

## CITY OF CULVER CITY ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT HANDBOOK

FEBRUARY 2024



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Culver city

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## CONTENTS



INTRODUCTION



## PRE-REVIEWED ADU PROGRAM



## PRE-APPROVED ADU DESIGNS

POST WAR BUNGALOW - PLAN I CONTEMPORARY - PLAN I SPANISH REVIVAL - PLAN I

POST WAR BUNGALOW - PLAN II CONTEMPORARY - PLAN II SPANISH REVIVAL - PLAN II

. . . . . . . . . . . . .

POST WAR BUNGALOW - PLAN III CONTEMPORARY - PLAN III SPANISH REVIVAL - PLAN III



ADU REQUIREMENTS CHECKLISTS





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

33

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## CITY OF CULVER CITY ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

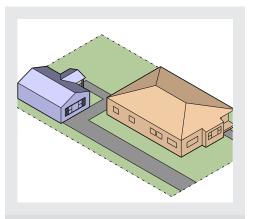


## INTRODUCTION

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) have been known by many names: granny flats, in-law units, backyard cottages, casitas, and more. In recent years, California's state laws have legalized ADUs and required cities to make them easier to build. ADUs are one solution to increasing the supply of affordable housing in our community.

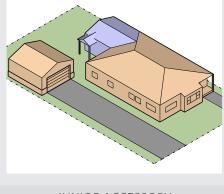
Culver City allows Accessory Dwelling Units and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JADUs) in existing residential neighborhoods, in compliance with State laws. The City created the Pre-Reviewed ADU Program (PRADU) to make it more affordable and easier for homeowners to build an ADU. The PRADU Program provides 9 pre-reviewed ADU plan sets to expedite the permit process.

This handbook breaks down the different types of ADUs and the varying regulations and design considerations for each one. You can use it to explore which ADU may be right for you and your property or to understand what ADUs may be coming to your neighborhood.



ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (ADU)

- Attached or detached
- Located on a lot with existing primary dwelling
- Must have own sanitary facilities



JUNIOR ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (JADU)

- Attached only (including conversions)
- Max size of 500 square-feet
- May share sanitary facilities with main unit

### BACKGROUND

For several decades, California's housing production has not kept pace with the demand of residents and jobs. This lack of housing impacts affordability with average housing costs in California exceeding the rest of the nation by a large margin. As affordability becomes more problematic, people travel longer distances between a home that is affordable and where they work, or more people live in a house or apartment to reduce the cost of rent. Cities have prioritized incentivizing housing production and housing options, including ADUs, in an effort to provide more dwelling units.

Page 1 ADU HANDBOOK

## **BENEFITS OF ADUS**

ADUs provide many benefits to property owners, residents, and their communities at large.

#### ADUs are an affordable housing option

- More **affordable** than many home types ADUs don't require acquiring a new property or major infrastructure.
- Inexpensive wood-frame construction costs significantly less than new multifamily homes.
- Most ADUs are owned and managed by homeowners who live on the premises. Such landlords are more likely to provide affordable rents to friends or family and much less likely to impose significant increases once the lease is signed.

#### ADUs can generate wealth

- Increases property value.
- Over time could generate a **source of income** for homeowners to cover mortgage payments and make ends meet especially for homeowners on a fixed income.

#### ADUs can house people of all ages and lifestyles

- A person's housing needs change over time, and ADUs can be adapted for different household types, income levels, and stages of life.
- Allow seniors to **age in place** with some independence, even as they require more care.
- Allow **extended families** or **friends** to live near one another while maintaining privacy.
- Many ADUs are accessible or able to be adapted to fit specific mobility or health needs.
- Small living spaces are well-suited for many young couples, students, and seniors.
- Provide for intergenerational living for empty nesters or expanding families.
- Flexibility of sharing independent living areas with family members and others.

