



Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Guidelines

Background

The County of Los Angeles has seen an increase in development of accessory dwelling units (ADU's) to address the rising need for housing across the state. The State of California has since passed Senate Bill 9 (SB9) which has added provisions for the allowance of building ADU's on residential properties with existing dwelling and new dwellings.

Scope

The County of Los Angeles Fire Department (LACoFD) wants to address its continued requirements for new and existing dwellings, while following the laws set forth by SB9; without compromising the integrity and safety of the dwelling(s), civilians, and our LACoFD personnel; in addition to the Los Angeles County Codes.

Requirements

All new ADU's shall meet the following:

1. No portion of the lot frontage (the length of a lot line that borders a public or private right-of way or public space) to the public fire hydrant shall:
 - a. Exceed 450 feet via vehicular access from a properly spaced public hydrant that meets the required fire-flow.
 - b. Exceed 750 feet via vehicular access from a properly spaced public hydrant that meets the required fire-flow – when there is less than one dwelling unit per lot acre.

(See exhibit 1 & 2)

2. The water system shall be capable of delivering a minimum flow from the closest fire hydrant for a fire-flow calculation area less than 3,600 square feet, not located in a Fire Hazard Severity Zone:
 - a. The water system can deliver at least 1000 GPM at 20 PSI for one-hour if non-sprinklered.
 - b. The water system can deliver at least 500 GPM at 20 PSI for one-half hour if sprinklered. Sprinklers allow a reduction in fire flow of 50 %.
 - c. The minimum fire-flow and flow duration requirements for one-and two-family dwellings, and Group R-3 buildings located in a Fire Hazard Severity Zone shall not be less than 1,250 gallons per minute for a 1-hour duration at 20psi.
3. All portions of a new ADU shall be within 150 feet of an approved vehicular access roadway that is a minimum 20 feet wide clear to sky, paved with concrete or asphalt, and does not exceed 15% grade; as measured along the path of access. All portions of a detached ADU that is installed with an approved fire sprinkler system can increase the distance to 300 feet. (See exhibit 1 & 2)
4. When fire sprinklers are not required, they can be used to mitigate a condition when approved by the fire code official – to be determined on a case-by-case basis.
5. See Appendix for additional information on the planning, zoning, construction review and permitting processes.



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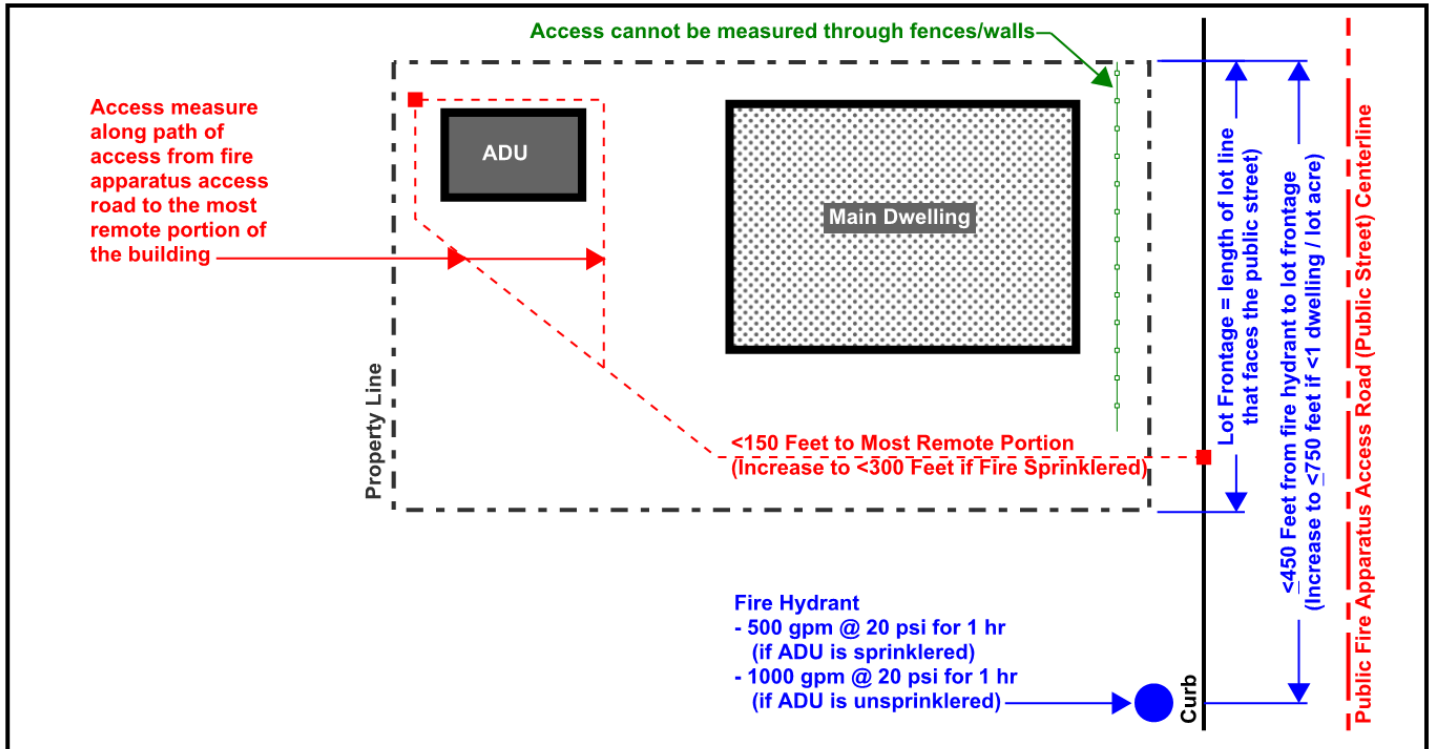


