



# ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUs) INFORMATION AND CHECKLIST

## Planning and Building Divisions

Economic and Community Development  
34009 Alvarado-Niles Road  
Union City, CA 94578  
510-675-5379 – [Planning@unioncity.org](mailto:Planning@unioncity.org)

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), Also known as “in-law units, granny flats, or second-units” are permitted on lots with an existing single or multi-family dwelling. An ADU may be created through the conversion of existing living space, conversion of a garage, the addition of new habitable space, the conversion of a legally permitted existing detached accessory structure, or through the construction of a new detached unit. ADUs must have a separate kitchen, bathroom, and sleeping area from the main house.

A Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit (JADU) is a unit that is contained within the habitable floor area or garage space of a single-family residence only (multi-family dwellings are not eligible for JADUs). A JADU must have a kitchenette, and it may share a bathroom with the primary residence.

Requirements for ADUs and JADUS are summarized below. For more information, see [Chapter 18.34 Accessory Dwelling Units](#), of the Municipal Code, which can be accessed online.

### **SECTION 1 – APPLICATION PROCESS**

#### **Application Process - Steps to getting a Building Permit for an ADU**

1. Apply for a Building Permit – Contact the [Building Division](#) with submittal questions.  
*Union City Building Division Email: [Building@unioncity.org](mailto:Building@unioncity.org) Phone: 510.675.5313*
2. Include the ADU and JADU Zoning Checklist and Design Standards Checklist with your application  
(See Page 2-6)
3. JADUs Only: Record a Declaration of Restrictions at the Alameda County Recorder’s Office

#### **ADUs and JADUs Requirements**

- ADUs must have a separate address; JADUs are not eligible for a separate address.
- ADUs and JADUs cannot be rented as short-term rentals (less than 30 days).
- The property owner must live on-site with a JADU (either in the JADU, ADU, or main house).
- All rental properties are subject to the City’s rental regulations and require a business license.
- ADUs and JADUs must have adequate water, sewer, and electrical services provided.
- Utility services to ADUs can be shared or have a separate meter(s). Please contact the [Alameda County Water District](#), [Union Sanitary District](#), and [PG&E](#) for information related to service extensions, capacity, or connection fees. Please contact the utilities before submitting a building permit application to the City.
- All utility connections to an ADU shall be undergrounded.
- ADUs over 750 square feet are subject to the City’s impact fees (i.e., Capital Facilities, Park Facilities, and Traffic Signalization).
- A deed restriction is required for JADUs (only).
- Sprinklers are required in the ADU/JADU when sprinklers are required for the main building.

## SECTION 2 – ADU AND JADU ZONING CHECKLIST

Project Address: \_\_\_\_\_ APN: \_\_\_\_\_

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are allowed on property zoned to allow residential uses. Development standards for an ADU are provided below. If an ADU meets all of the following requirements and the building plans are consistent with the California Building Code, the City of Union City will issue a building permit for the ADU.

<b>Does your ADU application meet the following standards?</b>	<b>Compliance (Circle One)</b>
1. <u>Zoning</u> . Is the property zoned to allow for residential uses? <u>Zoning designation for the property:</u> _____	Yes    No
2. <u>For Single-Family Properties Only</u> . Does the property currently contain or have proposed one single-family dwelling? The property may only have up to one ADU plus one Junior ADU. <u>How many units currently exist on the property?</u> _____	Yes    No N/A
3. <u>Multifamily Lots (two or more units) Only</u> . On lots currently containing multifamily dwellings, the lot may contain the following: <u>Attached</u> : One (1) ADU or up to 25% of the # of existing units* AND <u>Detached</u> : Maximum of up to two (2) ADUs; may be attached to each other <b>Does the proposed number of ADUs comply with the maximum limits?</b> <i>*Attached ADUs must be created through the conversion of areas not used as habitable space, such as storage rooms, boiler rooms, passageways, attics, basements, or garages. Fractions may be rounded up.</i>	Yes    No N/A
4. <u>Size Limitation</u> . <u>ADUs</u> cannot be larger than 850 square feet (Studios/1bedroom) or cannot be larger than 1,000 square feet (2+ bedrooms) in total floor area*. <u>Junior ADUs</u> cannot be larger than 500 square feet in total floor area*. <b>Does this application meet the size limitation?</b> <i>* Enclosed patios or other enclosed non-habitable spaces dedicated to the ADU or JADU are included in the total floor area.</i>	Yes    No
5. <u>Maximum lot coverage</u> . The ratio of all building footprints on the lot and the lot area shall not exceed the maximum lot coverage for the Zoning District. (Total square feet of building footprint(s) on the lot divided by the total size of the lot (sq.ft.): = _____ Percent lot coverage: _____% <b>Does this application meet the lot coverage requirement?</b>	Yes    No If No, see #15 below for possible exception.
6. <u>Unit Entrance/Separation</u> . <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An attached ADU must have a separate exterior entrance from the primary dwelling.</li> <li>A Junior ADU (JADU) must have a separate exterior entrance and must have a direct internal connection to the primary unit.</li> <li>Exterior entrances cannot be located on the same elevation as the primary unit.</li> <li>A three (3) foot covered entry above the primary entrance to the ADU shall be provided. (I.e. overhang or patio)</li> </ol>	Yes    No

