



**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA
PLANNING COMMISSION**

**AGENDA
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, JULY 14, 2026 AT 6:30 P.M.**

**AMEDEE O. "DICK" RICHARDS JR. COUNCIL CHAMBERS
1424 MISSION STREET, SOUTH PASADENA, CA 91030**

South Pasadena Planning Commission Statement of Civility

As your appointed governing board we will treat each other, members of the public, and city employees with patience, civility and courtesy as a model of the same behavior we wish to reflect in South Pasadena for the conduct of all city business and community participation. The decisions made tonight will be for the benefit of the South Pasadena community and not for personal gain.

NOTICE ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & ACCESSIBILITY

The South Pasadena Planning Commission Meeting will be conducted in-person from the Amedee O. "Dick" Richards, Jr. Council Chambers, located at 1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena, CA 91030.

The Meeting will be available:

- In Person – Council Chambers, 1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena
- Via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83530439651> **Meeting ID: 8353 043 9651**

To maximize public safety while still maintaining transparency and public access, members of the public can observe the meeting via Zoom in the following methods below.

- Go to the Zoom website, <https://Zoom.us/join> and enter the Zoom meeting information; or
- Click on the following unique Zoom meeting link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83530439651>

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Amitabh Barthakur

ROLL CALL: Chair Amitabh Barthakur
Vice-Chair Jason Claypool
Commissioner Mark Gallatin
Commissioner Arnold Swanborn
Commissioner James Martin
Commissioner Matthew Horton
Commissioner Joseph Williams
Youth Commissioner Batia Lou

COUNCIL LIAISON: Mayor Sheila Rossi

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Majority vote of the Commission to proceed with Commission business.

DISCLOSURE OF SITE VISITS AND EX-PARTE CONTACTS

Disclosure by Commissioners of site visits and ex-parte contact for items on the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT GUIDELINES (Public Comments are limited to 3 minutes)

The Planning Commission welcomes public input. If you would like to comment on an agenda item, members of the public may participate by one of the following options:

Option 1:

Participate in-person at the Council Chambers, 1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena.

Option 2:

Participants will be able to “raise their hand” using the Zoom icon during the meeting, and they will have their microphone un-muted during comment portions of the agenda to speak for up to 3 minutes per item.

Option 3:

Email public comment(s) to PlanningComments@southpasadenaca.gov. Public Comments received in writing will not be read aloud at the meeting, but will be part of the meeting record. Written public comments will be uploaded online for public viewing under Additional Documents. There is no word limit on emailed Public Comment(s). Please make sure to indicate:

- 1) Name (optional), and
- 2) Agenda item you are submitting public comment on, and
- 3) Submit by no later than 12:00 p.m., on the day of the Planning Commission meeting.

NOTE: Pursuant to State law, the Planning Commission may not discuss or take action on issues not on the meeting agenda, except that members of the Planning Commission or staff may briefly respond to statements made or questions posed by persons exercising public testimony rights (Government Code Section 54954.2). Staff may be asked to follow up on such items.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Public Comment – General (Non-Agenda Items)

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS

2. Minutes from the Special Meeting of May 19, 2026

DISCUSSION

3. Discussion and Direction Regarding Planning Commission Chair Review Process

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission receive this report, discuss the current Chair Review process, and provide direction on potential process improvements to facilitate timely and efficient review of Chair Design Review applications while maintaining high-quality design review.

4. Consideration of dissolving the existing Planning Commission Objective Design Standards (ODS)/Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ad Hoc Subcommittee and establishing a new planning commission ADU Ad Hoc Subcommittee

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission:

1. Dissolve the existing Objective Design Standards (ODS)/Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ad Hoc Subcommittee; and
2. Establish a new two-member Planning Commission ADU Ad Hoc Subcommittee to continue working with the consultant through completion of the Pre-Approved ADU Program.

5. Discuss and provide feedback on three proposed Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) floor plans, amenities and exterior features

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission:

1. Receive and file the presentation and staff report; and
2. Provide final comments and feedback on the proposed pre-reviewed ADU floor plans, amenities and exterior features, as appropriate.

ADMINISTRATION

6. Comments from City Council Liaison

7. Comments from Subcommittees

8. Comments from Planning Commissioners

9. Comments from Staff

ADJOURNMENT

10. Adjourn to the Regular Planning Commission meeting scheduled for August 11, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO AGENDA DOCUMENTS AND BROADCASTING OF MEETINGS

Planning Commission meeting agenda packets are available online at the City website:

<https://www.southpasadenaca.gov/Your-Government/Boards-Commissions/Planning-Commission>

AGENDA NOTIFICATION SUBSCRIPTION

Individuals can be placed on an email notification list to receive forthcoming agendas by emailing CityClerk@southpasadenaca.gov or calling the City Clerk's Division at (626) 403-7230.

ACCOMMODATIONS



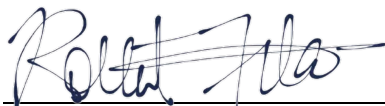
The City of South Pasadena wishes to make all of its public meetings accessible to the public. If special assistance is needed to participate in this meeting, please

contact the City Clerk's Division at (626) 403-7230. Upon request, this agenda will be made available in appropriate alternative formats to persons with disabilities. Notification at least 48 hours prior to the meeting will assist staff in assuring that reasonable arrangements can be made to provide accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title II).

I declare under penalty of perjury that I posted this notice of agenda on the bulletin board in the courtyard of City Hall at 1414 Mission Street, South Pasadena, CA 91030, and on the City's website as required by law.

7/9/2026

Date



Robert (Dean) Flores, Senior Planner



DRAFT

**CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA
Planning Commission
Special Meeting Minutes**

**May 19, 2026, 6:30 PM
Amedee O. "Dick" Richards Jr. Council Chambers
1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena, CA 91030**

CALL TO ORDER

A Special Meeting of the South Pasadena Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Amitabh Barthakur on Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 6:32 p.m. The meeting was held at 1424 Mission Street, South Pasadena, California.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Amitabh Barthakur
Vice-Chair: Jason Claypool
Commissioners: Mark Gallatin, Matthew Horton, James Martin,
Joseph Williams

Youth Commissioner: Batia Lou

City Staff

Present: Gabrielle Janssens, Esq., Special Counsel
Erika Ramirez, Community Development Department Director
Jasmin Kim, Planning Manager
Robert (Dean) Flores, Senior Planner
Stephen Peterson, Senior Planner
Michael Donovan, Associate Planner
Lillian Estrada, Administrative Secretary

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Barthakur recommended reordering the Agenda with Item 2 moved to the last Item.

Approved, 6-0.

DISCLOSURE OF SITE VISITS AND EX-PARTE CONTACTS

Commissioners Gallatin, Martin, and Vice-Chair Claypool visited the site for Item 3, and Vice-Chair Claypool spoke with community members regarding Item 2.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Public Comment – General (Non-Agenda Items)

None.

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

3. **Project No. CUP25-0004** – a request for approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow an existing 121-space surface parking lot to operate as a stand-alone public pay parking facility at 1051 Mission Street (APN: 5315-008-048) and to make a determination of exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Section 15301, Class 21 (Existing Facilities).

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission adopt a Resolution taking the following action(s):

1. Finding the Project exempt under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15301 (Existing Facilities); and
2. Approving Project No. CUP25-0004, subject to Conditions of Approval.

Staff Presentation:

Senior Planner Stephen Peterson provided the background and history of the Project. CJ Keeley from Ganji Architects and Matthew Ganji, one of the property owners, were available for questions.

Questions for Staff:

The Commissioners inquired about police enforcement between 2:00 am and 6:00 am; whether any of the revenue would go to the City; clarification regarding staffing of the lot; a public comment regarding future development of the site; and whether the lot owner would provide additional handicap spaces facing Mission Street for better accessibility in addition to the six (6) spaces required. He also remarked about access to the building from the parking lot.

Applicant Presentation:

None. However, Ms. Keeley and Mr. Gangi were available for questions. Mr. Gangi remarked that he is the property manager on the site.

Questions for Applicant:

The Commissioners inquired about accommodations for the Farmers' Market; pedestrian gates and access; enforcement of ingress and egress; signage and QR code; the operations – possibly having an agreement with the tenants on site, the general fee to park in a spot per hour; and how often the rates are re-evaluated.

Mr. Gangi remarked that Ever Park is contracted to serve as the parking operations manager and that they wanted to offer a fair rate for the community and for the tenants.

Public Comments:

Sally Kilby, a resident of Golden Oaks Apartments adjacent to the lot, expressed concern about traffic congestion on Diamond Avenue due to the increase in music venues and businesses and requested that all ingress and egress be from Fairview Avenue.

Rhoda Limbacher, a resident of 1013 Mission Street, spoke on behalf of the residents and expressed concerns about overnight parking access.

Tucker Nelson, a resident, requested adding a condition requiring access for wheelchair users on all four sides of the lot and improved pedestrian access.

Eric Aguilar Jensen, a resident of 1013 Mission Street, expressed concern about parking accommodations for overflow parking for his building and discussed the need for more and better lighting. He appreciated the owner's willingness to work with the tenants and make parking available to them.

Josh Albrektson (via Zoom), a resident, raised concerns about the potential for all-residential developments without any commercial elements on Mission Street.

Commissioner Discussion:

The Commissioners engaged in a robust discussion regarding allowing operation under a CUP. Concerns were raised about traffic impacts, particularly on Diamond Avenue, and the need for better pedestrian access. Commissioners debated the Conditions of Approval, including adding conditions for monthly reports and public comments and a six-month progress report; the addition of two (2) handicap parking spaces on Mission Street; limiting egress to Fairview Avenue; and ensuring adequate lighting. The Applicant agreed to provide additional information on traffic impacts and operational details.

The Commissioners inquired about the site potentially being developed with only housing and no commercial component on Mission Street, and whether the site is subject to SB 79. Special Counsel Gabrielle Janssens, a Partner with the law firm Goldfarb and Lipman, LLP, introduced herself and addressed this issue.

The Commissioners expressed frustration that the downtown area really needs a parking strategy now that there is more development. The Commissioners are looking for two things – any impact based on the egress and ingress of the parking lot and the utilization on the surrounding streets, particularly Diamond Avenue, and

reviewing the impact on the surrounding streets because of that. Secondly, clarity on the operational characteristics of the lot and how it will be secured, whether overnight parking versus not, and how to ensure the lot is safe and secure.

The Commission requested a six-month progress report and a review of the CUP for potential modifications.

Commission Motion and Action:

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER GALLATIN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MARTIN, to continue this Item to the next regularly scheduled meeting and a request for Staff to come back with additional information necessary for the Commission to make the required findings.

COMMISSIONER GALLATIN WITHDREW his motion.

MOVED BY VICE-CHAIR CLAYPOOL, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GALLATIN, to approve Project Number CUP25-0004, subject to the Conditions of Approval, as edited below, and a required six (6) month progress report, and to find the Project exempt under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Existing Facilities).

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL NO. 1.

This approval and all rights hereunder shall terminate within six (6) months of the effective date of approval by the Planning Commission unless otherwise conditioned and/or unless a Building Permit is issued and substantial construction has begun, or the use is established, or action is taken.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL NO. 3.

If no planning or building permit applications for redevelopment of the site have been submitted to the Community Development Department within six (6) months of the date of Planning Commission approval of the CUP, the CUP will be returned to the Planning Commission for review and potential reconsideration.

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL NO. 7.

All six (6) existing and two (2) additional (and consideration of additional) accessible parking spaces and their accessible routes to the respective building entrances shall be maintained.

AYES:	Gallatin, Horton, Martin, Williams, Claypool, Barthakur
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	Swanborn
ABSTAINED:	None

Motion carried, 6-0.

MEETING RECESSED: 8:47 pm
MEETING RESUMED: 9:00 pm

DISCUSSION

4. Feedback on Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Pre-Approved Program

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission take the following action(s):

1. Receive and file the presentation and Staff Report; and
2. Provide feedback on the three (3) proposed ADU sizes, configurations, and architectural styles, as appropriate.