# ADU HANDBOOK 2 Culver city

### **BENEFITS OF ADUS**

#### ADUs are just the right size

- ADUs are generally smaller homes, resulting in cheaper heating, cooling, and utility costs.
- Generally measuring between 600 and 1,200 square feet, ADUs work well for the one and two-bedroom homes needed by smaller households (which today account for nearly two-thirds of all households in the United States).

#### ADUs are compatible with the community

- ADUs offer a way to include smaller, relatively affordable homes in established neighborhoods.
- In comparison to building types such as a multifamily apartment building, ADUs provide a more dispersed and incremental way of adding homes to a neighborhood.



## Page Culvercity 3 ADU HANDBOOK

## **DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS**

There are numerous design considerations to make sure your ADU will be a good fit for you and your neighborhood.

- **Prioritizing Spaces and Functions.** Creating a smaller, comfortable home means weighing options among the elements and features included in the unit. This often translates to making decisions between different functions. Consider if you (or possible future residents) will benefit the most from having a full-size kitchen, or a living area designed for social gatherings, or a dedicated workspace. Homeowners must determine whether their most desired features will fit into the compact space they have to work with.
- Accessibility and Adaptability. ADUs are often a great housing choice for seniors, who often have mobility needs that aren't met by traditional forms of housing. Sometimes, these needs can be addressed at the design and construction stage by incorporating ADA compliant architectural elements. The floor layout may also change in order to prioritize convenience and ease of movement. If you are considering the possibility of housing someone with extra mobility needs, but aren't sure, adaptable plans carve out the space to be able to bring the unit to accessibility standards later. An interior designer and landscape architect may be helpful to bring on at an early stage to plan how people move about the property.
- **Privacy.** Well-designed ADUs can maintain the privacy of neighbors as well as the privacy of the ADU's future residents, even in relatively close quarters on compact lots. Privacy can be achieved in a number of ways, but a starting point to consider is the placement and orientation of windows and open spaces. Your design should provide adequate light and air for the ADU resident while avoiding placing balconies or large windows where there are direct sightlines into neighboring living spaces or backyards. High windows above eye level, or opaque windows are also an option to preserve privacy. Although it sometimes isn't addressed until after an ADU is constructed, landscape plantings and fencing can be very useful for maintaining a sense of privacy.





# ADU HANDBOOK 4 Culver city

## **TYPES OF ADUS**

There are various configuration options for ADUs that are allowed to be developed in Culver City, in accordance with the regulations within Title 17, Article 4, Chapter 17.400.095.

- **Detached ADUs.** Detached ADUs are newly constructed units that are physically separated from the primary home. Detached ADUs are commonly placed within the rear yard area where they are less visible from the street.
- Attached ADUs. Attached ADUs are newly constructed units that share at least one wall with the primary home. Aside from their independent exterior entrance, many new Attached ADUs typically match the primary home very well and often don't appear to be a separate unit.
- Conversion ADUs. Conversion ADUs re-purpose existing space, whether that space is detached or attached to the primary home. Detached Conversion ADUs are a conversion of part or the entirety of an existing residential or accessory structure such as a freestanding garage or pool house. Attached Conversion ADUs are a conversion of a part of an existing primary home – often an attached garage or attic.
- Junior ADUs (JADUs). Junior ADUs are small ADUs of less than 500 square feet. They are contained entirely within an existing or proposed primary home, and they may share a bathroom with the primary home. They contain what is called an "efficiency kitchen" comprised of a sink with a drain, food preparation counter, fridge, and cooking facility with appliances, all in a compact design.



# Culvercity Page ADU HANDBOOK

## CITY OF CULVER CITY ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT HANDBOOK

# **PRE-REVIEWED ADU PROGRAM**



## PRADU PROGRAM

The City of Culver City allows Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units (JADUs) as a permitted use in residential zones and lots containing multi-family dwelling units. In compliance with State law, regulations are established in Title 17, Article 4, Chapter 17.400.095 of the Culver City Municipal Code.

To help simplify the construction of ADUs in Culver City, the City has developed the pre-reviewed ADU (PRADU) program. Through this program the City is making available prototype plans for residents to use to build an ADU on their property. The plans come in three different layouts: studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom configuration and in three different styles: Post-War Bungalow, Spanish Revival, and Contemporary.

