not sign the contract until you fully understand and agree with all the terms.





Monitor Construction

Once your contract is signed, your contractor will start work according to the schedule you agreed upon.

Your contractor will lead the construction process, you will have the following responsibilities:

COMMUNICATE Keep in touch with your contractor and schedule regular check-ins.

MONITOR Regularly walk through the construction area to monitor the quality of the work and make sure the work is progressing the way you expect.

DECIDE Be prepared to make decisions about the details—light fixtures, appliances, and other materials—in a timely manner so your contractor can stay on schedule.

ADJUST Follow the contract you agreed to, including any changes as described specifically in a change order form.

INSPECT Although your contractor will usually arrange the required city or utility inspections, it is your responsibility as the property owner to make sure that the inspections are conducted as required at each stage of the construction process.

Traditional construction will take 6-12 months, though this varies heavily.

Stages of construction include:

- Site preparation 1-2 months
- Foundation 1 month
- Walls, roof, doors 1-2 months
- Plumbing & electrical 1-2 months
- Insulation & drywall 1/2-1 month
- Fixtures & finishes 1-2 months
- Final touches 1/2-2 month

Any changes to the original agreement should be reflected in a change order form that is signed by both you and the contractor and that describes the specific change and any corresponding adjustment to the price or timeline. Beware that some changes (size, height) require City review.

It's a good idea to have your designer involved for at least initial consultation as construction begins, because your contractor may have questions and suggest construction cost savings related to design details. Your designer may also (for an extra fee) stay on board to consult with last-minute substitutions and complications that might arise.



Get Inspections

During construction, your ADU will be inspected multiple times to ensure it is being built according to the permitted plans (typical inspections include foundations/footings, framing, electrical/plumbing, exterior finishes, etc.). It is your and your contractor's responsibility to schedule all required inspections, which can be scheduled via phone at 949-644-3255 or requested online through the Newport Beach [CiViC Portal](#). From the main website page select "Scheduling an Inspection Guide" for detailed instructions.

After your final inspection is approved, the inspector will provide final sign-off on your Building Permit and then your ADU is ready for move-in!



Photo: Cari Designs Architecture

Prefabricated/Modular ADUs

There are two types of construction to consider for your project. Both have pros and cons, so it can help to think about what you want, like the level of customization you want and how the ADU would work on your specific property (slopes, obstacles for installation, etc.).



TRADITIONAL CONSTRUCTION

A traditionally constructed ADU is designed and built specifically to your preferences and property and built on site (“stick-built”). This option allows for a lot of customization and smaller changes to be made throughout the construction process.



PREFABRICATED, MODULAR, PANELIZED

These ADUs are partially or mostly built in a factory, then shipped to your site to be put together. Sometimes the company will include all services in their fee (“turn-key”), including help with permitting and all on-site construction tasks (e.g. laying the foundation, utility hookups, etc.). Other times you’ll need to hire additional professionals to help. Using a prefab design can save time and give you a thorough sense of what your completed project will look and feel like. However,

they also typically offer less customization, can be difficult in permitting, and often cost the same as traditionally constructed ADUs. People are often surprised at the cost of many prefab units, but additional costs like transport, crane, foundation, and sales tax can end up being 20-40% of the total cost. Some companies offer prefab ADUs at a smaller price point. Note that not all banks will finance prefab construction.

To explore prefab or modular ADU options, you will want to get in touch with companies directly. They will visit, evaluate your property, and make recommendations. You can find prefab contractors by researching online.



Photo: iStock



Photo: Blokable

Building Costs

ADU construction costs vary significantly depending on materials, site conditions, location, and other factors. The cost to build an ADU typically ranges from \$30,000 for a simple interior conversion JADU to \$400,000+ for a large detached ADU with high-end finishes on a hillside lot. Cost per square foot is a good way to estimate - but this can range from \$150-300 per square foot depending on your project. \$200 per square foot is a good estimate of construction costs for an average project.