Staff Report:

Associate Planner Michael Donovan gave a brief history and background regarding the ADU Pre-approved Program and introduced the City's Consultant from the nonprofit Urban Planning and Architecture Organization Office of: Office tasked with creating an Accessory Dwelling (ADU) Program to meet the requirements of California Assembly Bill 1332, requiring local agencies to have an established ADU program to help applicants through the permitting process. The program aims to streamline the permitting process and provide a guidebook for applicants.

Elizabeth Temmi, Executive Director of Office of: Office, an architecture, urban planning, and policy non-profit organization, introduced herself and her team and provided background on the Project.

Olivia Arena, Staff member of Office of: Office, outlined the research process, including a comprehensive review of permitted ADUs and field observations.

Questions for Staff and Consultants:

The Commissioners inquired about the sizes and styles of the ADUs, details of the loft example, limiting the choices to specific square footages, the specificity of the types of ADUs, the doors and windows, and glazing, etc., and the budget for the prototypes, among other inquiries.

The Consultants addressed the Commissioners' questions and concerns.

Commissioner Discussion:

The Commissioners discussed the pre-approved ADU program presented by the Consultants, reviewing the recommended sizes and styles (Spanish, Craftsman,

Modern) to accommodate various user needs and architectural styles. The Commissioners provided feedback on the proposed plans, emphasizing the need for flexibility and affordability and the importance of clear communication and collaboration between the Planning Department, homeowners, and architects.

The Commissioners thanked the Consultants and expressed appreciation for their hard work.

Commission Action:

The Commissioners received and filed the presentation and Staff Report.

5. Planning Commissioner Subcommittee

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission take the following action(s):

1. Discuss and consider adding one additional Commissioner to the ODS and ADU Program Subcommittees.

Commissioner Discussion:

Chair Barthakur discussed the need to add a third member to the ODS and ADU Program Subcommittees. Commissioner Martin explained the roles of the two existing Committee members (himself and Commissioner Swanborn) who are serving on both Subcommittees, and the intention to add a third person for additional oversight. Commissioner Horton volunteered to join the Subcommittees.

Commissioner Action:

MOVED BY VICE-CHAIR CLAYPOOL, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MARTIN, to add Commissioner Horton to the ADU Program and Objective Design Standards Subcommittees.

AYES: Gallatin, Horton, Martin, Williams, Claypool, Barthakur
NOES: None
ABSENT: Swanborn
ABSTAINED: None

Motion carried, 6-0.

2. **CONTINUED ITEM – Project No. ZTA26-0003/ZTM26-0002/SPA26-0002** – Consideration to adopt a Resolution recommending the City Council adopt an Ordinance to amend Chapter 36 (Zoning) of the South Pasadena Municipal Code (SPMC) and to the South Pasadena Zoning Map to delay effectuation and exclude certain individual sites and to adopt a transit-oriented development alternative plan pursuant to Senate Bill 79 (Government Code Sections 65912.155 et seq.), and

making a determination of exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This item was originally scheduled for the May 12, 2026 Regular Planning Commission meeting, but was continued to the May 19, 2026 Special Planning Commission meeting.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission take the following action(s):

1. Open the Public Hearing, take testimony from anyone wishing to speak; and
2. Adopt a motion continuing the item to the Planning Commission meeting of May 19, 2026 at 6:30 pm.¹

Four Commissioners gave conflict statements: Commissioners Williams, Horton, and Vice-Chair Claypool confirmed they have no conflicts of interest. Commissioner Martin recused himself from this Item.

Staff Presentation:

Director Ramirez explained the requirements and limitations of SB 79 (which takes effect July 1), including the new maximum density and height limits. She presented the goals of the discussion: to receive an overview of SB 79, review implementation options and select a recommendation for City Council. Three (3) options for implementation were presented: delayed effectuation of certain sites, alternative plans to minimize impacts on residential zones, and alternative plans to increase density in specific areas. Director Ramirez provided a detailed explanation of each option, including the impact on different zones and the rationale behind the proposed changes.

Director Ramirez introduced Special Counsel Gabrielle Janssens of Goldfarb and Litman, LLP (on the dais) and Consultant Zachary Field with MIG (via Zoom), who assisted with the calculations.

Questions for Staff:

The Commissioners inquired if a fiscal analysis had been completed after a review of the increased valuation of the proposed City properties; details of the state density bonus law and the new density allowed under SB 79; and clarification of the detailed information in several tables on various issues.

The Commissioners expressed appreciation for all the hard work by the Staff, Consultants, and legal counsel on the Staff Report.

¹ Staff recommendation was to adopt a Resolution.

Public Comments:

Josh Albrektson (via Zoom), a resident, suggested requiring commercial development on Mission Street and Fair Oaks Avenue for all projects.

Commissioner Discussion:

The Commissioners engaged in a robust and thorough discussion regarding the implementation of SP 79 in South Pasadena. The Commissioners also considered the impact of SB 79 on historic properties and the potential for density bonuses. The Commissioners debated several suggestions and provided feedback on the SB 79 scenarios presented.

Public comments suggested requiring commercial zoning on major streets and questioned the zero density for churches.

The Commissioners raised concerns about the conflict with residential-only projects under SB 79 and asked Staff and Legal to look into whether the developer has the burden of proof of demonstrating that it is infeasible to require commercial zoning on major streets.

MEETING RECESSED: 12:15 am

MEETING RESUMED: 12:30 am

The Commissioners continued their in-depth discussion.

The Commissioners deferred the discussion regarding the shopfront overlay revisions for further review and will discuss it as a separate item.

Special Counsel Janssens summarized the proposed recommendations as follows:

Changes to the densities:

Modifications to Option C: the Downtown Specific Plan MUC will increase from 50 to 70 dwelling units per acre; the Downtown Specific Plan Historic District zoned MUC will be at 70 dwelling units per acre, and MUC 50 will be at 50 dwelling units per acre. Housing opportunity sites will be increased to the maximum possible, and based on where the numbers fall, ideally below 152 dwelling units per acre. RH will increase from 50 to 65 dwelling units per acre. However, if the numbers do not work, then it would be okay to go up to 70 dwelling units per acre. The Downtown Specific Plan housing sites, the Fair Oaks housing sites, and the Fair Oaks Corridor would all have the same density as the DTSP housing sites.

Changes to the development standards:

The development standards match the Mixed-Use Corridor of the Downtown Specific Plan for TOD 1 Overlay; for TOD 2 – the RS, AM, RE, RM and RH zones

will use the standards that are in the RH standards in the Zoning Code; the MU Overlay and Housing Opportunity sites will have the standards that are used for the Mixed-Use Overlay.

Commission Motion and Action:

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER HORTON, SECONDED BY CHAIR BARTHAKUR, to adopt a Resolution recommending the City Council (a) adopt an Ordinance that will delay effectuation and exclude only individual sites designated as historic on a local register, and (b) adopt an Ordinance to adopt a corresponding transit-oriented development plan (TOD Alternative Plan) by amending Article Two, Division 36.240 of Chapter 36 Zoning of the South Pasadena Municipal Code and the Zoning Map, as amended, and (c) adopt a Resolution to amend the Downtown Specific Plan to reflect the Transit-Oriented Development Plan (TOD Alternative Plan), as amended with the changes summarized herein by the City's Special Counsel.

AYES:	Gallatin, Horton, Williams, Claypool, Barthakur
NOES:	None
ABSENT:	Swanborn
ABSTAINED:	None

Motion carried, 5-0.

ADMINISTRATION

6. Comments from City Council Liaison

None.

7. Comments from Subcommittees

None.

8. Comments from Planning Commissioners

None.

9. Comments from Staff

None.

ADJOURNMENT

10. Adjournment to the Regular Planning Commission meeting scheduled for Tuesday, June 9, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.

There being no further matters, Chair Barthakur adjourned the meeting at 1:00 a.m. on May 20, 2026.

Amitabh Barthakur, Chair



Planning Commission Agenda Report

ITEM NO. 3

DATE: July, 2026

FROM: Erika Ramirez, Community Development Director

**SUBJECT: DISCUSSION AND DIRECTION REGARDING CHAIR REVIEW
PROCESS**

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Planning Commission receive this report, discuss the current Chair Review process, and provide direction on potential process improvements to facilitate timely and efficient review of Chair Design Review applications while maintaining high-quality design review.

ANALYSIS

Chair Design Review provides an administrative process for reviewing certain design review applications without the need for a public hearing. This process allows projects meeting specific criteria to receive design review while reducing processing time compared to applications requiring Planning Commission review. As application volumes have increased and statutory processing timelines continue to apply, staff is seeking Planning Commission feedback on whether refinements to the current Chair Review process could improve efficiency while preserving the quality and consistency of design review.

Pursuant to South Pasadena Municipal Code (SPMC) Section 36.400.020 The Planning Commission Chair ("Chair") has review authority over specific Design Review applications. The project types subject to a Chair review are:

- Additions to commercial and industrial existing structures or any new such structures between 500 and 3,000 square feet in floor area; exterior modifications that would result in a change of architectural style of the building.
- Exterior modifications to existing residential structures that propose to substantially change the architectural style of the structure through changes in materials including, but not limited to, new siding type, windows, roofing, front porch posts and balcony railings and other features characteristic of an architectural style that the existing structure does not reflect.

- Additions to existing residential structures of more than 500 square feet in area, or more than 25 percent of the existing structure, whichever is less, for an outdoor structure or a habitable space. Developments that require a Minor Hillside Development Permit with more than 500 square feet in area.
- Freestanding/monument signs in excess of three feet in height (see SPMC 36.320.080).
- Two-story ADUs in front of the primary dwelling (see SPMC 36.350.200(E)(1)(d)).

In accordance with SPMC Section 36.410.040D.2, the Planning Commission Chair (“Chair”) or a Planning Commissioner delegated by the Chair who is a state-registered architect or retired from that status shall be responsible for Chair Design Review applications.

The Chair shall form a review committee with a City planner(s) appointed by the Director to review the project design. The committee shall decide on the project’s approval without a public hearing.

The current process in which Chair Design Review applications are reviewed includes the following steps:

1. Staff takes in the application and fee.
2. Staff performs a completeness review of the application.
3. Once the application is deemed completed, staff forwards a deemed complete letter and application materials to the Chair for review or assignment.
4. Staff coordinates review comments and communication between the Chair (or designee) and the applicant until the design review process is complete.
5. Staff then stamps the plans and provides the stamped approved plans to the applicant.

Although Chair Review does not require a public hearing, it remains a discretionary entitlement subject to the Permit Streamlining Act. Accordingly, statutory timelines apply to both application completeness determinations and final action on the application. Therefore, there are certain time frames in which specific determinations must be made.

These are:

1. An application has to be deemed incomplete or complete within 30 days.
2. Once an application is deemed complete and determined to be exempt from CEQA, action on the application must occur within 60 days.

The most common Chair Review applications involve exterior modifications to existing residential structures and additions to existing residential structures.

As staff continues to administer Chair Design Review applications, opportunities have been identified to improve the efficiency and predictability of the review process while continuing to provide thoughtful design review and maintaining compliance with statutory processing requirements. Staff is requesting Commission feedback on the following discussion topics:

1. Are the current thresholds for Chair Review appropriate, or should additional project types be reviewed administratively or by the full Commission?
2. Are the current qualifications for serving as the Chair Review designee appropriate, or should additional Commissioners be eligible to conduct Chair Reviews?
3. Would establishing a regular day and time for Chair Reviews improve scheduling and provide applicants with greater predictability?
4. Could use of the City's electronic permitting system improve communication, document review, and tracking of Chair Review applications?
5. Are there other procedural improvements the Commission would recommend that could enhance efficiency while maintaining the quality and consistency of design review?

The purpose of this discussion is to evaluate whether adjustments to the Chair Review process could improve administrative efficiency, provide greater predictability for applicants, and ensure continued compliance with statutory processing timelines while preserving the Planning Commission's expectations for design quality. Staff will use the Commission's feedback to evaluate whether administrative process changes or future Municipal Code amendments should be considered.