The plans are intended to save homeowners the expense of having custom plans created and are intended for new construction only. The applicant will be responsible for providing a site plan for their specific property on which the ADU will be located and filling out all applicable portions of the prototype plans including project specific information on the coversheet. The required project specific information includes the APN number, the zoning, and the lot size, as well as the required setbacks among other information, such as the style selected, the window materials, and colors which will be used.

The applicant will have the ability to download the plans using the links found on the City's <u>ADU webpage</u>. Four sets of 24"x36" plans will still need to be submitted to the Building Safety Division for Plan Check Review. No construction is permitted without an approved Building Permit. All applicable plan check and development impact fees still apply. See the City's <u>ADU webpage</u> for more information.







# Culvercity Page ADU HANDBOOK

## WHERE DO I START?

#### CONSIDER YOUR PROPERTY

Homeowners should become familiar with the regulations of Title 17, Article 4, Chapter 17.400.095 of the Culver City Municipal Code. You should determine if an ADU is allowed on your property, and whether your property can accommodate the ADU configuration you would like to build.

Generally, if you own a single-family residential property, you are eligible to build an ADU or JADU. If you own a multifamily residential property, you are eligible to build an ADU.

Title 17, Article 4, Chapter 17.400.095, Subsection D, of the Culver City Municipal Code establishes that accessory dwelling units shall be permitted in areas zoned to allow single-family or multi-family dwelling residential use. Once you are eligible to build, there will be additional limitations on what is feasible to build based on your specific property's size, dimensions, and slope (especially if you are located on a hillside).

IF YOU ARE CONSIDERING BUILDING AN ADU AND HAVE QUESTIONS, CITY STAFF IS AVAILABLE TO ASSIST!

#### CONTACT THE PLANNER ON DUTY: (310) 253-5710 OR PLANNING@CULVERCITY.ORG





# ADU HANDBOOK 8 Culver city



### **CONSIDER COSTS**

Homeowners should evaluate the financial aspects of incorporating an ADU to their property. Here are some of the costs associated with building an ADU:

- Construction labor and materials (including demolition and site preparation)
- Architectural design services
- Permit fees
- Development impact fees
- Financing (e.g. lender fees and interest payments)
- Property taxes

### **CONSIDER OPTIONS**

This handbook breaks down the different types of ADUs and the varying regulations and design considerations for each one. Use it to explore which ADU may be right for you and your property!



# Culvercity Page ADU HANDBOOK

## CITY OF CULVER CITY ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT HANDBOOK

# **PRE-APPROVED ADU DESIGNS**



## **PRE-APPROVED ADU DESIGNS POST WAR BUNGALOW - PLAN I**

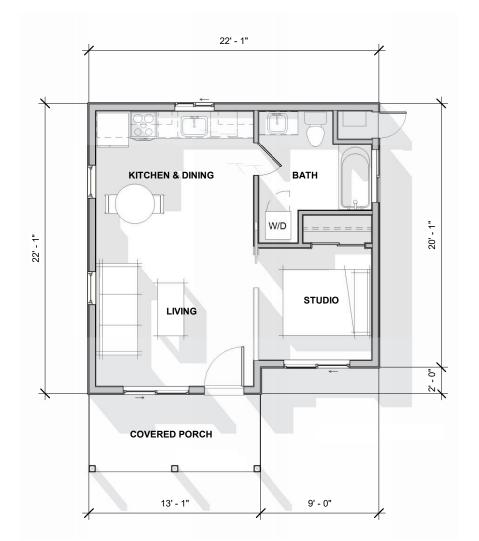
The Plan I Post War Bungalow ADU is a compact studio at 468 square feet. The plan accommodates a covered porch, in-unit washer and dryer, and an optional wall at the bedroom area.



