

FREE HOMEOWNER TOOL · ILLUSTRATIVE PLANNING AID

ADU Permit Readiness Checklist

A guided scan for the property facts, existing conditions, owner decisions, consultants, and permit responsibilities worth identifying before paying for plans.

KNOWN Supported by a useful source or current project information.	UNKNOWN Not established yet, but relevant to the decision.	VERIFY Needs field, agency, title, survey, utility, or consultant confirmation.
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How to use this: Read the quick scan first. Mark detailed items Known, Unknown, or Verify. Circle the one unknown that most affects your next decision. Do not treat an online record, map, visible condition, or preliminary review as proof of approval.

STUDIO BLUEWORK

Southern California ADU property research, remote feasibility, and permit-plan support.

READINESS SCAN

Start with the decision—not the package.

A “not yet” answer is not a failure. It is a routing signal. The most consequential unknown usually tells you whether to organize information, request judgment, verify a condition, or define plan scope.

01	Can I name the reviewing city or county?	■ Yes	■ Not yet
02	Do I know which property facts are sourced and which are assumed?	■ Yes	■ Not yet
03	Is the ADU project idea described clearly enough to evaluate?	■ Yes	■ Not yet
04	Do current photos and rough dimensions describe existing conditions?	■ Yes	■ Not yet
05	Have utilities, access, parking, and fire access been considered?	■ Yes	■ Not yet
06	Is any suspected unpermitted work or conflicting record identified?	■ Yes	■ Not yet
07	Do I know which consultants may be needed?	■ Yes	■ Not yet
08	Are submission, corrections, meetings, and owner decisions assigned?	■ Yes	■ Not yet
09	Are agency, utility, school, consultant, and permit fees separate?	■ Yes	■ Not yet
10	Is the next paid step tied to a clear question and written boundary?	■ Yes	■ Not yet

Circle the most consequential unknown: _____

The next decision this unknown affects: _____

SECTION 01

Property and public information

Use source links and review dates. A mailing city, assessor map, or visible online record may not establish the reviewing jurisdiction, a legal boundary, or permit status.

Readiness item	KNOWN	UNKNOWN	VERIFY
Property address and assessor parcel number match the intended site.	■	■	■
Reviewing city or county is identified from an official source.	■	■	■
Zoning, general-plan, overlay, or specific-plan sources are noted.	■	■	■
Available permit and building-record searches have been checked.	■	■	■
Recorded maps, assessor maps, and title information are kept distinct.	■	■	■
Known easements, utilities, flood, fire, hillside, or other mapped constraints are flagged.	■	■	■
Every material online source has a link and reviewed date.	■	■	■
Conflicting, incomplete, or unavailable information is labeled—not guessed.	■	■	■

SECTION 02

Existing conditions

Remote information cannot replace field verification. Existing garages, additions, slopes, utilities, and unpermitted work can change scope.

Readiness item	KNOWN	UNKNOWN	VERIFY
Current photos show all sides of relevant structures and site access.	■	■	■
Rough dimensions are available and clearly labeled as owner-provided.	■	■	■
Garage walls, ceiling, slab, door openings, utilities, and damage are documented.	■	■	■
Electrical panel, gas, water, sewer/septic, drainage, and utility routes are considered.	■	■	■
Suspected unpermitted work or record conflicts are identified.	■	■	■
Items needing survey, title, utility, agency, structural, or field verification are listed.	■	■	■

SECTION 03

Project idea and owner decisions

A remote information-based review is most useful when the project idea is described clearly enough to evaluate. Undefined alternatives multiply coordination and revision risk.

Readiness item	KNOWN	UNKNOWN	VERIFY
Detached, attached, conversion, JADU, or legalization approach is selected—or intentionally undecided.	■	■	■
Approximate size, rooms, access, privacy, parking, and intended use are described.	■	■	■
One person is identified to consolidate owner decisions.	■	■	■
Construction budget and financing assumptions are stated as ranges, not promises.	■	■	■
Desired timing distinguishes owner goals from agency review time.	■	■	■
The question the next paid service must answer is written in one sentence.	■	■	■

SECTION 04

Consultants and permit responsibilities

Consultant and agency needs vary by property and jurisdiction. Define who hires, coordinates, submits, pays, and responds before work begins.

Readiness item	KNOWN	UNKNOWN	VERIFY
Potential structural, energy, survey, soils, civil, fire, utility, or septic needs are flagged.	■	■	■
Consultants and outside records are client-paid unless the agreement says otherwise.	■	■	■
Submission responsibility and agency account ownership are explicit.	■	■	■
Meetings, revision limits, correction rounds, and consultant cycles are defined.	■	■	■
Agency, school, utility, consultant, record-request, and permit fees are separate.	■	■	■
Inactivity pauses, amendments, and scope-change triggers are written.	■	■	■
Payment milestones are tied to deliverables—not permit approval or issuance.	■	■	■

SECTION 05

Permit-document scope and handoff

A plan set is a coordinated communication package. The exact sheets and consultants depend on the property, project idea, scope, and reviewing agencies.

Readiness item	KNOWN	UNKNOWN	VERIFY
Existing-condition base information is adequate for the agreed drawing scope.	■	■	■
Site plan, floor plans, elevations, sections, details, schedules, and notes are scoped as needed.	■	■	■
Energy, structural, survey, soils, civil, fire, utility, or other consultant documents are assigned.	■	■	■
Owner review milestones and design-freeze expectations are defined.	■	■	■
The submittal package owner and file-handoff format are defined.	■	■	■
Correction-response scope distinguishes included rounds from new design or consultant work.	■	■	■
The final handoff standard does not promise permit approval or issuance.	■	■	■

Readiness notes

Most important known: _____

Most important unknown: _____

Verification owner and target date: _____

Next decision: _____

NEXT-STEP ROUTER

Use the unknown to choose a proportionate first step.

INFORMATION Property Information Report · \$395 Best when the gap is available online property information that needs to be organized into a source-linked report. Next action: Check address coverage	JUDGMENT ADU Feasibility Report · \$1,055 Best when an ADU project idea needs an information-based remote review of known conditions, unresolved checks, approaches worth exploring, and practical next actions. Next action: Request a fit review
VERIFICATION Custom first step Best when the answer depends on measurements, a survey, title, utilities, field conditions, agency input, or a consultant. Next action: Ask Studio Bluework to define the verification step	PERMIT PLANS Permit Documents · starting at \$12,500 Residential drafting and permit-document preparation for qualifying work, with the exact scope and responsibilities defined before work begins. Next action: Request a fit review

Shared report boundary. No field measurements, survey, permit drawings, legal advice, or approval prediction are included in the two fixed-scope reports. The website does not take payment, and an inquiry does not create an agreement or begin work.

GENERAL INFORMATION AND SOURCES

This checklist is general educational information, not a permit determination, survey, title report, legal opinion, design, engineering conclusion, cost estimate, or approval prediction. Rules, records, fees, and agency procedures change. Verify material facts with the reviewing agency and appropriate licensed or qualified professionals.

Useful official starting points:

California HCD ADU resources — hcd.ca.gov/policy-and-research/accessory-dwelling-units

Local planning and building department pages for the property jurisdiction

County assessor, recorder, surveyor, and public-works sources as applicable

Illustrative planning aid · HTML version: studiobluework.com/checklist/sample