Planning Commission Agenda Report

ITEM NO. 4

DATE: July 14, 2026

FROM: Erika Ramirez, Community Development Director

SUBJECT: **CONSIDERATION OF DISSOLVING THE EXISTING PLANNING COMMISSION OBJECTIVE DESIGN STANDARDS (ODS)/ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (ADU) AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEE AND ESTABLISHING A NEW PLANNING COMMISSION ADU AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEE**

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Planning Commission:

1. Dissolve the existing Objective Design Standards (ODS)/Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ad Hoc Subcommittee; and
2. Establish a new two-member Planning Commission ADU Ad Hoc Subcommittee to continue working with the consultant through completion of the Pre-Approved ADU Program.

ANALYSIS

On July 8, 2025, the Planning Commission established a two-member ad hoc subcommittee to participate in the consultant selection process and assist staff throughout the development of both the Objective Design Standards (ODS) project and the Pre-Approved Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Program. On May 19, 2026, the Planning Commission expanded the subcommittee to three members to continue providing input on both projects. The subcommittee has since met regularly with the respective consultant teams to review project progress and provide feedback.

On July 7, 2026, the City Council established an Objective Design Standards (ODS) Subcommittee consisting of three Planning Commissioners and two City Council Members. The Council subcommittee will provide ongoing policy direction and coordination for the ODS project. As a result, the existing Planning Commission ad hoc subcommittee is no longer needed for ODS-related work.

The Pre-Approved ADU Program remains under development and will continue through completion of the final plans, guidebook, and program materials. Accordingly, staff recommends dissolving the existing combined ODS/ADU subcommittee and establishing a new Planning Commission ADU Ad Hoc Subcommittee made up of the three existing

subcommittee members to continue working with staff and the consultant through completion of the ADU Program.

The creation of a dedicated ADU subcommittee will maintain Planning Commission participation during the final stages of the project while avoiding duplication of effort on the ODS project. Staff will continue to present project updates and final recommendations to the full Planning Commission at publicly noticed meetings for review and consideration prior to project completion.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The proposed action is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5), as it is an organizational and administrative activity that will not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

PUBLIC NOTICING

The public was made aware that this item was to be considered at a public hearing by virtue of its inclusion on the legally publicly noticed agenda, as well as the posting of the same agenda and reports on the City's website.

DATE: July 14, 2026

FROM: Erika Ramirez, Community Development Director
Michael Donovan, Associate Planner

**SUBJECT: DISCUSS AND PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON THREE PROPOSED
ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (ADU) FLOOR PLANS,
AMENITIES AND EXTERIOR FEATURES**

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Planning Commission:

1. Receive and file the presentation and staff report; and
2. Provide final comments and feedback on the proposed pre-reviewed ADU floor plans, amenities and exterior features, as appropriate.

Executive Summary

The City retained the nonprofit urban planning and architecture organization Office Of: Office (OOO) on December 17, 2025, to develop a Pre-Reviewed Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Program that will provide residents with a library of pre-reviewed ADU plans, reducing design costs and streamlining the permitting process. As part of the program, OOO is also preparing an ADU Guidebook and related educational materials.

Following direction from the Planning Commission at its Special Meeting on May 19, 2026, and additional community outreach, OOO has prepared preliminary floor plans and architectural concepts for the three proposed pre-reviewed ADU models. The purpose of this agenda item is to obtain the Planning Commission's final comments on the floor plans, layouts, amenities, and exterior design features before OOO proceeds with preparation of the construction documents and technical plan sets required for the City's pre-reviewed ADU library.

Background

Assembly Bill (AB) 1332 requires local agencies to establish a program that includes a library of pre-reviewed plans for detached accessory dwelling units (ADUs). The intent is to reduce design and permitting costs while streamlining the approval process for homeowners. Although pre-reviewed plans simplify plan review, applicants must still

obtain building permits and submit site-specific information, including grading, utility connections, easements, setbacks, height compliance, and other project-specific requirements.

Project milestones completed to date include:

- On July 8, 2025, the Planning Commission formed a subcommittee to serve on a selection committee and to participate in the development process of the ADU Program.
- On September 10, 2025, the City issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) seeking qualified firms to prepare an ADU Pre-Approved Program.
- On December 17, 2025, the City Council approved the subcommittee's recommendation to award a contract to Office Of: Office (OOO) to create a Pre-Approved ADU Program.
- On March 9, 2026, Office Of: Office (OOO) conducted a City Tour to analyze the existing stock of ADUs within the city and understand the neighborhood context.
- On March 19, 2026, OOO conducted a virtual focus group meeting for professionals, which included local contractors, architects, and designers.
- On March 26, 2026, OOO conducted an in-person focus group meeting for homeowners, which included homeowners, community members, and the general public.
- On May 19, 2026, at the Special Planning Commission meeting, OOO presented research activities, initial community feedback, and proposed ADU configurations and styles to the Planning Commission for review, questions, feedback, and initial approval. The three ADU types were presented, discussed, and approved.
- On July 4, 2026, OOO conducted community engagement and gathered interest in ADU programs at the July 4th Celebration.

Analysis

Office Of: Office (OOO) has presented a timeline consisting of seven tasks that will culminate at the end of September/early October; however, based on the desire to have additional Planning Commission feedback on the discussion items presented in this staff report the timeline has been adjusted to November. As part of Tasks 1, 2, 3, and 4, OOO has conducted data collection and research, a City tour, two focus group meetings, community engagement event, feedback on three ADU sizes, configurations, and architectural styles from the Planning Commission, and the preparation of pre-reviewed ADU floor plans. Following the Planning Commission's final comments and feedback on the pre-reviewed ADU floor plans, OOO will complete the final Pre-Approved ADU Plan Sets. Task 3 and 4 will conclude after the plan sets have been completed and OOO will continue with Task 5 which will include review and revisions to the city's ADU ordinance to be in compliance with state law.

As discussed in the May 19, 2026, Special Planning Commission meeting, as part of Task 2, OOO conducted a summary analysis of City's ADU permit data, qualitative observations of ADUs on a city-wide tour, gathered feedback from one focus group of professionals and one focus group of community residents, a comparative analysis of

similar Pre-Approved/Pre-Reviewed ADU Programs in California, and a review of the City's existing zoning code and design guidelines. With these data collection activities, OOO developed three guiding concepts for the Pre-Reviewed ADU Program:

1. Preserving South Pasadena Architectural Character,
2. Providing Flexibility and Accessible Use, and
3. Prioritizing Affordability.

Based on permit trends, community input, and Planning Commission direction, OOO developed three proposed pre-reviewed ADU models:

- **Cottage** – 700 square feet; one-story; one bedroom and one bathroom.
- **Loft** – 450 square feet; one-story; one bedroom and one bathroom.
- **Townhouse** – 1,200 square feet; two stories; two bedrooms and one-and-one-half bathrooms.

The proposed models are available in three architectural styles: Spanish/Colonial Revival, Craftsman, and Modern.

Following the May 19, 2026 Special Planning Commission meeting, OOO refined the plans and conducted additional outreach during the July 4 community celebration. Feedback continued to support designs that accommodate multigenerational living, rental opportunities, aging in place, and flexible living arrangements. Affordability, privacy, efficient layouts, and adaptable living spaces were consistently identified as priorities by community members.

The purpose of this agenda item is to obtain the Planning Commission's final design input before OOO begins preparing the construction documents for the City's pre-reviewed ADU library. Staff requests that the Commission focus its comments on:

- Floor plan layouts and functionality;
- Bedroom and bathroom configurations;
- Exterior architectural features and elevations;
- Building amenities; and
- Any remaining design refinements.

Following the Commission's review, OOO will incorporate the final direction into the construction drawings, complete the required structural, energy (Title 24), and engineering components, and initiate the City's interdisciplinary plan review process. The final pre-reviewed ADU plan library and supporting materials are anticipated to be completed in November 2026.

Fiscal Impact

City Council approved a budget enhancement that included \$100,000 for the ADU Program in the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Adopted Budget in account number 101-7010-7011-8170-000.

Environmental Analysis

The proposed action, which involves the review of recommended ADU prototypes, is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under the General Rule Exemption (CEQA Guidelines § 15061(b)(3)). The General Rule exemption applies

because it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility the review itself would have a significant effect on the environment.

Next Steps

Staff will incorporate the Planning Commission's feedback and complete Task 4 of the Pre-Reviewed ADU Program.

Attachments

Attachment No. 1 – OOO Presentation

Attachment No. 2 – ADU Floor Plans

Accessory Dwelling Unit Pre-Approved Program

Planning Commission Meeting

July 14, 2026



Agenda

Scope of Work

Key Learnings from Research

- Permitting Analysis, Program Comparison, Community Engagement
- Style Analysis

Proposed ADU Plans

- “Cottage”
- “Loft”
- “Townhouse”

Opportunity for Feedback



South Pasadena's Pre-Approved ADU Program

Scope: Produce three sets of Pre-Approved Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) plans with three architectural styles, representative of the character of South Pasadena housing styles — lowering the barriers for homeowners to build ADUs on their properties.

Completed Activities/Deliverables:

- Zoning/Design Guideline Memo, including an outline for the ADU Guidebook and proposal for (3) ADU Pre-Approved Plans and styles;
- Three Community Engagement Events, a homeowner focus group, professional focus group, and 4th of July Celebration;
- Three Draft Plans, including three style options per plan (Craftsman, Spanish Revival, Modern)

South Pasadena's Pre-Approved ADU Program

Goals: We are presenting design progress to the Planning Commission for feedback and approval on the three proposed plans, specifically:

- Plan layout
- Amenities
- Rough exterior of the ADUs

Context: *On May 19th Planning Commission approved the following size and types of ADUs: “Cottage” (1-bedroom, 1-bathroom), “Loft” (1-bedroom, 1-bathroom, loft), “Townhouse” (2-bedroom, 1.5-bathroom, 2-story). This meeting provides an opportunity to review the proposed plans for these three types.*

Key Learnings from Research

Designing for South Pasadena Community Members

Guiding Principles & Community Users



Senior Residents



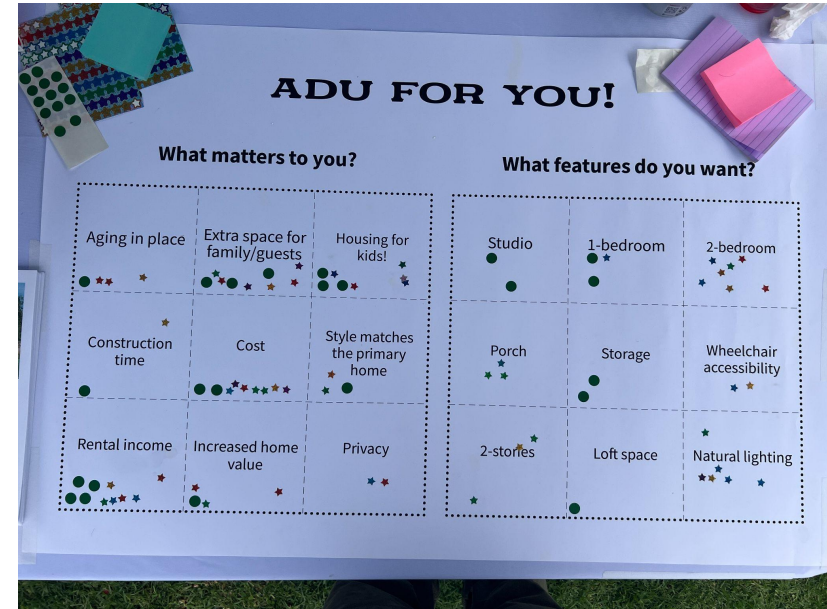
Large Families



Multi-Gen Families

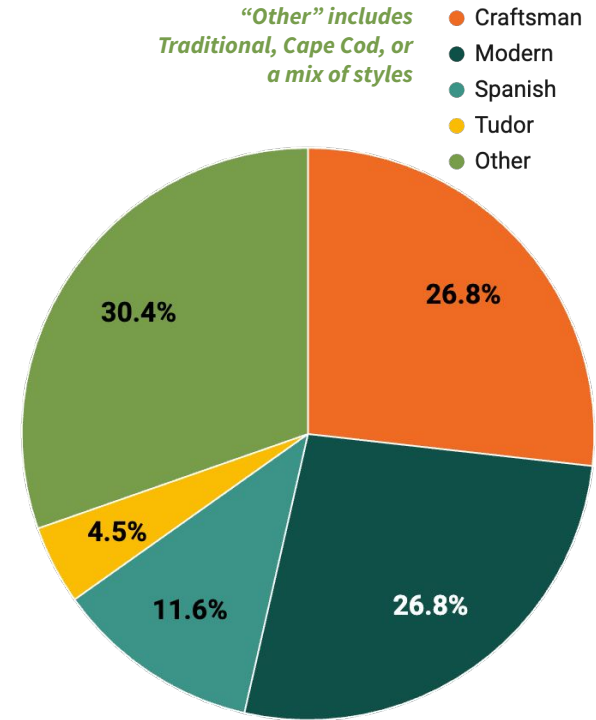
Key Learnings from Research - Type

- Community members want **flexible, adaptable** ADUs that can accommodate aging in place, growing or multigenerational families, or rental units.
- Two-Story ADUs** offer additional living space without sacrificing yards or trees.
- Most comparable programs in California have a **1-bedroom or 2-bedroom option**.
- Homeowners are **cost-sensitive**, and there is interest in a pre-approved plan that saves money and time.