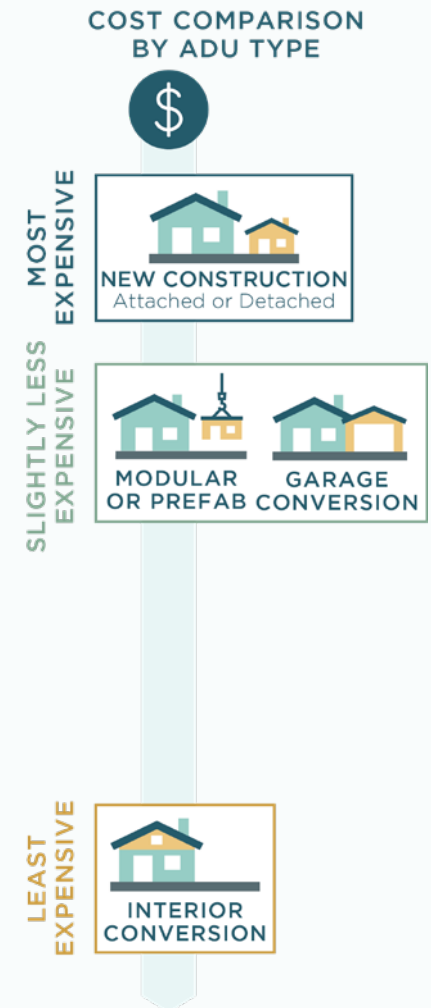
Despite what many think, smaller ADUs may cost almost the same as larger ones. Many costs like foundation, kitchen, and bathroom work only increase slightly for larger ADUs. Kitchen costs will range from \$25,000-\$50,000 with each bathroom ranging from \$15,000-\$25,000. Placing all your plumbing (kitchen and bathroom pipes) in the same wall, especially on multiple floors, will save you money.

- **CONVERSIONS OF INTERIOR SPACE** (basement or otherwise) are often the cheapest, as long as there aren't complex codes or structural issues.

- **GARAGE CONVERSIONS** are not much cheaper than new construction (if at all) because they usually need significant work to meet code and the shell of a building (walls, foundation, roof) are not the most expensive parts of construction. Common expenses/challenges include: redoing the foundation, replacing the floor to add a vapor barrier, and replacing the windows and insulation.
- **NEW CONSTRUCTION ADUS** tend to be the most expensive.

There are many other factors that will impact costs, including:

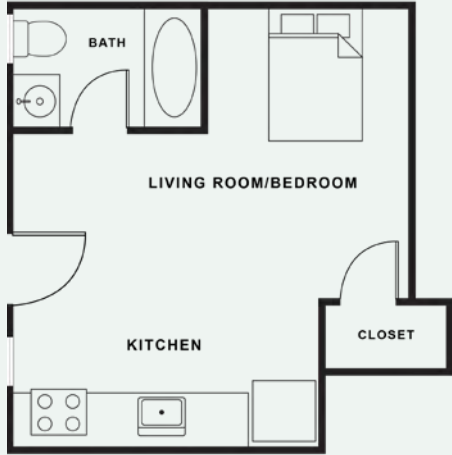
- Quality of interior finishes and amenities
- Architectural form and details
- Extent of required utility, structural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing upgrades
- Required site upgrades (sidewalks, sewer, and water)
- Whether sprinklers are required
- Whether doors and windows meet emergency exit standards
- Lot complexity (slope, trees, fault lines, etc.)





SPOTLIGHT

NAME & NAME Headline here sticking to one line



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“ A quote goes here about how great the ADU is great and what it means to this person.”

TEMPLATE

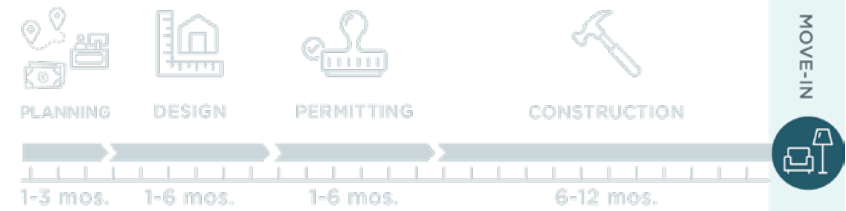
Location	Neighborhood
ADU Type	Sample
Price	\$sample
Year Completed	sample
Time	sample
Size	XXX SF



BONUS SECTION

MOVE-IN & BEING A LANDLORD

TIMELINE FOR BUILDING AN ADU



WHAT IS INVOLVED IN BEING A LANDLORD?