Does your ADU application meet the following standards?	Compliance (Circle One)
<i>Does the application meet the entrance and internal separation requirements?</i>	
<p>7. <u>Conversion of Existing Structure</u> Is the proposed ADU to be located within the existing dwelling, within an existing garage, or in an existing detached building? (i.e., does not involve an addition or building a new structure) <i>(If yes, skip question 10)</i></p>	Yes No
<p>8. <u>Addressing</u>. An address shall be placed at the front of the lot, visible from the public right-of-way, and at the main entrance to the ADU if not visible from the public right-of-way. <i>Does the ADU meet the Addressing requirements stated above?</i></p>	Yes No
<p>9. <u>Height Exception in a Flood Zone</u>. If the lot is located within a FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area, a detached ADU may exceed the maximum 16-foot height limit in order to meet FEMA regulations for flood safety. To qualify for this exception, the detached ADU is limited to a maximum 8-foot ceiling height, and it must meet 4-foot side and rear yard setbacks. <i>Does this application qualify for this exception?</i></p>	Yes No N/A
<p>10. <u>Maximum Height for Detached ADU</u>. A new detached ADU may not exceed 16 feet in height. <i>Does the detached ADU or JADU meet the height requirement?</i></p>	Yes No
<p>11. <u>Setbacks</u>. All ADUs shall meet the following requirements: a. Front setback: As established by the Zoning District* b. Interior side or rear yard setback: 4 feet (with appropriate fire-rated construction) c. Corner/Street side setback: As established by the Zoning District* d. Separation from other structures on the lot: 5 feet <i>Does the ADU or JADU meet the setback requirements above?</i></p>	Yes No *If No, see #15 below for possible exception.
<p>12. <u>Parking</u>. JADU - No additional on-site parking is required. (JADUs must replace parking on-site when garage space is converted) ADU - No additional on-site parking is required* <i>*The homeowner may request an additional driveway parking space (must be on building permit plans)</i> <i>Does the JADU or ADU meet the parking requirements?</i></p>	Yes No
<p>13. <u>JADU Applicant</u>. The applicant for JADU must be the current owner-occupant of the property. <i>JADU only - Are you the property owner and do you reside on the property?</i></p>	Yes No N/A
<p>14. <u>JADU Only - Deed Restriction</u>. Prior to the issuance of building permits, the property owner must record a Declaration of Restrictions on the property with the following stipulations: a. The separate sale of the JADU is prohibited. b. Short-term rental (less than 30 days) of the JADU is prohibited. c. The restrictions apply to any successor property owner. d. Either the JADU or primary dwelling shall be owner-occupied. <i>Do you agree to these stipulations and record a Declaration of Restrictions prior to the issuance of building permits?</i></p>	Yes No N/A

<i>Does your ADU application meet the following standards?</i>	<b>Compliance</b> (Circle One)
<p>15. <u>800 SF ADU Exception</u>. This question applies only if “NO” is circled for questions # 5, and 11 above. A project may be exempted from one or more of the established standards if it is determined that the specific standard(s) would make it infeasible for an 800 square foot ADU to be constructed on a property consistent with California Government Code, § 65852.2, subdivision (e).</p> <p><i>Does this application require this exception?</i></p>	<p>Yes    No</p>
<p>17. <u>Summary</u>. <b>I certify that this project meets all requirements above.</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p>Applicant Signature</p>	<p>Yes    No</p>