The Plan I Post War Bungalow ADU style is characterized by:

- Covered porch
- Open kitchen and living Decorative exterior area
- Full kitchen and bath
- Brick wainscot

- Wood porch columns
- sconce
- Asphalt shingle roof
- Stucco siding



Page Culvercity ADU HANDBOOK

#### POST WAR BUNGALOW - PLAN I



FRONT ELEVATION



**BACK ELEVATION** 



**RIGHT ELEVATION** 



LEFT ELEVATION

ADU HANDBOOK 12

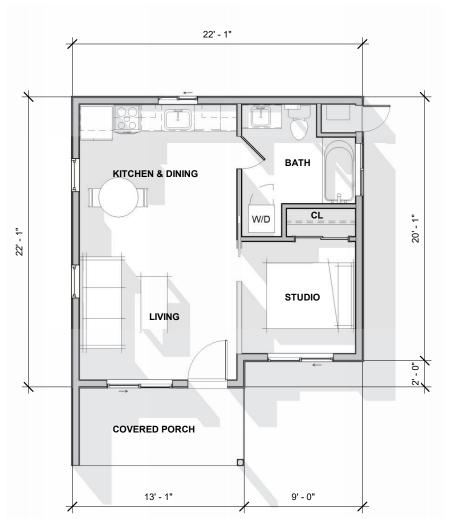
### **CONTEMPORARY - PLAN I**

The Plan I Contemporary ADU is a compact studio at 468 square feet. The plan accommodates a covered porch, in-unit washer and dryer, and an optional wall at the bedroom area.



The Plan I Contemporary ADU style is characterized by:

- Covered porch
- Open kitchen and living area
- Full kitchen and bath
- Fiber cement "wood look" tongue-and-groove (T&G) porch surrounds
- Decorative trim
- Reglets
  - Fiber cement panel siding
- Metal shed roof



Culvercity 13 ADU HANDBOOK

#### **CONTEMPORARY - PLAN I**



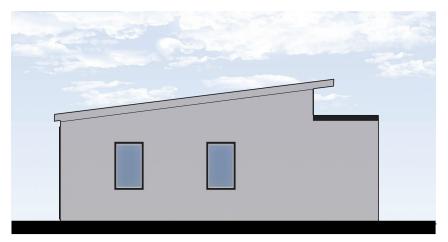
FRONT ELEVATION



**BACK ELEVATION** 



**RIGHT ELEVATION** 



LEFT ELEVATION

ADU HANDBOOK 14 Culver city

### SPANISH REVIVAL - PLAN I

The Plan I Spanish Revival ADU style is a compact studio at 468 square feet. The plan accommodates a covered porch, in-unit washer and dryer, and an optional wall at the bedroom area.

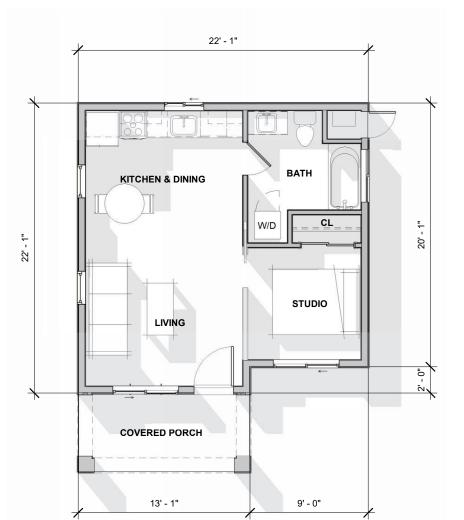


The Plan I Spanish Revival ADU style is characterized by:

Covered porch

•

- Open kitchen and living area
- Full kitchen and bath
- Archway at porch/entry •
- Arched openings at porch/entry
- Decorative tile vents
- Decorative exterior sconces
- Clay tile roof
- Stucco siding