Construction is complete, and now it's time for someone to move in. This could be you, a friend, a family member, or a tenant. There are both benefits and responsibilities to having someone else on the property – added security, extra income, shared tasks, but also understanding housing laws, managing the tenant, and properly maintaining the property. You'll need to approach both sides thoughtfully, especially understanding important laws about rent increases, evictions, and more.

PRELIMINARY STEPS Prepare to rent your unit by ensuring your homeowners insurance is set up adequately, setting up utilities, and developing a plan to handle the finances.

EXERCISES

- Identifying What You Want in a Lease
Plan important decisions about your lease terms.

EXERCISES PDF

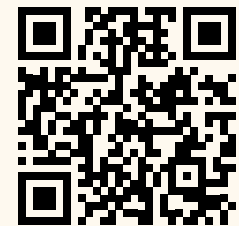


Photo: New Avenue Homes

WHAT'S AFFORDABLE?

A unit is considered affordable if a household is paying less than one third of their income on their housing costs; see current average incomes for Orange County and Newport Beach on the [City's website](#).



THE LAW AND BEING A LANDLORD

You will need to understand all the laws related to being a landlord, especially with regards to discrimination. For an overview of California laws, review [California Tenants: A Guide to Residential Tenants' and Landlords' Rights and Responsibilities](#), published by the California Department of Consumer Affairs. Newport Beach works with the Fair Housing Foundation to provide fair housing resources for both property owners and tenants, including guidance on writing a lease agreement and managing disputes. Visit [their website](#) for more information, including details about their very helpful workshops and events.



SETTING THE RENT

Maximizing rent increases your income, but setting it a bit under market rate can help you attract and keep good tenants. **Consider pricing your unit affordably for local workers and families** who may not be able to afford high rents but who serve essential roles in our community. If you financed with a loan, consider loan length, interest rate, and any reserve funds you have.



RENTAL LEASES

Make sure your lease (or rental agreement if it is month-to-month) clearly identifies all the expectations for you and your tenant.



FINDING A TENANT

Research how to successfully advertise your unit and select a good tenant. Typical methods for advertising rentals in Newport Beach include Craigslist and other online listings as well as posting a "for rent" sign on your property. Make sure to reference [local rules about real estate signs](#), which limits signs to one per property and certain size and appearance characteristics.



TENANT MANAGEMENT

Think about a long-term plan for the care and upkeep of your ADU, how to split shared responsibilities, and how to address any issues that might occur with your tenant.



Photo: Valley Home Development

EXTRA PAGE

LEAVING IN CASE WE NEED IT :)

Directory

CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH

PLANNING & BUILDING DIVISIONS

7:30 – 5:30 Mon-Thu, 7:30 – 4:30 Fri
1st Floor Bay C, 100 Civic Center Drive

BEST OPTION **Planning and Zoning Info**
Phone Line 949-644-3204

Main line: 949-644-3200
Permit Counter: 949-718-1888

[Planning Division website](#)
[Building Division website](#)
[ADU Assist Form](#)

INSPECTION REQUESTS Online or by phone. [CiViC Portal](#), 949-644-3255

ADDRESS LOOKUP TOOL

Use to look up key information about your property, including approximate lot size, some utility providers, and more. [Website](#)

CITY VIRTUAL CONNECT (CIVIC) PORTAL

Use to schedule an inspection, check your Plan Check status, estimate local fees, and much more. [Website](#)



ORANGE COUNTY ASSESSOR

Info about your property and tax valuation. 714-834-2727, [Website](#)

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Questions about school impact fees and payment should be directed to the Planning Division. Find your school district with the [Address Lookup Tool](#)

Use these websites for up-to-date information on fee calculation:
[Newport Mesa School District](#)
[Santa Ana School District](#)

UTILITIES: ELECTRICITY & GAS

SO. CAL. EDISON Contact for electricity services. 1-800-655-4555, [Website](#)

SO. CAL. GAS CO. Contact for gas services. 1-877-238-0092, [Website](#)

UTILITIES: WATER & SEWER NEWPORT BEACH UTILITIES DEPT.