Key Learnings from Research - Style

- OOO identified common architectural elements through a **review of existing South Pasadena documentation** (*South Pasadena Design Guidelines for ADU Development on Historic Properties*) and **qualitative observations** on our City Tour.
- Although there are a multiplicity of styles, the three selected styles are the **most prevalent** and incorporate **common design elements**.



Observations from the City Tour of approved ADUs.

FORM

Craftsman

Implements **triangle** shapes (gabled roofs) with a **square/rectangle** horizontal base.



Implements **triangle** shapes (pyramid and gabled roofs), as well as flat roofs with **stepped parapets**.



The base is horizontal with vertical volumes, with a **rectangle/square** profile.



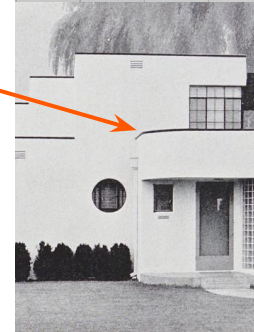
Spanish

Modern

Implements a mix of shapes, following a horizontal **rectangle** base with vertical volumes, and flat roofs.



Can include **round corners** and **pitched roofs**.





PORCHES

Craftsman



Implements **decorative trims**, vertical supports, and a mix of exterior finishes.



Spanish



Implements **arcs** or round corners.



Modern



Implements minimal, **thin lines**, either orthogonal or with round corners.



Porch

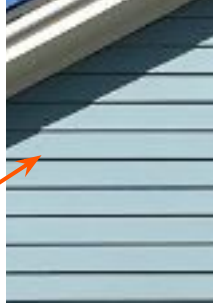
Stoop



MATERIALS

Craftsman

Implements **horizontal wood siding**, cedar shake or scallop siding, in **dark green, light blue, shell/white** or cream yellow tones.



Spanish

Implements **terracotta tiles** (roof and floors), and **textured stucco** in **shell/white** and cream tones.



Modern

Implements **stucco**, laminates, acrylic or plastic panels, and **brushed metal** details (frames or fixtures).





WINDOWS

Craftsman

Implements **single/ double hung** window types, with **square** and **rectangle** profiles.



Spanish

Implements **french windows** (casement and fixed) with vertical **rectangle** and **arch** profiles.



Modern

Implements walls of glass, **large picture windows** and **clerestory** with vertical and horizontal **rectangle** profiles.



Can include awning and pivot windows with **square** and **round** profiles.





TRIMS

Craftsman

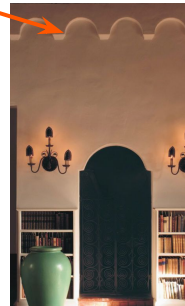
Implements a mix of **geometries** with flat profiles and **sturdy proportions**, emphasizing structural joints.

Doors and windows casings follow the style of the rest of the house's trims.



Spanish

Implements **stucco jambs** with **arch geometries**. **Ogee profiles** for decorative and structural supports (corbels).



Modern

Implements **fine lines** through railings, columns and fixtures.

Can include **contrasting band boards** and bold geometric profiles.





DOORS

Craftsman

Implements shaker panels, with **3 to 6** square/rectangle **glass panes**.

Can include **9-lite glass panel** doors.



Spanish

Implements panels and planks with **rectangle** and **arch** profiles.

Can include a **small glass pane** or a **barred window**.



Modern

Implements **flush** or **frameless** panels with **rectangle** profiles.

Can include **natural/ stained colors** or **bold mixed materials** and colors.





DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

Craftsman

Implements **ornamental trims**, varying in geometry and color, showcasing *craftsmanship*.



Implements textured plaster, **window awnings**, and **wrought iron** details (for windows and fixtures).



Can include exposed beams, niches, and talavera tiles.

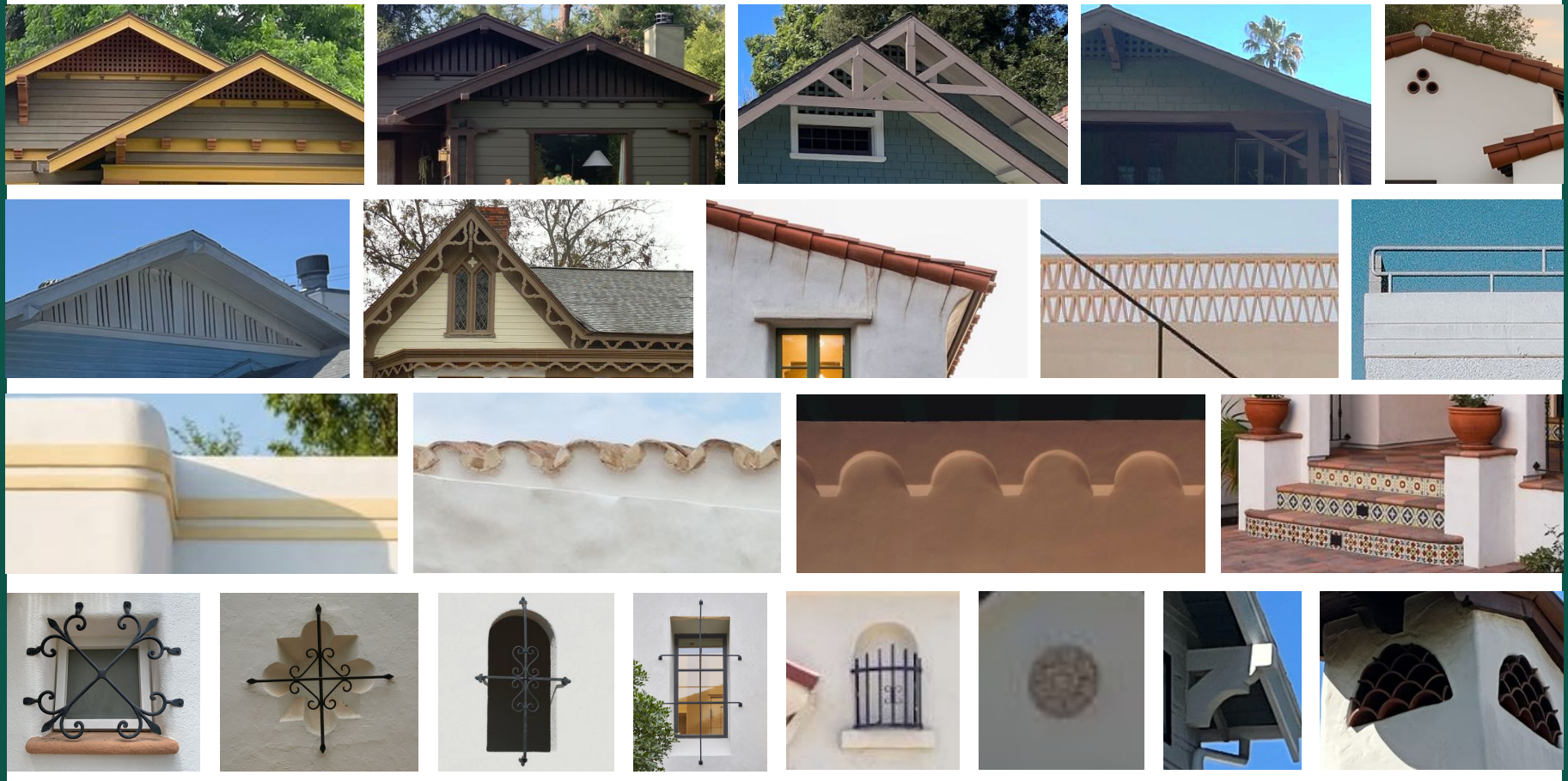


Spanish

Implements **bright colors** or **contrasting materials**, and thin line work with trims and fixtures.



Modern



Proposed ADU Plans

Proposed ADUs - Sizes & Typologies



Senior Residents

- “Cottage”** - 700 SF 1-Story, 1-bedroom, 1-bathroom, accessible
- A larger square footage and single story provides accessibility and flexible use.
 - Accommodates residents aging in place.



Large Families

- “Loft”** - 450 SF 1-story, 1-bedroom, 1-bathroom
- Typology lends itself to the high-pitched rooflines commonly found in South Pasadena.
 - A lofted unit or mezzanine can provide flexible space for families or added privacy.



Multi-Gen Families

- “Townhouse”** - 1200 SF 2-story, 2-bedroom, 1.5-bathroom
- Smaller footprint with two-stories preserves yard space.
 - Can accommodate larger families.

Proposed ADUs - Styles

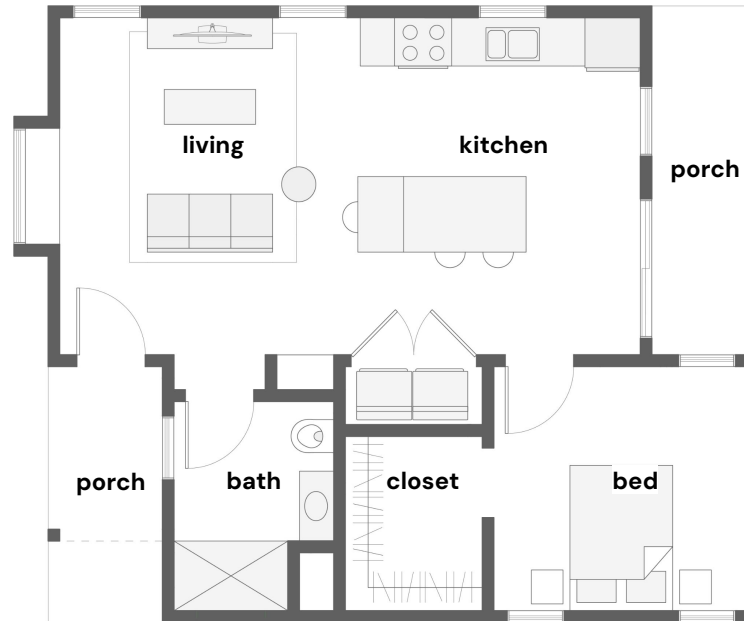


- **Craftsman**
- **Spanish Revival**
- **Modern**

The Cottage - 700 SF, 1-bed, 1-bath

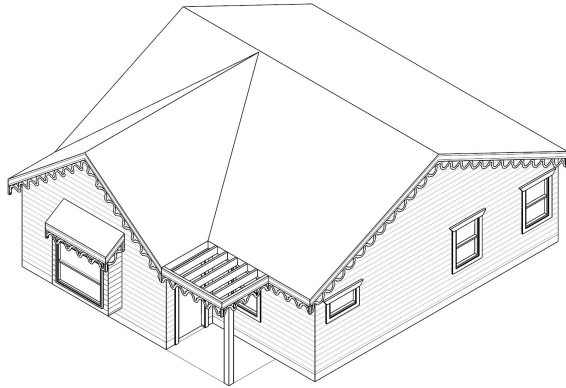
Design Description:

