

**For Immediate Release**

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**Mayor Liccardo, Council Colleagues, and the City of San José Announce New Portal and Expedited Services to Transform San José into California’s Friendliest ADU City**

*Amid critical housing crisis, Mayor, Councilmembers, and City announce new online portal, processes, and resources to transform San José into the State’s ADU Capital.*

**San José, Calif.** – Today, San José Mayor Sam Liccardo, Councilmembers Magdalena Carrasco, Sylvia Arenas, and Pam Foley, and the City of San José announced a new online ADU portal and customer service efforts to help thousands more San José homeowners build backyard homes and other secondary housing units for rent. With the majority of San José’s 180,000 single-family homes qualifying for an ADU (accessory dwelling unit), this initiative will offer San José homeowners the opportunity to help combat the housing crisis, while also providing an additional source of income.

“We have teachers, nurses, college students, seniors, first responders, and so many others desperate to find an affordable place to rent. And at the same time, we have thousands of homeowners interested in creating affordable rental options. The city can and must act as a catalyst to speed up construction of these new units,” **Liccardo said.**

Liccardo called the backyard homes and other types of secondary units “the single fastest, most efficient path to addressing the city’s affordable housing crisis.”

The initiatives -- [which build on the Mayor, Council, and City’s existing efforts to enable ADU construction](#) -- are the first in a series of efforts to transform San José into California’s ADU capital:

- **ADU Online Portal:** The new online portal asks San José residents to sign up for information on how to build and permit Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and how to take advantage of ADU programs. The online portal will also allow homeowners to determine if their property qualifies for an ADU, and begin the application and permitting process. The online portal can be accessed at [www.sjbackyardhomes.com](http://www.sjbackyardhomes.com).
- **ADU Ally:** The City of San José’s Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement department has hired a full-time “ADU Ally” who will dedicate their efforts to assisting homeowners through the now streamlined ADU permitting process.
- **ADU Tuesdays:** The City’s Permit Center has launched an “express lane” for ADU project submittals, where every Tuesday homeowners and developers with qualifying projects can receive a building permit in as little as 90 minutes. Additionally, all ADU projects on Tuesdays are given priority, front-of-line service.
- **ADU Pre-Approved Master Plan Program:** Costs for ADUs can be lowered and permitting can be expedited when a homeowner uses an ADU design that has the City’s pre-approval. The [ADU Master Plan Program](#) works with ADU designers to pre-approve their design plans, which cost

less than custom designs. Homeowners who use these pre-approved designs can then have their plans reviewed through the Permit Center's Express Service, which can result more easily in same-day building approval.

- **New City of San José Website with a "Universal Checklist":** The City has redesigned its ADU landing page to ensure homeowners can access all critical information -- including a new universal checklist -- in one location.

Since 2016, the City has gone from processing 40 applications each year, to more than 40 applications each month -- a 1,500% increase. A recent poll also indicated that more than 30% of San José homeowners are interested in building a backyard home, or converting a garage or a part of their home for rental use.

"This is an opportunity to house our community in low-density neighborhoods adjacent to transit. If we can bring costs down, many more homeowners will take advantage of this program, helping us put more roofs over our families' heads," **said Councilmember Magdalena Carrasco.**

"These administrative improvements will help make it easier for our seniors to age-in-place, our millennials in search of less burdensome rent, and our middle-class families needing an extra income. We need to make the ADU permitting process absolutely seamless," **said Councilmember Pam Foley.**

"An ADU is a small home that must meet the zoning code and building codes, and those regulations are not something we expect the average homeowner to understand, so we are providing services and staff to help applicants through the process," **said Rosalynn Hughey, the director of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement.** "I'm particularly excited that we now have ADU Ally as a personal guide to our ADU applicants."

The new services are already being met with enthusiasm. **Brian Lam, an ADU designer** with All Phase Construction, Inc., and who has worked in several South Bay cities, recently took a project through the Express Service offered on ADU Tuesdays.

"San José's new Express Service for ADUs is both fast and fantastic. I walked in with my plans and walked out with the building approval in less than two hours. This is what ADU applicants need to help get the building permit quickly," **said Lam.**

The new online portal was built with residents and builders like Lam in mind, to further speed up and ease the permitting process.

"We need to get more information to interested homeowners and also get a better understanding of how many homeowners are interested in building ADUs," **Liccardo said.** "The interest is there to build new affordable rental housing, now we need to remove the friction points and speed up the process." The Mayor, Councilmembers, and City Staff were on hand today in the Permit Center at City Hall to greet homeowners interested in an ADU, and to help direct them to the right city staff. Mayor Liccardo indicated he planned to regularly monitor the progress personally.

For more information, please visit: [www.sjbackyardhomes.com](http://www.sjbackyardhomes.com)

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