Contact for water and sewer services, including an estimation of fees. 949-644-3011, [Website](#)

Based on your location, you may be directed to these water service providers:

MESA WATER DISTRICT
949-631-1200, [Website](#)

IRVINE RANCH WATER DISTRICT
949-453-5300, [Website](#)

UTILITIES: TRASH & RECYCLING

PUBLIC WORKS DEPT. Info about trash collection. [Website](#)

CR&R ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES Most Newport Beach properties are serviced by CR&R Environmental Services, the city's waste contractor. Contact CR&R for information on trash and recycling services. 949-667-4158, [Email](#)

COSTA MESA SANITARY DISTRICT

Residential properties in Santa Ana Heights are serviced by CR&R under contract with the Costa Mesa Sanitary District (CMSD). Contact CMSD for information on trash and recycling services. 949-645-8400, [Email](#)

FINDING CONTRACTORS AND DESIGNERS

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS, ORANGE COUNTY For a directory of local designers. [Website](#)

CALIFORNIA CONTRACTORS' STATE LICENSE BOARD For information on finding a qualified contractor and verifying a contractor's license. 800-321-2752, [Website](#)

Directory, cont.

FINANCE RESOURCES

CAL HFA ADU GRANT PROGRAM ADU financing for low-income and moderate-income homeowners. [Website](#)

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF MORTGAGE BROKERS Info on finding a loan provider, including banks and mortgage brokers. [Website](#)

CA DEPTS. OF REAL ESTATE AND CORPORATIONS Tools for verifying mortgage broker licenses. [Website](#)

ORANGE COUNTY ADU CALCULATOR Online tool for estimating ADU costs and potential income. [Website](#)

RESOURCES FOR NEW LANDLORDS

FAIR HOUSING FOUNDATION Resources for landlords and tenants, including drafting agreements, legal basics, and managing disputes. [Website](#), [Email](#), 800-446-FAIR (3247)

CALIFORNIA TENANTS: A GUIDE TO RESIDENTIAL TENANTS' AND LANDLORDS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES This [PDF guide](#) is provided by the State of California as a primer for both landlords and tenants.

OVERALL ADU GUIDANCE

CASITA COALITION Resources, case studies, and more resources for small homes in California. [Website](#)



Photo: ADU Marin

PHOTO SOURCES

ABODU Prefab, abodu.com, 866-936-5620, hello@abodu.com

ADU MARIN ADU resources, adumarin.org

BLOKABLE Prefab, blokable.com

BUILDING AN ADU ADU resources, buildinganadu.com

CARI DESIGNS Architect Cari Jelen, cari-designs.com, 510-467-0768, crj@cari-designs.com

LANEFAB DESIGN/BUILD, lanefab.com, 604-558-1123, info@lanefab.com

MCDUNN ADUS ADU builder, mcdunnadus.com

NAPA SONOMA ADU ADU resources, napasonomaadu.org, 707-804-8575, info@napasonomaadu.org

NEW AVENUE HOMES Design/Build, newavenuehomes.com, 855-563-9283, info@newavenuehomes.com

PROPEL STUDIO Design/Build, propelstudio.com, 503-479-5740, info@propelstudio.com

SAN MATEO COUNTY SECOND UNIT CENTER ADU resources, secondunitcentersmc.org

SMALLWORKS DESIGN/BUILD, smallworks.ca, 604-264-8837, info@smallworks.ca

TIMBRE ARCHITECTURE DESIGN, timbre-architecture.com, 415-200-8106, info@timbrearch.com

VALLEY HOME DEVELOPMENT Design/Build, valleyhomedevlopment.com, 707-429-3300