Culvercity 15 ADU HANDBOOK

#### **SPANISH REVIVAL - PLAN I**



#### FRONT ELEVATION



**BACK ELEVATION** 



**RIGHT ELEVATION** 



LEFT ELEVATION

ADU HANDBOOK 16 Culver city

### **POST WAR BUNGALOW - PLAN II**

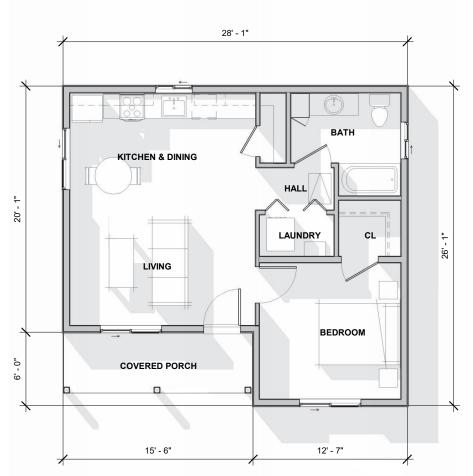
The Plan II Post War Bungalow ADU style includes a 637 square foot floor plan for a one bedroom home with a covered porch, in-unit washer and dryer, and storage space.



The Plan II Post War Bungalow ADU style is characterized by:

- Covered porch
- Open kitchen and living Decorative exterior ٠ area
- Full kitchen and bath
- Brick wainscot

- Wood porch columns
- sconce
- Asphalt shingle roof
- Stucco siding



Page Culvercity ADU HANDBOOK

#### POST WAR BUNGALOW - PLAN II



FRONT ELEVATION



**BACK ELEVATION** 



**RIGHT ELEVATION** 



LEFT ELEVATION

# ADU HANDBOOK 18 Culver city

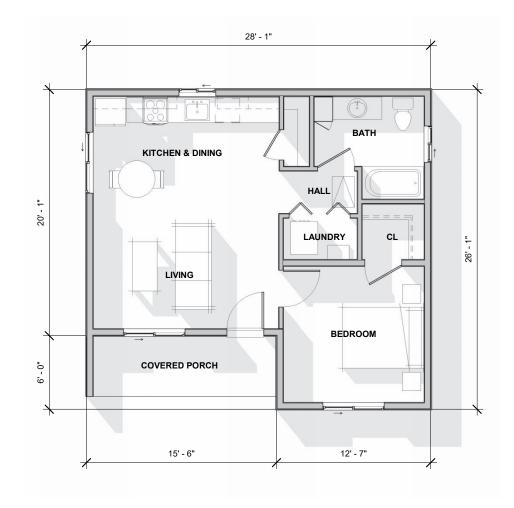
### **CONTEMPORARY - PLAN II**

The Plan II Contemporary ADU style includes a 637 square foot floor plan for a one bedroom home with a covered porch, in-unit washer and dryer, and storage space.



The Plan II Contemporary ADU style is characterized by:

- Covered porch
- Open kitchen and living area
- Full kitchen and bath
- Fiber cement "wood look" T&G porch surrounds
- Decorative trim
- Reglets
  - Fiber cement panel siding
- Metal shed roof

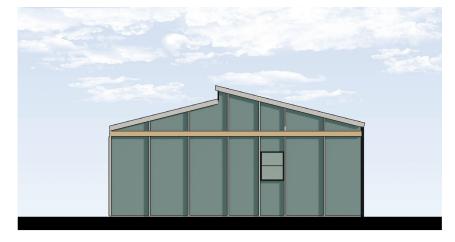


Culvercity 19 ADU HANDBOOK

#### **CONTEMPORARY - PLAN II**



FRONT ELEVATION









LEFT ELEVATION

ADU HANDBOOK 20 Culver city

### SPANISH REVIVAL - PLAN II

The Plan II Spanish Revival ADU style includes a 637 square foot floor plan for a one bedroom home with a covered porch, in-unit washer and dryer, and storage space.