### SECTION 3 – DESIGN STANDARD CHECKLIST

Does your ADU application meet the following Design standards?	Compliance (Circle One)
<p>16. <u>Building facades and materials:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. No façade shall run in a continuous plane of more than fifteen (15) feet without incorporating one or more of the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. A vertical wall shift of at least one (1) foot in depth;</li> <li>ii. a change in material type;</li> <li>iii. Window or building entrance; or</li> <li>iv. A projection such as a stoop, bay or overhang.</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. A minimum of three (3) exterior colors or a combination of materials and colors shall be used on the building façade.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Stucco must be used in combination with a secondary material.</li> </ul> </li> <li>c. Second story facades shall incorporate the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. A minimum of a six (6) foot inset from the front wall plane.</li> <li>ii. A minimum of an eighteen (18) inch inset from the side and rear wall plane.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Does the ADU or JADU meet the building facade and material requirements?</b></p>	<p>Yes      No</p>
<p>17. <u>Windows and glazing:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. All windows shall incorporate the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Trim at least three (3) inches in width must be provided around all windows, or window must be recessed at least two (2) inches from the plane of the surrounding exterior wall.</li> </ul> </li> <li>b. Attached ADUs with upper story windows located less than ten (10) feet from and facing the rear or side yard of an adjacent property shall incorporate at least one of the following techniques:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Sill height located a minimum of sixty (60) inches above the finished floor;</li> <li>ii. Location of the window is such that the centerline of the glazing is offset greater than fifteen (15) lateral feet from the centerline of any glazing on an existing adjacent structure; or</li> <li>iii. Any window located partially or entirely below sixty (60) inches from the finished floor consists of frosted or obscured glazing.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Does the ADU or JADU meet the windows and glazing requirements?</b></p>	<p>Yes      No</p>
<p>18. <u>Roof form and detailing:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. New structures shall provide a roof pitch no less than two and one-half (2-1/2) inches of vertical rise for each twelve (12) inches of horizontal run.</li> <li>b. ADUs resulting from alterations or additions to an existing structure shall provide the same roof form, material, and color as the existing structure.</li> <li>c. New buildings shall provide a roofing material that is the same as the predominant roofing material throughout properties within 100 feet.</li> <li>d. Roof material and color shall be the same throughout the entirety of the roof.</li> <li>e. Overhanging eaves shall extend a minimum of twelve (12) inches beyond the supporting wall.</li> </ul> <p><b>Does the ADU or JADU meet the roof form and detailing requirements?</b></p>	<p>Yes      No</p>

<i>Does your ADU application meet the following Design standards?</i>	<b>Compliance</b> (Circle One)
<p>19. <u>Principal Entrance:</u></p> <p>a. A three (3) foot covered entry above the primary entrance to the ADU shall be provided.</p> <p>b. The covered entry requirement may be achieved by inseting the door into the ADU.</p> <p><i>Does the ADU or JADU meet the principal entrance requirements?</i></p>	<p>Yes    No</p>
<p>20. <u>Exterior Stairways:</u></p> <p>a. Exterior stairways providing access to an upper story are prohibited</p> <p><i>Does the ADU or JADU meet the exterior stairway requirements?</i></p>	<p>Yes    No</p>
<p>21. <u>Balconies:</u></p> <p>a. Usable balconies and upper-story decks are prohibited on ADU units</p> <p><i>Does the ADU or JADU meet the balcony requirements?</i></p>	<p>Yes    No</p>
<p>22. <u>Historic Properties:</u></p> <p>Properties located within the Landmark and Historic Preservation Overlay Zone, or included in the California Register of Historical Resources, the National Register of Historic Places, or considered a historic resource after completion of a historic resource evaluation, any new addition for an attached ADU shall be located along the rear wall of an existing single-family dwelling, unless the ADU is fully enclosed within the existing building walls. The attached ADUs shall adhere to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings or the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (1995), Weeks and Grimmer.</p> <p><i>Does the ADU or JADU meet the Historic Properties requirements?</i></p>	<p>Yes    No</p> <p>N/A</p>
<p>23. <u>Exceptions:</u></p> <p>Exceptions may be granted by the Director to the some of the requirements listed above to accommodate a complete architectural style or Neighborhood Compatibility. See <a href="#">Section 18.34.030(A)(12)</a> of the Union City Municipal Code for exact list of exceptions</p>	
<p>24. <u>Summary:</u> <b>I certify that this project meets all requirements above.</b></p> <p>_____</p> <p>Applicant Signature</p>	

## **SECTION 4 - APPLICATION MATERIALS**

### **Documents required at time of submittal**

- Completed Building Permit Application.
- ADU Checklist (Section 2 of this document)
- Plans of the proposed ADU (see sections below)
- For conversions of existing space with less than four (4) feet, a copy of the permit for the original structure is required.
- Non-conventional construction may require 3-party special inspections and additional supporting documentation.