- Accessible Design, for residents aging in place
- Washer Dryer side-by-side
- All doors are 36"
- Layout governed by wheelchair turning radius
- Plan supports de-facto porches for covered entry and exit
- Window box reading nook

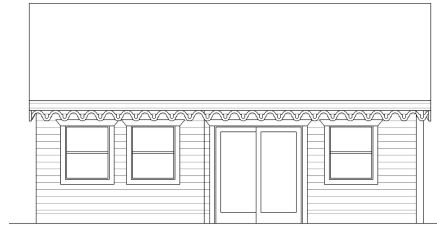
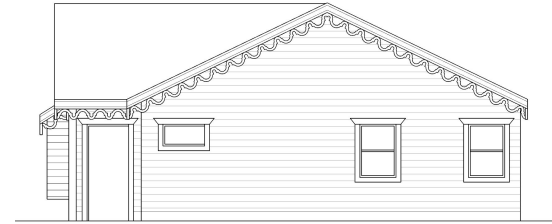
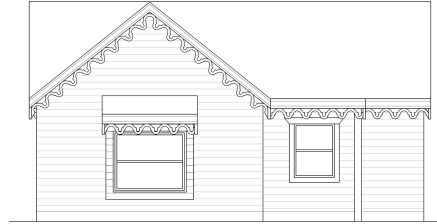


Ground Floor

The Cottage - Craftsman

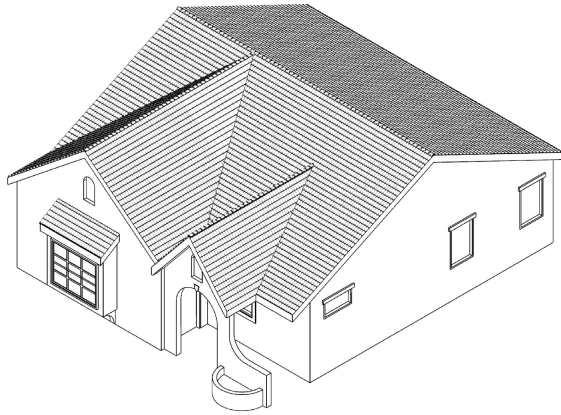


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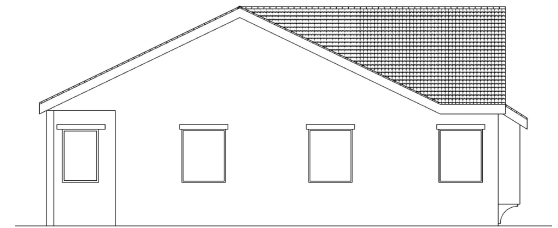
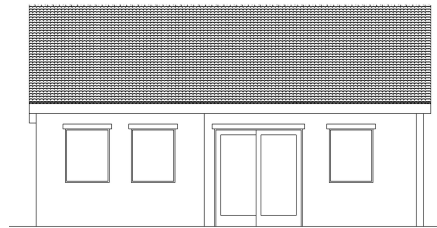
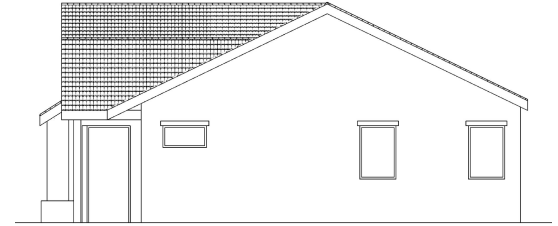


Elevations

The Cottage - Spanish

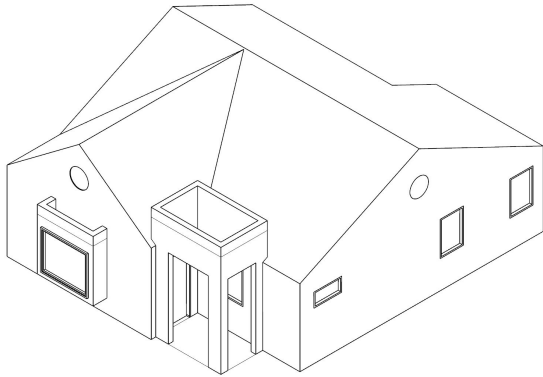


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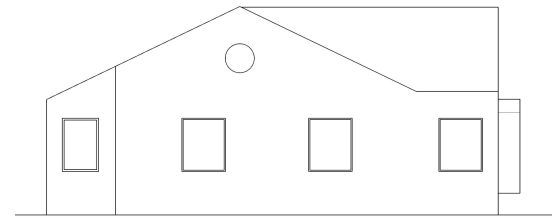
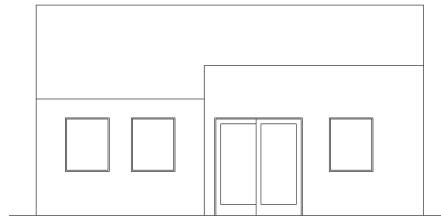
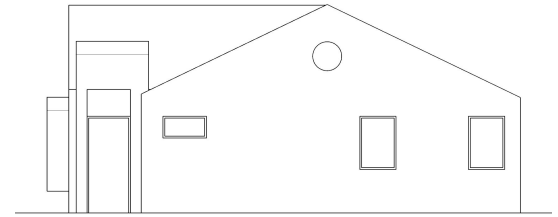
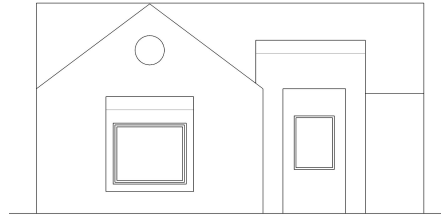


Elevations

The Cottage - Modern



3D

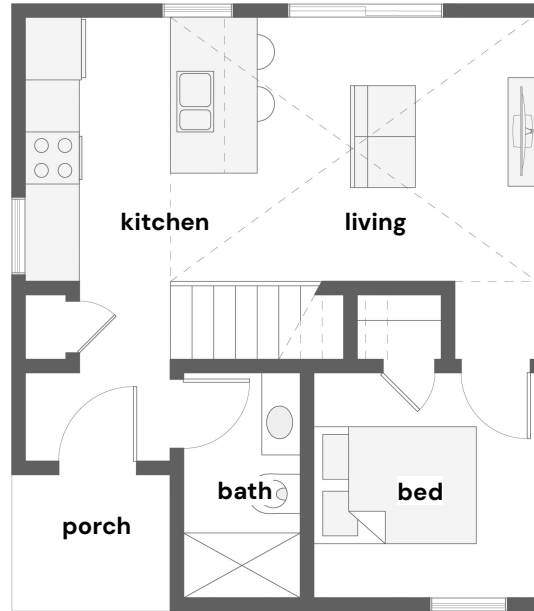


Elevations

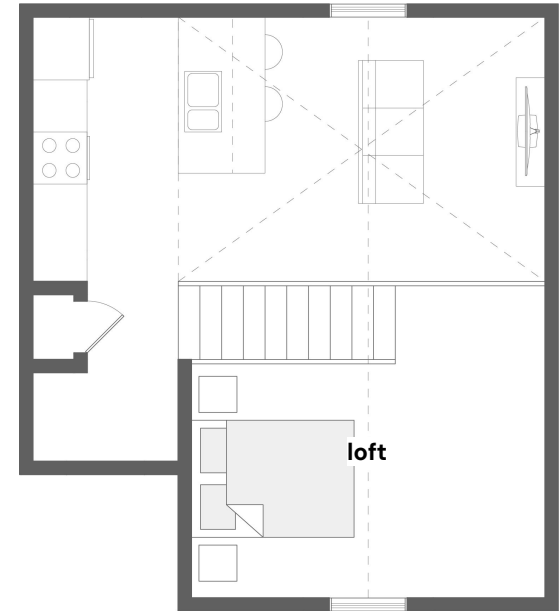
The Loft - 450 SF, 1-bed, 1-bath

Design Description:

- Economic footprint that has bonus loft space
 - Entry porch that is adaptive to different architectural styles
 - Flexible lofted space that accommodates a full-sized bed
 - Double height space in living room/kitchen
- *Note: lofted bed will not be shown in the final set of drawings.*

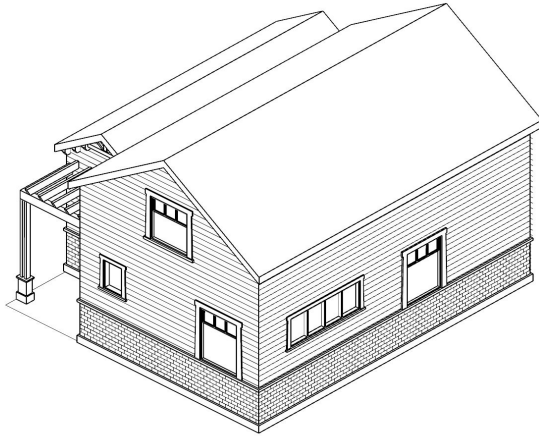


Ground Floor

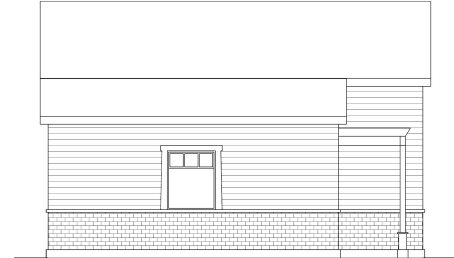
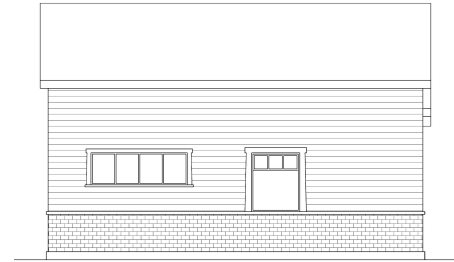


Loft

The Loft - Craftsman

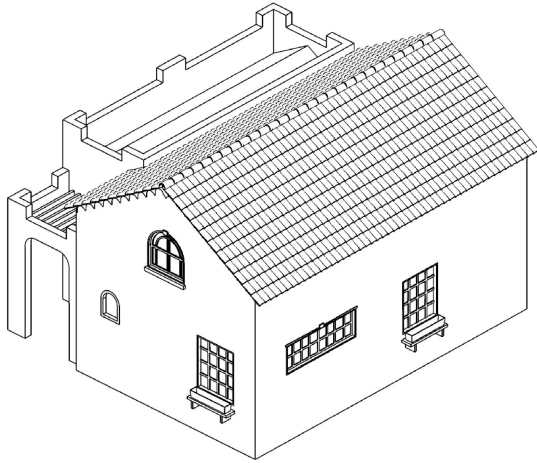


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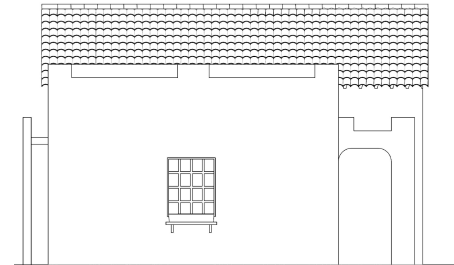
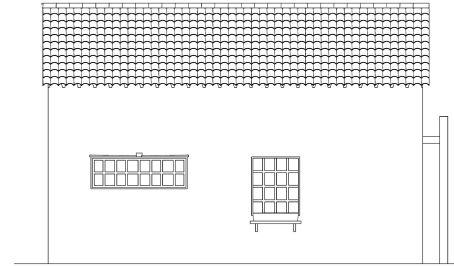
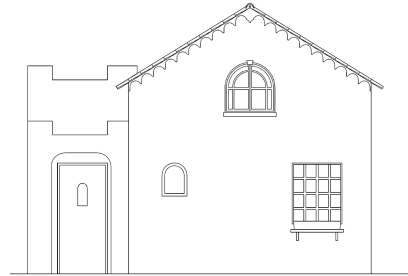


