



CITY OF SOLANA BEACH

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www.cityofsolanabeach.org

Pre-Approved Accessory Dwelling Unit Program

The Pre-Approved Accessory Dwelling Unit (PADU) Program is designed to promote the development of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) by providing property owners with a selection of pre-approved building plans for detached ADUs. Designers with building plans that are pre-approved by the City of Solana Beach can offer their customers a streamlined, lower-cost, plan review, subject to any specific site considerations. The plans may include associated configuration options. The plans must clearly identify the level of scope for the project. PADU plans may be used in residential and mixed-use zoning districts with existing single-family or multi-family residential units, and enable city staff to expedite the project review.

HOW DO I OBTAIN A PADU PLAN APPROVAL?

There are restrictions on who may prepare certain building plans, and licensing and/or certification may be required. Consult with the Building Department at counter@cosb.org for information on when a license and/or certification is required. It is advised that all building plans be prepared by an architect properly licensed in the State of California.

1. Prepare plans

Create ADU plans that are not site-specific, and include architectural plans, structural drawings, and calculations with the following information within the submittal package:

- Architectural Documentation: Comprehensive architectural plans, including floor plans elevations, sections and construction details.
- ADU Requirements:
 - Height: Maximum 16' in height measured from the lower of pre-existing or proposed grade.
 - Floor Area: Maximum 800 SF
- Structural Documentation: Detailed structural plans including the foundation, floor framing, roof framing wall sections and elevations, structural details and structural load calculations (structural calcs).
- Truss Specification and Calculations: Detailed truss layout plans, and engineering calculations, for pre-manufactured trusses (may be deferred).
- Foundation Design: For ADUs, foundation design may adhere to the minimum soil evaluation requirements specified in the code or utilize prescribed footing dimensions for conventional construction. Alternatively, the foundation may match the specifications of the existing foundation provided it meets minimum code requirements.
- Seismic Design requirements: Documentation of compliance with seismic design provisions, including detailing of structural connections and bracing as required by the California Building Code (CBC).
- Special Inspection and Testing requirements: Provide a statement of any special inspections or material testing that will be required during construction (such as for concrete, welding, or high strength bolting).
- Energy Compliance Documentation: "Title 24": Documentation to demonstrate compliance with the California Energy Code standards, as required.
- Fire sprinklers: Preapproved plans must include an automatic fire sprinkler system. A specific note should be placed on the plans that indicates for sites where the existing primary unit has no fire sprinklers, then fire sprinklers are not required for an ADU.
- A standardized Site Plan (Optional): A standard site plan for reference, if applicable to the project.
- City-Approved PADU Notes and Format: Submittal must follow notes and formatting consistently with the City's Accessory Dwelling Unit Submittal Process and Basic Plan Requirements Handout.

2. Schedule a preliminary pre-approved PADU meeting

A preliminary meeting with city staff to discuss the proposed PADU plan and the review process is required prior to submitting the

plans for review. To schedule this meeting, email counter@cosb.org with the subject line stating, "Preliminary pre-approved PADU plans meeting request."

Fees: Fees for review of plans for a preapproved PADU plan will be assessed at the regular service rates for the Building, Planning, Engineering, and Fire Prevention.

3. Submit the plans

After the preliminary PADU meeting, plans may be submitted via email to counter@cosb.org. An accurate, complete submittal package is required. An incomplete submittal package will not be accepted, and additional reviews or several resubmittals may be required to achieve full compliance with all applicable code requirements.

Once submitted, plans will be routed and reviewed by Building, Engineering, Planning, and Fire Prevention. The estimated time necessary for City staff to complete plan review is approximately 15 days per review cycle. These time frames are based on submitting complete and accurate plans and promptly addressing issues.

4. Get a listing on the City's ADU and PADU webpage

Upon approval of the plans, the PADU plan and a brief description of the size and type of the ADU will be listed on the City's [Website](#) along with the business name and contact information.

5. Required updates to preapproved PADU plans

Building, fire or zoning code updates affect plans. The preparer of the preapproved PADU plans will need to refile a plan when the City or state adopts new building codes, building policies, zoning changes, or new Climate Action Plan ordinances or policies that are applicable to the PADU plan. The city will notify the preparer of the plans if such changes take place. Plan revision fees will be assessed for the city to review and approve updated plans.

6. Removing a preapproved PADU plan

If the preparer of preapproved PADU plans wishes to have their plans removed from the city website, they may do so by emailing counter@cosb.org. The city will remove the plans from the website within 30 days of receiving the request.

HOW DO I USE A PADU PLAN?

Before starting an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) project, homeowners are encouraged to review the information on the City's website, including applicable zoning regulations, Building and Fire Codes. It is also important to consult with all reviewing City departments and divisions. Staying informed is essential as ADU laws and related regulations change frequently. If you would like to discuss the potential of developing an ADU on your property, please contact the Planning Department (858) 720-2440.

City staff can help determine whether an ADU can be built on your property in the desired location and configuration. Site-specific conditions—such as environmentally sensitive habitat areas, steep slopes, fire mitigation requirements, or other special circumstances—may affect where and how an ADU can be built. These conditions may also require additional reports or studies, even when using a pre-approved PADU plan design.

Using a PADU Plan

- **No Modifications:** If you are using a pre-approved PADU plan without any changes, you may submit your building permit application by email to counter@cosb.org along with a completed building permit application form.
- **With Modifications:** If you modify a pre-approved PADU plan, the project must go through the standard building permit review and approval process. This additional review may extend the processing time.

Fees: When using a pre-approved PADU plan, plan check fees will be collected to cover reviews by the Planning, Engineering, and Fire Departments. Permit issuance fees must be paid prior to permit issuance to cover required inspections. Additional fees may apply, including state or regional fees, school or water district fees, impact fees, or covenant recording fees. City staff will confirm all applicable fees during your consultation.

QUESTIONS?

Please contact the Building Department via e-mail at counter@cosb.org.