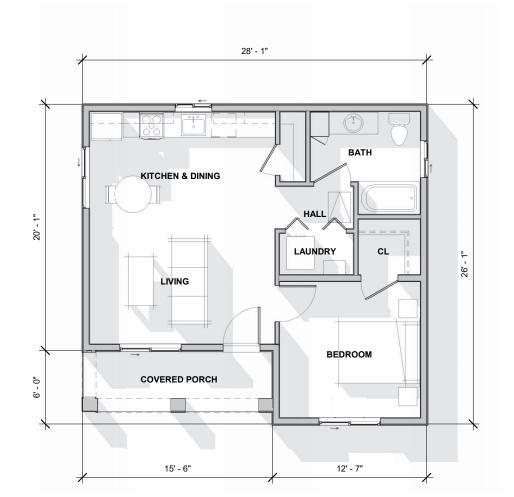


The Plan II Spanish Revival ADU style is characterized by:

Covered porch ٠

•

- Open kitchen and living area
- Full kitchen and bath ٠
- Archway at porch/entry ٠
- Arched openings at • porch/entry
- Decorative tile vents
- Decorative exterior sconces
  - Clay tile roof
  - Stucco siding



Page Culvercity ADU HANDBOOK

#### **SPANISH REVIVAL - PLAN II**



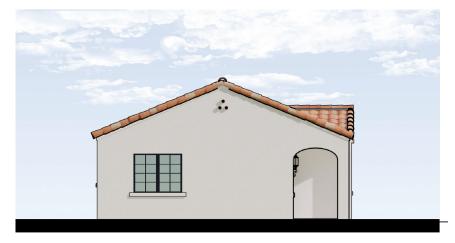
FRONT ELEVATION



**BACK ELEVATION** 



**RIGHT ELEVATION** 



LEFT ELEVATION

ADU HANDBOOK 22 Culver city

### **POST WAR BUNGALOW - PLAN III**

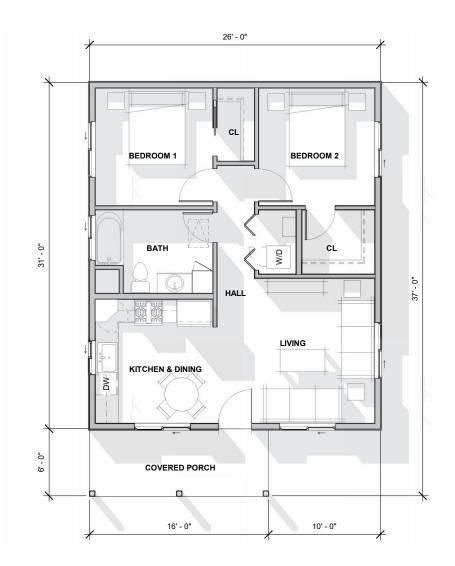
The Plan III Post War Bungalow ADU is a two bedroom home at 806 square feet. The plan accommodates a covered porch, in-unit washer and dryer, and interior storage.



The Plan III Post War Bungalow ADU style is characterized by:

- Covered porch
- Open kitchen and living Decorative exterior ٠ area
- Full kitchen and bath
- Brick wainscot

- Wood porch columns
- sconce
- Asphalt shingle roof
- Stucco siding



Page Culvercity ADU HANDBOOK

#### POST WAR BUNGALOW - PLAN III



FRONT ELEVATION



**BACK ELEVATION** 



**RIGHT ELEVATION** 



LEFT ELEVATION

ADU HANDBOOK 24 Culver city

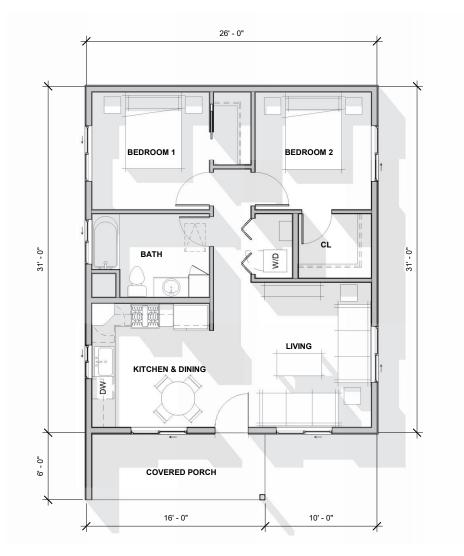
### **CONTEMPORARY - PLAN III**

The Plan III Contemporary ADU is a two bedroom home at 806 square feet. The plan accommodates a covered porch, in-unit washer and dryer, and interior storage.