Elevations

The Loft - Spanish

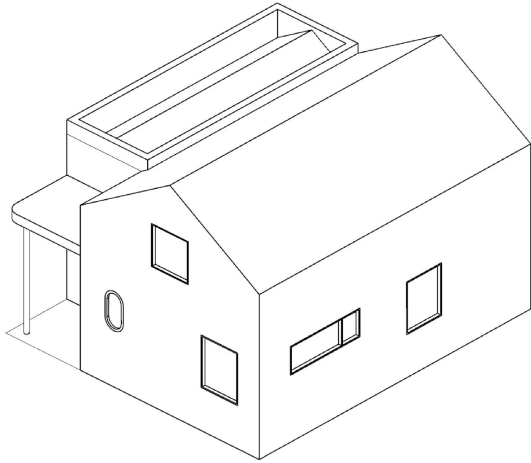


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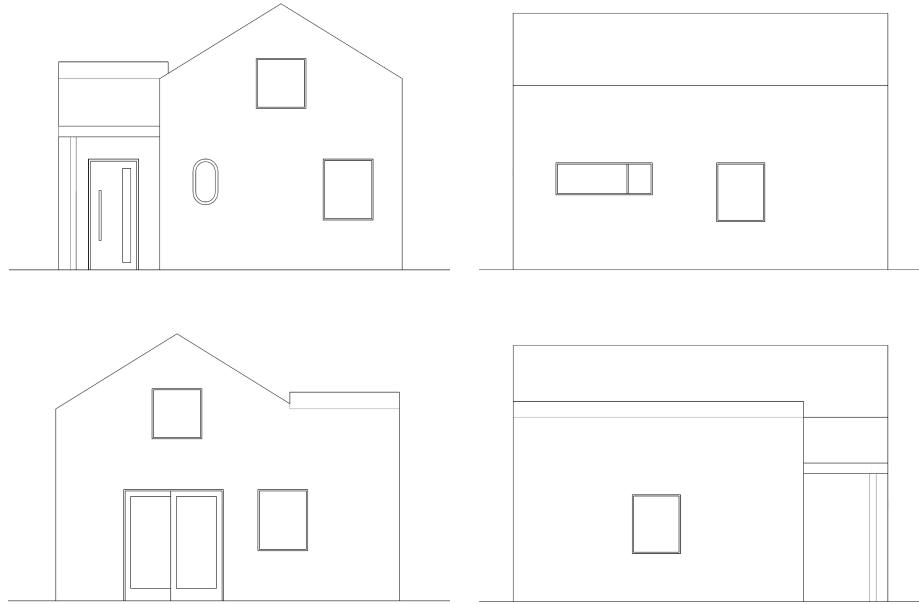


Elevations

The Loft - Modern



3D

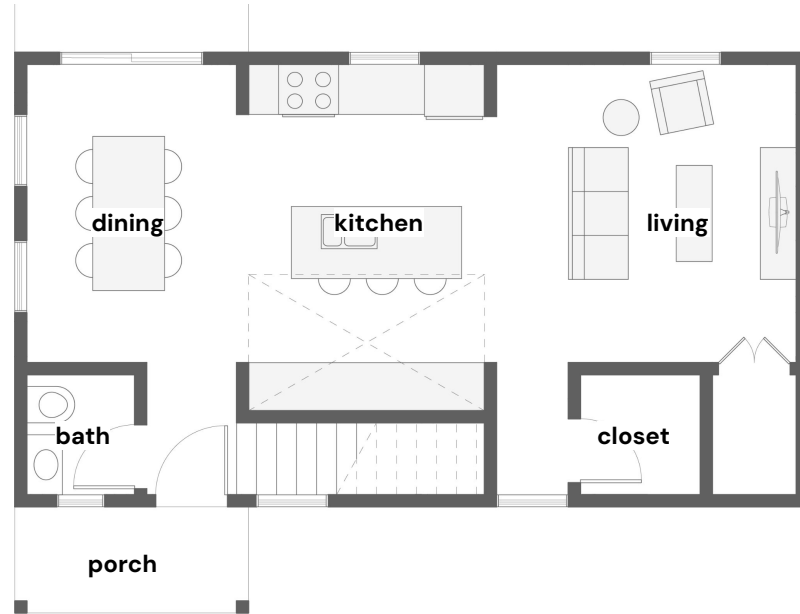


Elevations

The Townhouse - 1,200 SF, 2-bed, 1.5-bath

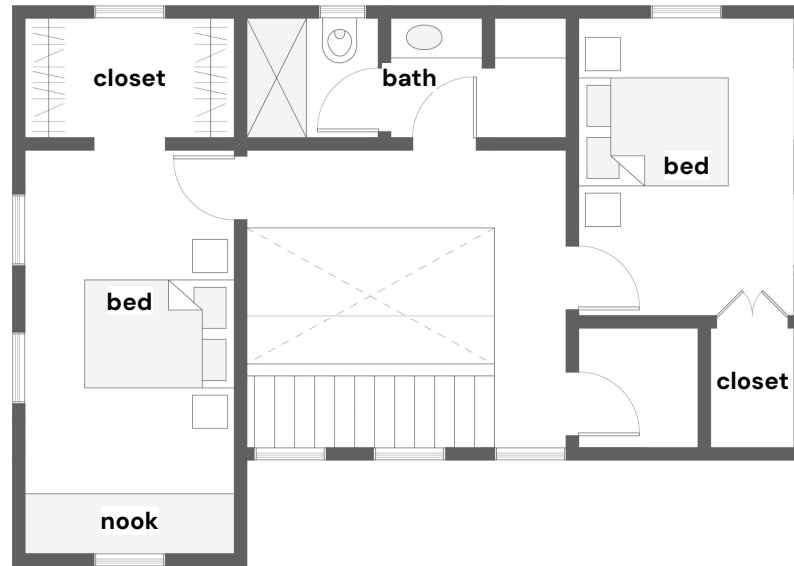
Design Description:

- Smaller footprint with 2-stories preserves yard space
- SB 9 unit potential
- Layout flexibly supports multi-gen use for young families
- Closet that can become an elevator
- Second-story reading nook
- Light well next to stair for natural light



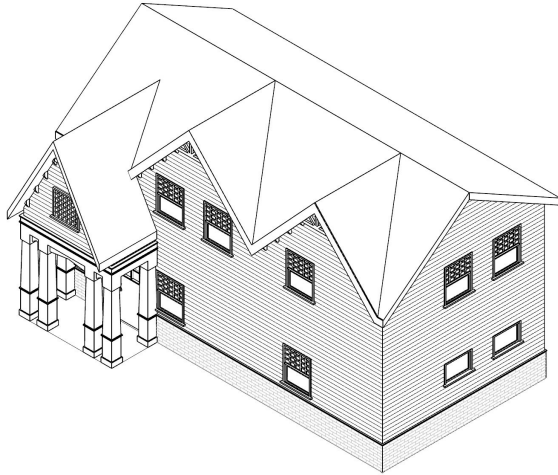
Ground Floor

The Townhouse - 1,200 SF, 2-bed, 1.5-bath, cont.



Level 2

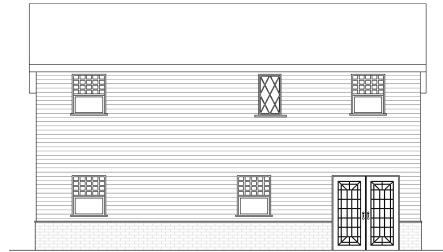
The Townhouse - Craftsman



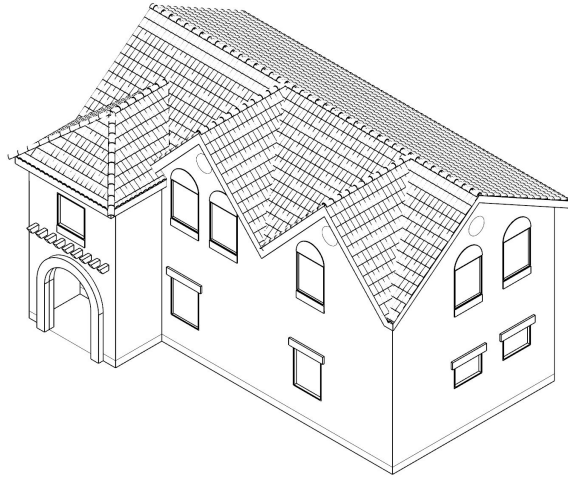
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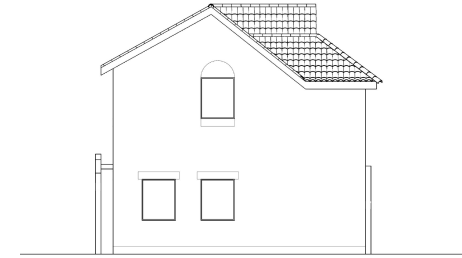
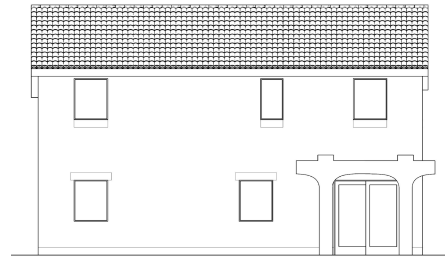
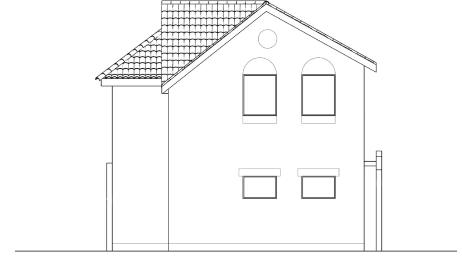
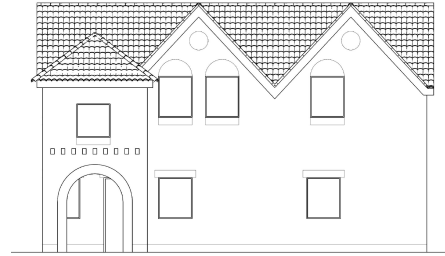
Elevations



The Townhouse - Spanish

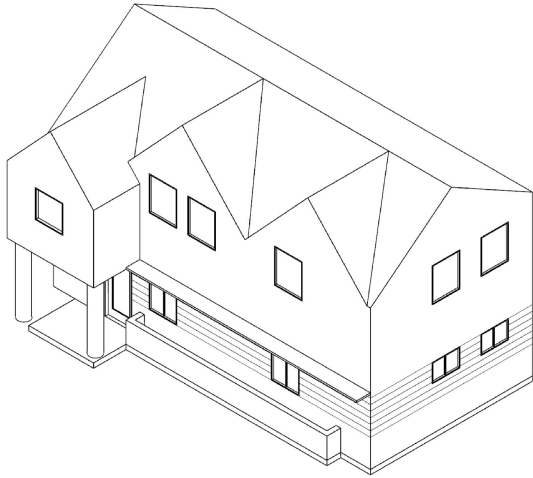


3D



Elevations

The Townhouse - Modern



3D



Elevations

Thank you!