Exhibit 1: ADU Access From Public Fire Apparatus Access Road (e.g., Public Street)

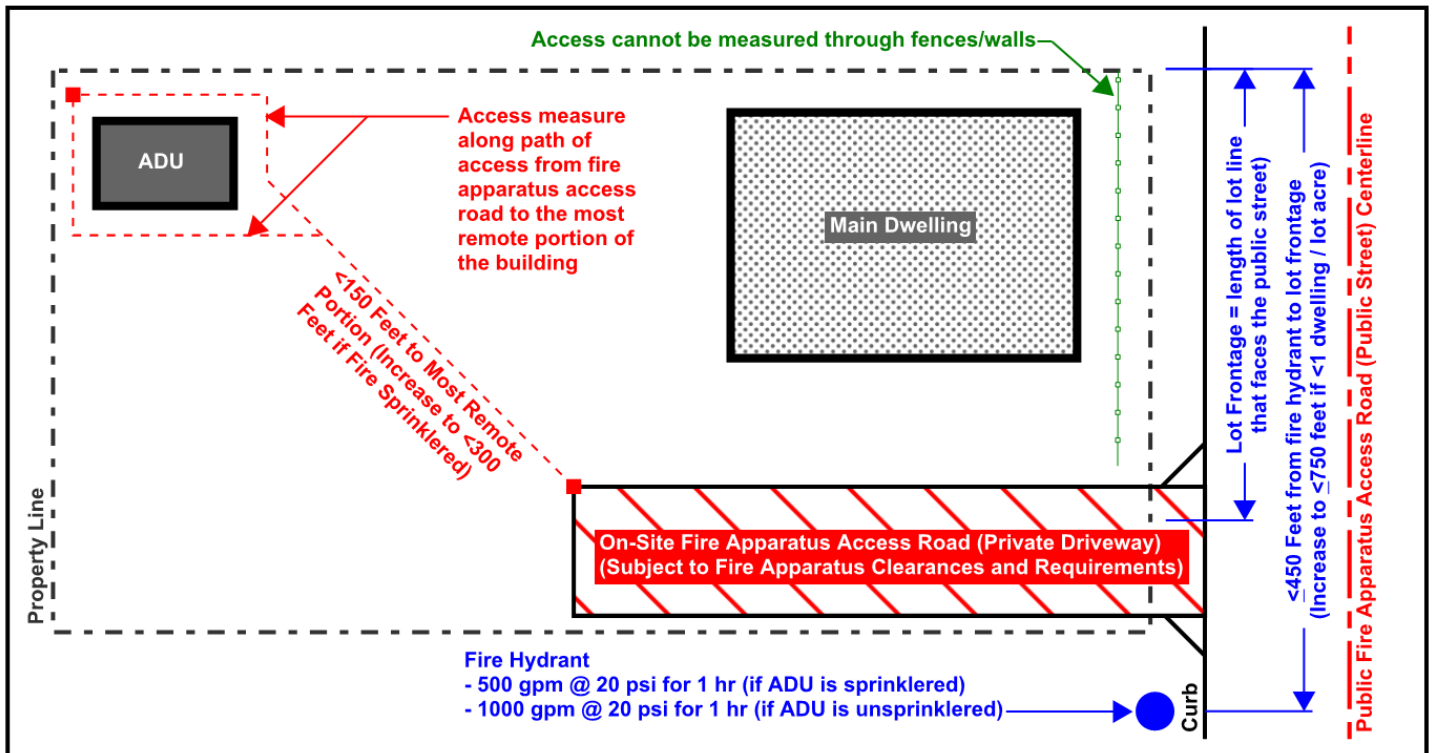


Exhibit 2: ADU Access From On-Site Fire Apparatus Access Road (e.g., Private Driveway)



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Appendix:

1. A review by the jurisdictional building and fire department is required and is a separate process from the review process by the jurisdictional planning and zoning authority that is set forth by Government Code section 66317. The sixty-day approval timeline pertains only to the review by the jurisdictional planning and zoning authority. A project that has been approved in the planning and zoning review phase, moves into the building and fire department plan-review process, which does not have a set timeline. Rather, laws governing the review process by the building and fire department allows a customer to resubmit plans as necessary to achieve a design that fulfills code requirements under the purview of those departments.
2. The County of Los Angeles Fire Department is charged by State statute to uphold the fire and life-safety requirements of the fire code [Part 9 of the California Building Standards Code (CCR Title 24), which is codified in Los Angeles County as LACC Title 32] to ensure the safety of residents and properties. Bound by these laws that serve as the minimum fire- and life-safety standards for building improvements.
3. Planning and Zoning and do not pre-empt all building and safety standards which are in the California Building Standards Code (BSC), or California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 24, which contains the California Building Code and the California Fire Code. Other codes that compose the BSC include, but are not limited to, the Electrical Code, the Plumbing Code, and the Mechanical Code. Each city and county in the State then codifies these parts within their local municipal codes. In the case of the County of Los Angeles (LAC), the LAC Building Code (LACBC) is LACC Title 26, and the AC Fire Code (LACFC) is LACC Title 32. The BSC serves to establish the minimum fire and life-safety requirements of the built environment.
4. The purpose of the Fire Flow Availability Form 195 is to help streamline the process for single family dwellings and Accessory dwelling units (ADU's) when the square footage is under 3,600 sqft that comply with the access and water requirements located in part III of the 195 form. It gives the building department the ability to accept certain projects that meets minimum Fire code requirements for projects not located in the Fire Hazard Severity Zones.
5. Change of occupancy shall comply the Codes effective at the time of the change of occupancy.