### **Documents required before issuance of a building permit (JADUs Only)**

- Declaration of Restrictions (Deed Restriction) signed by the property owner(s) notarized and recorded with the Alameda County Clerk's office

### **General Requirements for Plans and Drawings**

- Three (3) 24" by 36" plan sets (no mixed-sized papers); each plan set must be stapled.
- Title block with the address of property, Assessor's Parcel Number number(s), and name of owner and designer/contact person with daytime phone number and email.
- Plans must be signed by the design professional (i.e. architect, designer or engineer)
- Include sheet numbers and index.
- Include north arrow, date prepared, and bar scale. Acceptable scale: 1/4" or 1/8" = 1'

### **Title Sheet**

- Scope of Work – Descriptive narration of what the project will consist of.
- Owner's name, code information including code year, occupancy and construction type.
- Include a sheet index, zoning designation and Assessor's Parcel Number, and data table.
- Show square footage (for each level) of existing living space, added living space and total.
- Note if the property is or is not in a flood plain and/or an earthquake hazard zone.
- Fire sprinkler information

### **Title 24 Energy Documentation (for conditioned space)**

- CF1R Energy forms to be printed on plans. Make certain all signatures are completed. The forms need to be readable so DO NOT reduce them in size.
- All newly constructed, detached ADUs shall have a photovoltaic system. (Note if deferred submittal on title sheet or provide proof of existing solar on main house)

### **Site Plan**

- Location of proposed ADU
- Property lines, distance between outer edge of street curb and the front/street side property lines.
- Lot size and dimensions.
- Location and dimensions of all existing and proposed buildings.
- Dimensions of existing and proposed front, side, and rear yards
- Location of all existing and proposed landscaping. Indicate any trees to be removed. Include circumferences of all trees. Provide species and common name of all trees.
- For projects proposing construction within five (5) feet of property lines, plans must show the building footprints and appropriate height of structures on adjacent lots.
- Location of drainage ways and access easements. Check with the Public Works Department for public utility and access easements. Private easements typically appear in the property legal description.
- Show location of all utilities and underground service runs to the ADU

### **Roof Plan (existing and proposed on separate drawings)**

- All existing and proposed roof elements
- Label all roof pitches with slope
- Provide fire rating detail for any projection less than five feet from property lines or adjacent structures.

### **Elevations (existing and proposed on separate drawings)**

- Existing and proposed views of each elevation shown side-by-side, using the same scale.
- Fully label the elevations with dimensions.
- Show/indicate all finishes, new and existing. Show all items such as windows, doors, decks, stairs, etc. Clearly distinguish what elements are existing and which will be added/changed.
- Location of proposed vents, gutters, downspouts, air conditioning equipment, antennas, and utility meters.
- Direction of building elevation (i.e., north, south, front, rear, etc.)
- Details for fascia trim, windows, doors trim, sills, railing and fencing, and final height of building
- Location of exterior lighting and proposed address location(s).

### **Floor Plans**

- Existing and proposed floor plans, drawn to scale, for the existing house and ADU/JADU.
- Ceiling heights of all interior spaces
- Label all rooms (existing and new). Show dimensions of all rooms
- Clearly distinguish between new walls and walls to remain.
- Show all walls with double lines. Clearly indicate fire/sound rated walls.
- Show all windows and doors including sizes, types, and egress windows. Show location of all existing and proposed windows and doors. Identify any opening within three (3') feet of another building or property line.
- Show all major equipment locations including water heater, HVAC, electrical panels, washer/dryers, plumbing fixtures, cabinets, etc. Show all relevant electrical (grounding, light fixtures, receptacles, etc.), mechanical (registers, fans, etc.), and plumbing (fixtures, etc.) details. These items may be included in specific electrical, mechanical, and plumbing plans

### **Framing Plans**

- Provide for each floor, roof and walls.
- Show size, direction and spacing of all joists and beams.
- Clearly show how any existing framing will be altered in order to meet current code requirements.

### **Construction Details and Sections**

- Drawn large enough to show the specific construction and referenced from framing plans.
- Show major section through area of work including showing all major components.
- Clearly indicate fire/sound rated assemblies. Specific details must be provided for all rated assemblies.
- Show ceiling heights. Show insulation including type & R-value.
- Show stairways, fire/sound separation between units, moisture barrier under the floor slab, foundation wall waterproofing and drainage, etc.

### **Structural Calculations**

- Two (2) copies of structural design calculations and related details with signature of engineer in fresh ink on first page of each set of the calculations and all drawings directly related to the structural calculations.

### **Demolition Plan (if applicable)**

- Show items to be demolished as dashed. Clearly indicate which part of the structure is to remain.
- Written description of elements that will be removed and/or removed and reused materials

### **Foundation Plan (if applicable)**

- Provide if the foundation will be replaced.
- Show dimensions—Provide details showing how existing or new foundations meet current code.
- Show hold downs and brace/shear wall locations and lengths.
- Indicate location and size of access openings. Show connections to existing & use detailing to show further information.

### **Photographs**

- Printed on the plans and not as separate photos of the existing elevations and/or proposed work area

### **Other Information**

The City may request any other information relevant to the City's review of an ADU project, including but not limited to, a property survey or title report.