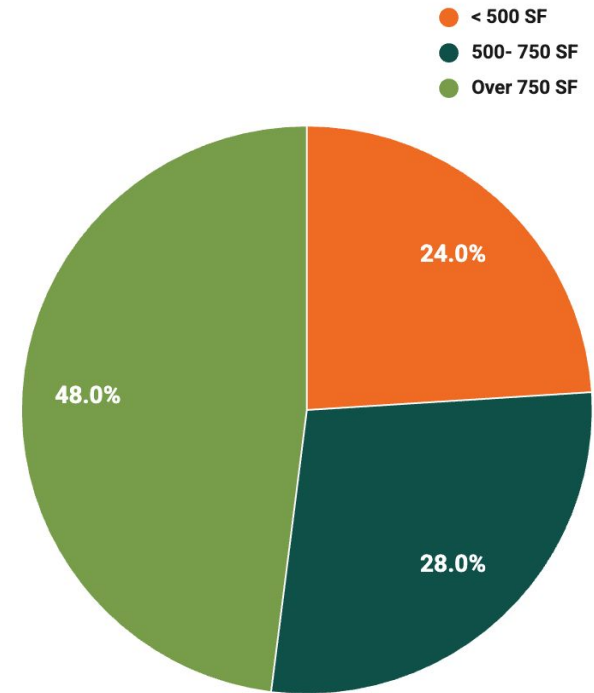
Opportunity for Feedback

Research Activities - Overview

Method	Activities	Results
1. Comprehensive review of the City's ADU standards	Review of: HCD Accessory Dwelling Unit Handbook March 2026, Housing Element, ADU Design Guidelines for Historic Properties, South Pasadena Municipal Code	- Qualitative understanding of current policy realm for ADUs within the state of California and within the local context.
2. Analysis of existing ADUs	Analysis of City permit data, 2024-2026 City Tour	-Data on 117 ADUs/JADUs -Qualitative observations of all permitted ADUs
3. Confirmation of community priorities	Professional Focus Group Homeowner Focus Group	-7 Professionals (Mark Gallatin, Steven Dahl, Jason Claypool, Conrado Lopez, Pakling Chiu, XiaoXiao Bao, Kyle Imoto) -13 Residents
4. Comparison of regional efforts	Review of 15 Pre-Approved Plan Programs in California	- Comparative analysis of common plan elements within the state

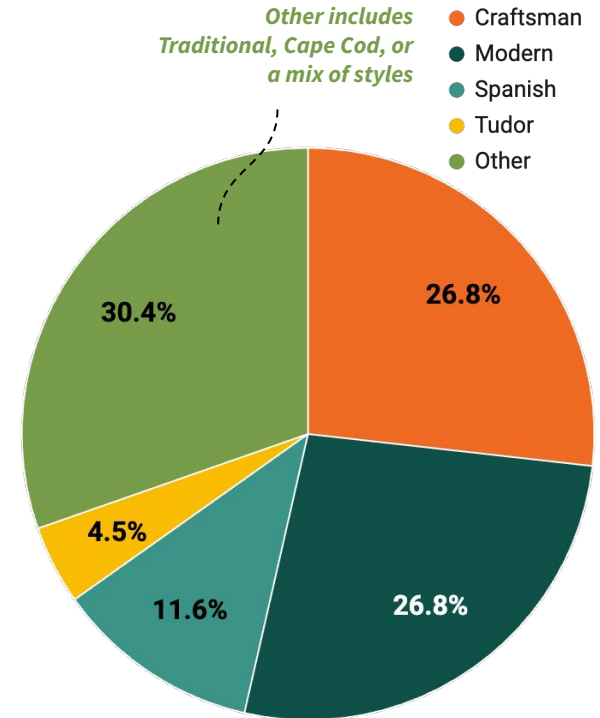
Research Highlights - South Pasadena

- Larger properties allow for **larger ADUs**.
- **Two-Story ADUs** offer additional living space without sacrificing yards or trees.
- Homeowners are interested in a program that **saves time and money**.
- Community members want **flexible, adaptable ADUs** that can accommodate **aging in place, growing or multigenerational** families, or **rental units**.



Nearly half of ADUs permitted are over 750 SF.

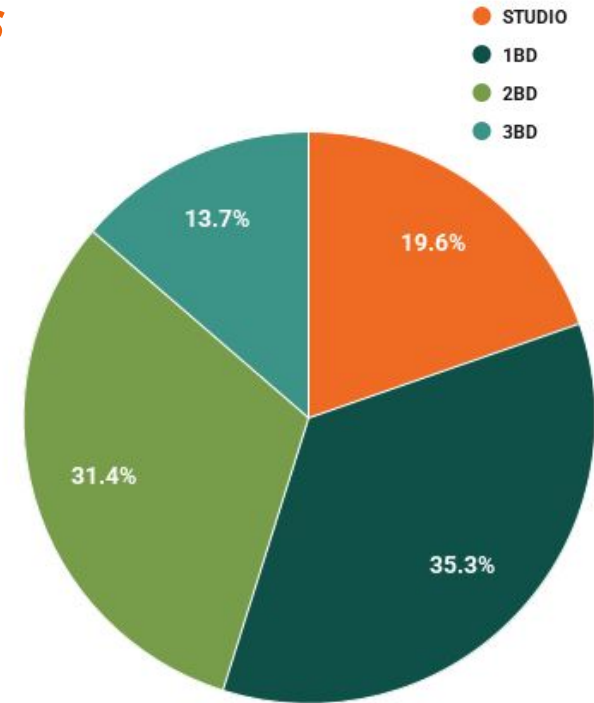
Research Highlights - South Pasadena



Most common styles were Craftsman and Modern, while Spanish was mainly found in the SE quadrant of South Pasadena.

Research Highlights - Comparative Programs

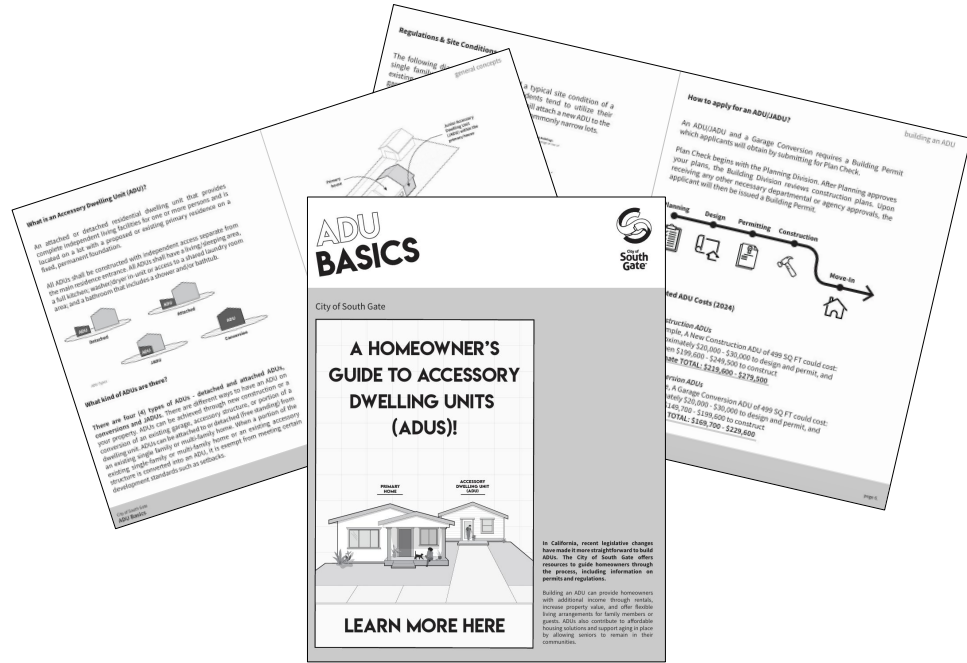
- We analyzed 15 pre-approved ADU programs and found **the plans vary by size, style, and structure.**
 - *Los Angeles County, Orange County, San Benito County, San Diego County, Santa Clara County, Ventura County, Burbank, Culver City, Dublin, Paradise, Pleasant Hill, Santa Ana, Santa Monica, South Gate, West Hollywood*
- **75% have a one-bedroom option; 69% have a two-bedroom option.**
- The average square footage across all pre-approved plans was **768 SF**. The largest footprints came at **1200 SF** and the smallest at **393 SF**.



Out of 51 total plans, 67 percent were one or two bedrooms.

Additional Materials

- An **ADU Guidebook** will provide a comprehensive suite of information for residents interested in building ADUs using these plans or traditional pathways.
- One additional summer **community engagement events** will provide opportunities for education with residents.
- **Recommendations for implementation** will ensure that the program supports and complies with housing goals in the City.

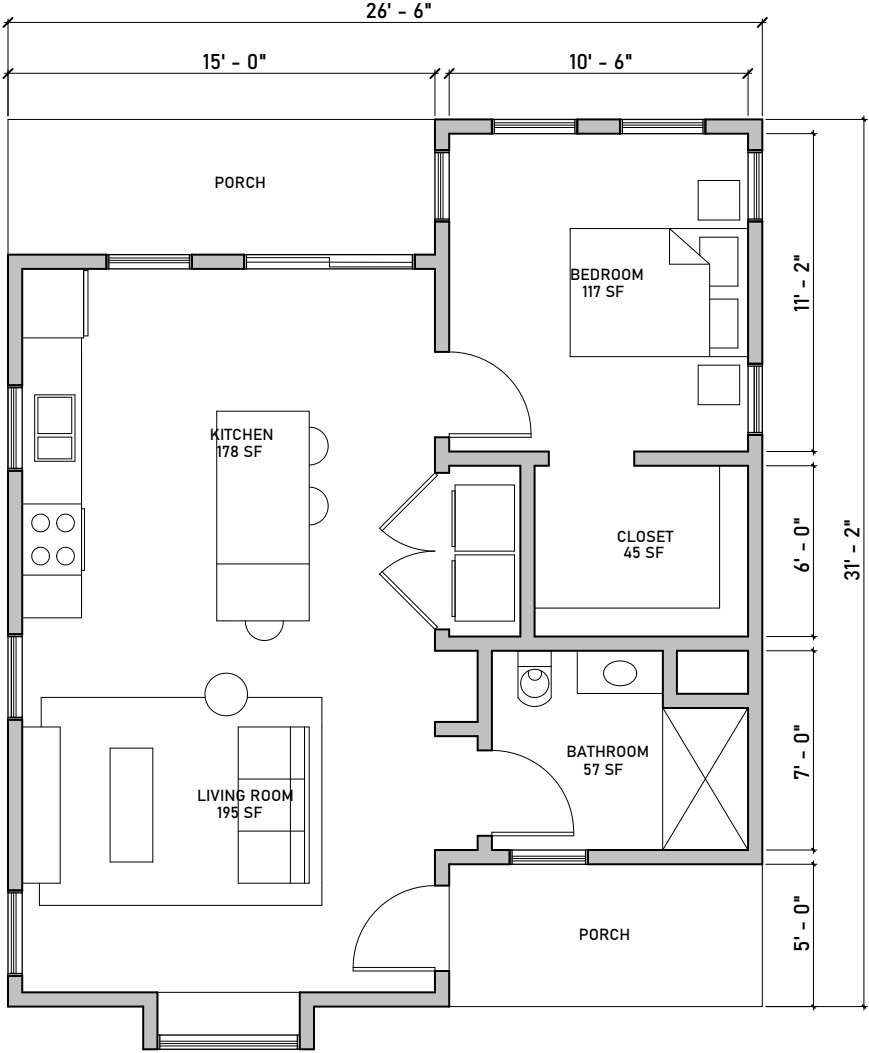


FLOOR PLAN

CITY OF SOUTH
PASADENA

PRE-APPROVED
ADU PLAN SET

The applicant ("Owner") has requested the use of the City of South Pasadena's Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) pre-approved plans ("Plans") at the property indicated above. By accepting and/or using the Plans, Owner agrees to and does hereby release, hold harmless, and indemnify the City, its officials, officers, employees, volunteers, agents, and the engineers and/or architects who prepared the Plans (collectively, the "Released Parties"), free and harmless from any and all claims, demands, causes of action, costs, expenses, liability, loss, direct or consequential damage or injury of any kind, in law or equity, to property or persons, in any manner arising out of, pertaining to, related to, or incident to Owner's use of the Plans (collectively, the "Claims").



