



HAWTHORNE PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

DATE: May 20, 2026
FROM: Gregg McClain, Director of Planning
SUBJECT: Ordinance to create local ADU regulations

PROJECT AND APPLICANT

Summary: ZA-2026-0002 reintroduces local ADU regulations to the HMC.

Applicant: City of Hawthorne

OVERVIEW

State ADU laws are regularly changing to close unintended loopholes and to address previously unforeseen situations. Cities are expected to amend their local ADU ordinances to reflect these changes, but for small cities with small staffs, this is not always feasible. Staff took the approach that we adhere to the latest state regulations wherever there is disagreement with our local ordinance, and we intended to amend the ordinance when the differences became too many, or when staffing permitted, whichever came first. This position was relayed to HCD after they identified our ADU ordinance as being out of compliance. Although HCD agreed to a reasonable timeframe for fixing our ADU ordinance, they also indicated that our ADU regulations were effectively null and void so requested that we rescind the ordinance. A previous ordinance will accomplish that.

This ordinance reinstates local ADU regulations that conform to state law, and specifically does the following:

- Definitions cleaned up and moved to the Definitions chapter of Title 17;
- References to California Government Code updated;
- Reference to an “accessory dwelling unit permit” changed to generic “Planning approval”;
- Time limit for City review added;
- Reference to preapprove ADU plans added;
- Permissible locations for ADUs updated to align with state law;
- Permissible number of ADUs and JADUs was also updated;
- Subdivision and separate conveyance prohibitions removed;
- Miscellaneous other language updates to ensure compatibility with state ADS laws.

The City places a maximum size restriction on certain detached ADUs of 1,000 square feet. This is 200 square feet of the maximum allowed by state law, but is also a permissible local restriction.

GENERAL PLAN COMPLIANCE

The adoption of this ordinance does not alter the Zoning Code's compliance with the General Plan.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The Planning Commission public hearing for this ordinance was published in the April 30, 2026, edition of the South Bay Cities (Hawthorne Press Tribune). Additionally, notices were posted in accordance with HMC 17.06.050. See Exhibit 2.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

This zone text amendment re-adopts local ADU regulations that largely mirror existing state regulations on ADUs. This is determined not to be a project under CEQA (Pub. Resources Code, § 21065) because no significant regulatory changes are being made.

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt PC Resolution 2026-05 recommending the City Council adopt an ordinance to address alcohol regulations.

ATTACHMENTS

1. PC Resolution 2026-05 with attached draft Ordinance
2. Notice of Public Hearing Proof of Publication