The Plan III Contemporary ADU style is characterized by:

- Covered porch
- Open kitchen and living
   area
- Full kitchen and bath
- Fiber cement "wood look" T&G porch surrounds
- Decorative trim
- Reglets
- Fiber cement panel siding
- Metal shed roof

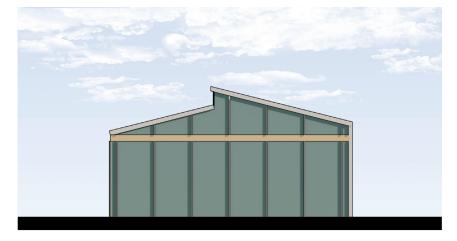


 Page
 ADU HANDBOOK

#### **CONTEMPORARY - PLAN III**



FRONT ELEVATION



**BACK ELEVATION** 



**RIGHT ELEVATION** 



LEFT ELEVATION

ADU HANDBOOK 26 Culver city

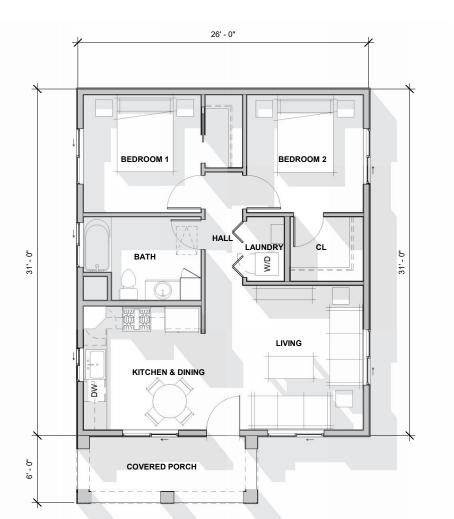
### **SPANISH REVIVAL - PLAN III**

The Plan III Spanish Revival ADU is a two bedroom home at 806 square feet. The plan accommodates a covered porch, in-unit washer and dryer, and interior storage.



The Plan III Spanish Revival ADU style is characterized by:

- Covered porch ٠
- Decorative tile vents
- Open kitchen and living • area
- Full kitchen and bath •
- Archway at porch/entry ٠
- Arched openings at • porch/entry
- Decorative exterior
- sconces • Clay tile roof
- Stucco siding



Page Culvercity ADU HANDBOOK

#### SPANISH REVIVAL - PLAN III



FRONT ELEVATION



BACK ELEVATION



**RIGHT ELEVATION** 



LEFT ELEVATION

ADU HANDBOOK 28 Culver city

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## CITY OF CULVER CITY ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT HANDBOOK

# **ADU REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST**



## **ADU SITE PLAN REQUIREMENTS**

#### ADU SITE PLAN CHECKLIST

Applicants will be required to submit a site plan when applying for a building permit for an ADU utilizing the prototypes included in the PRADU program. The items included in the following checklist will be required as part of the site plan. Please refer to the ADU prototypes plan sets available on the City's <u>ADU webpage</u>.

#### ADU SITE PLAN CHECKLIST ITEMS

- Footprint of all existing and proposed buildings
- Area of existing buildings
- Footprint of proposed ADU
- Drawing scale
- Property lines
  - Yard labels (label front, rear, side yards, driveways, pathways, and other hardscape)
- Setbacks
- Easements
- Location of rain water leaders
- Label streets and sidewalks
- Dimension building separation
- Fire rated wall and roof required if ADU is proposed near property line or existing building
- Fire sprinklers if the primary residence is sprinklered
- Electrical panel (two options provided, see plan set)
- Swimming pools
  - Porches
  - Location of existing and proposed utilities
  - Location of existing and proposed fencing
  - Location of existing and proposed patio, walks, and decks

# Culvercity Page ADU HANDBOOK

# **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

## CITY OF CULVER CITY ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT HANDBOOK



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the difference between an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) and a junior accessory dwelling unit (JADU)?