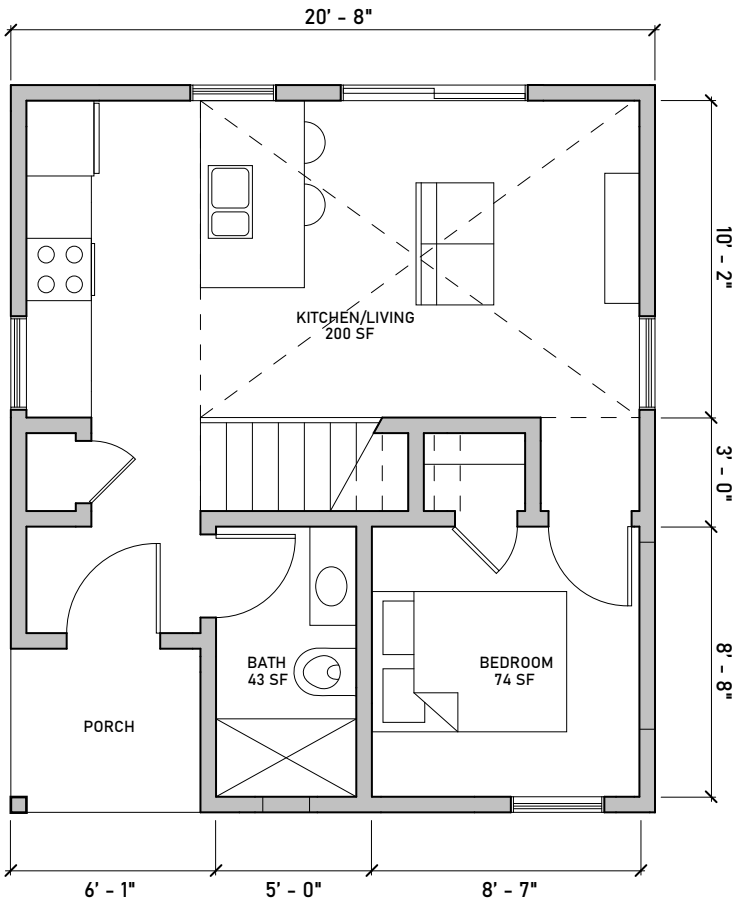
GROUND FLOOR

COTTAGE PLAN

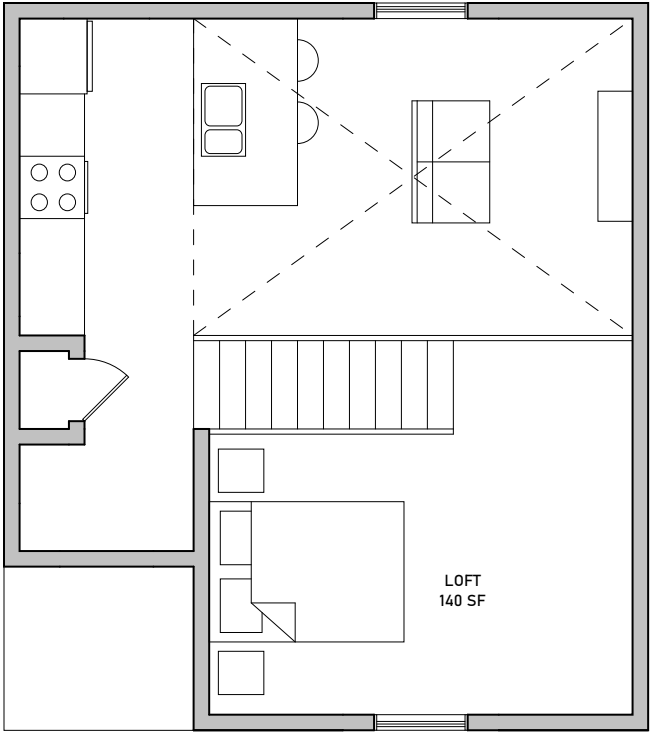
700 SF
1-BED, 1-BATH

A-010

The applicant ("Owner") has requested the use of the City of South Pasadena's Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) pre-approved plans ("Plans") at the property indicated above. By accepting and/or using the Plans, Owner agrees to and does hereby release, hold harmless, and indemnify the City, its officials, officers, employees, volunteers, agents, and the engineers and/or architects who prepared the Plans (collectively, the "Released Parties"), free and harmless from any and all claims, demands, causes of action, costs, expenses, liability, loss, direct or consequential damage or injury of any kind, in law or equity, to property or persons, in any manner arising out of, pertaining to, related to, or incident to Owner's use of the Plans (collectively, the "Claims").



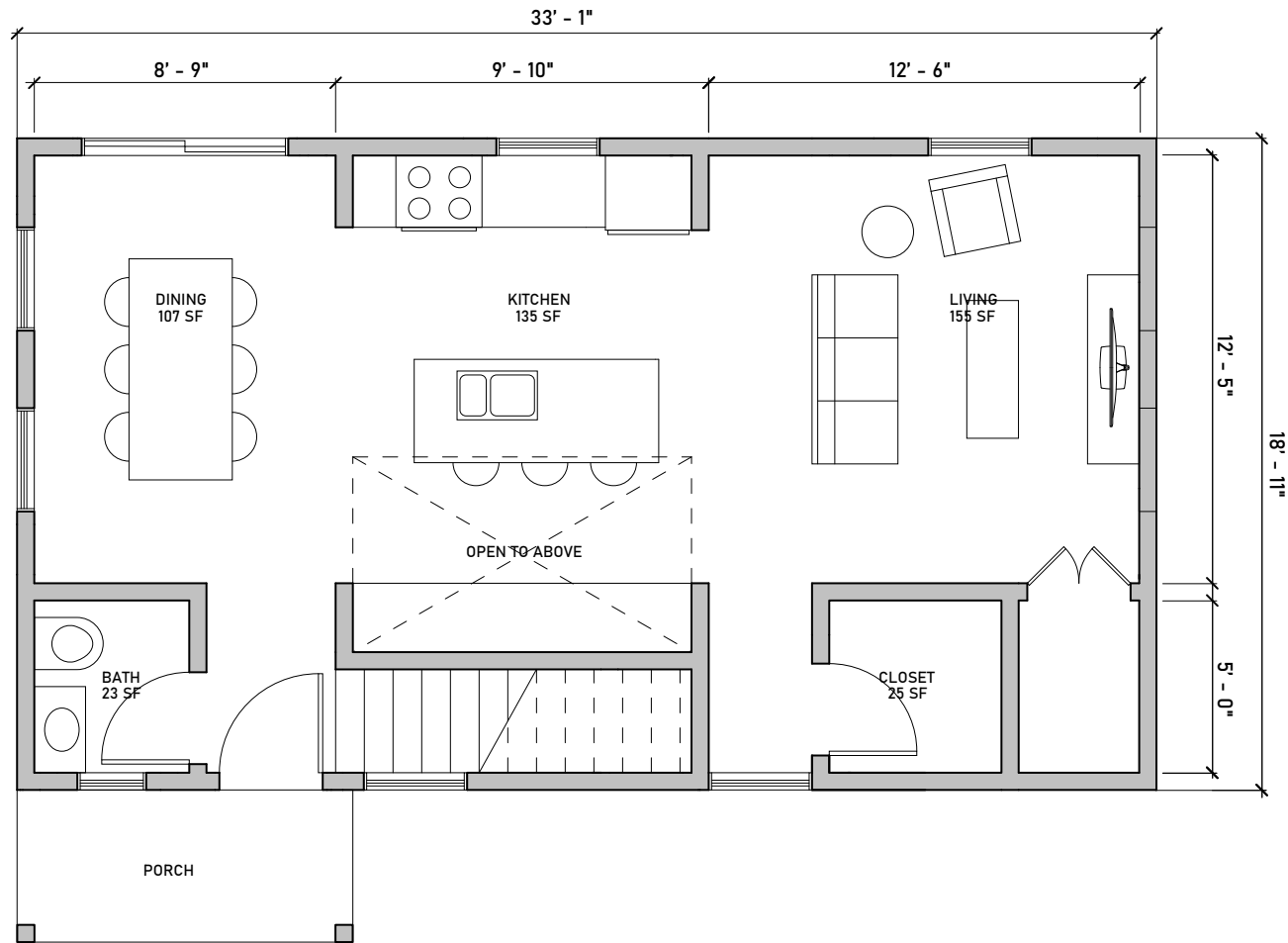
GROUND FLOOR



LOFT

450 SF
1-BED, 1-BATH, LOFT

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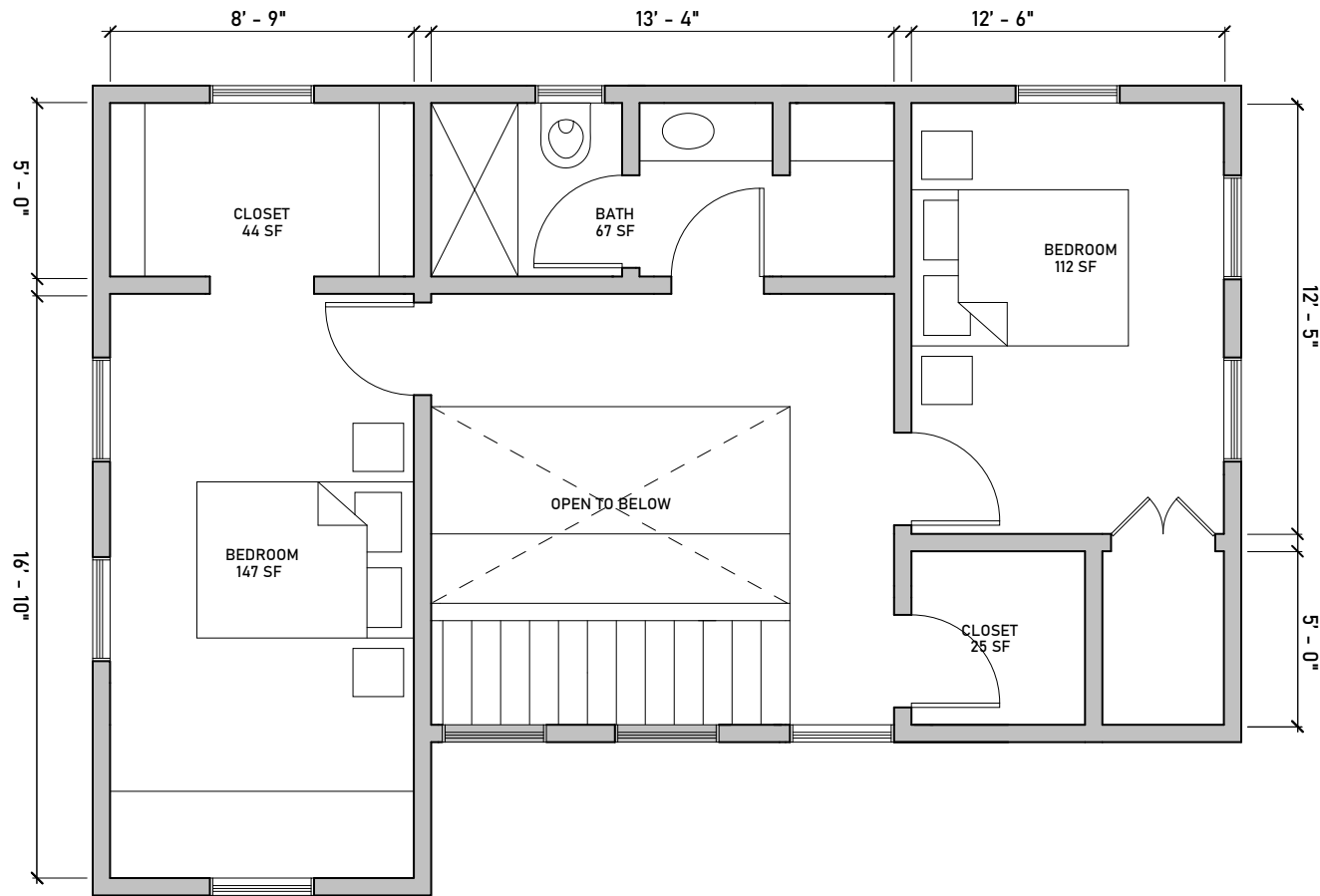
GROUND FLOOR

1,200 SF
2-BED, 1.5-BATH

TOWNHOUSE PLAN

A-030**5 - 51**

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LEVEL 2

1,200 SF
2-BED, 1.5-BATH

TOWNHOUSE PLAN

A-031**5 - 52**