An ADU is a completely separate residential unit. This means regardless of whether the ADU is attached to a primary residence or detached from the primary residence, it has everything a person needs in a residence: space for sleeping, living, a kitchen and sanitary (i.e. bathroom) facilities. Even if an ADU is attached there is no internal access to the primary residence. A JADU is a residential unit – sleeping, living, kitchen areas – that may share the sanitary facilities with the primary residence. Since the sanitary facilities are shared, there is internal access from the JADU to the primary residence. JADUs must be entirely contained within an existing or proposed single-family residence.

## Does Culver City allow homeowners to build either an ADU or a JADU?

Yes, Culver City's Municipal Code allows homeowners to build either an ADU or a JADU. However, the plans provided in the Pre-Reviewed ADU program are for detached new construction ADUs – dwelling units that contain all required facilities including sanitary facilities.

#### Does the zoning on my property allow for an ADU?

In Culver City, ADUs are permitted in all areas zoned to allow single-family or multi-family residential uses (Section 17.400.095(D)).

#### Can I convert my garage into an ADU?

Yes, you can convert your garage or other existing structure. The City of Culver City's Municipal Code defines what an existing structure is in Section 17.400.095(M)(2). If you convert your garage into an ADU, the garage door must be removed and replaced with windows or entry doors. (Section 17.400.095(M)(3)).

#### How small can my ADU be?

The smallest size permitted is 150 square feet, including a kitchen and at least one ¾ bathroom. This applies to attached and detached units. (Section 17.400.095(C))

#### Does my attached ADU need a separate entrance?

Yes, the ADU needs to have independent exterior access. (Section 17.400.095(G)(2))

# Culvercity Bage ADU HANDBOOK

#### How large can my ADU be?

For an attached ADU – meaning one that shares a wall with the primary residence or located entirely within the footprint of the primary residence – a one-bedroom ADU shall not exceed 850 square feet, a two-bedroom shall not exceed 1,200 square feet and neither can exceed 50% of the gross square footage of the primary dwelling unit, which ever is less. (Section 17.400.095(B)(1)) This is applicable to the extent it does not prevent the construction of an accessory dwelling unit of up to 800 square feet. However, applicants may propose units smaller than 800 square feet. (Section 17.400.095(B)(3))

For a detached ADU – meaning an ADU that is completely separate from the primary residence – a one-bedroom ADU shall not exceed 850 square feet, a two- or more bedroom shall not exceed 1,200 square feet. (Section 17.400.095(B)(2))

#### Can I sell my ADU separate from the home?

No, the ADU cannot be sold separately from the primary residence. (Section 17.400.095(J))

#### Can I rent my ADU?

Yes, for 30 days or more at a time (no short-term or vacation rentals).

#### Do I need to provide a parking space for an ADU?

No, you do not need to provide a parking space for the ADU. (Section 17.400.095(H))

#### Will it need Fire Sprinklers?

If the primary residence has fire sprinklers, the ADU is required to have fire sprinklers.

## Can I use a pre-fabricated, factory-built structure as an ADU?

You can use a pre-fabricated, factory-built structure as an ADU, assuming it meets all zoning criteria, however, a pre-fabricated structure cannot be used in the Pre-Reviewed ADU Program.

#### Does building an ADU impact property taxes?

Your property taxes will increase based on the property value increase due to adding an ADU. However, the base value of your property will not be reassessed. For questions about property tax assessments, please contact the LA County Assessor's Office at (213) 974-3211.

#### Does Building an ADU impact property values?

Yes! Building an ADU will increase the value of your property, although the exact amount is difficult to predict. A very rough rule of thumb is that the property value will increase by 100 times the ADU's monthly rental value. For example, if you can rent your ADU for \$2,000 per month, you may estimate a property value increase of roughly \$200,000.

# ADU HANDBOOK 34 Culver city



