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# City of San Diego Wins 2024 Ivory Prize for Housing Affordability

## ADU BONUS PROGRAM RECOGNIZED FOR POTENTIAL TO RAPIDLY INCREASE SUPPLY AND DENSITY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

SAN DIEGO – Recognizing progress toward its goal of creating homes that all San Diegans can afford, the City of San Diego has been named [a winner](#) of Ivory Innovations' annual national Ivory Prize for Housing Affordability in its Public Policy and Regulatory Reform category. The [Ivory Prize](#) aims to recognize ambitious, feasible and scalable solutions to housing affordability throughout the nation. The City's [Accessory Dwelling Unit \(ADU\) Bonus Program](#), which allows additional ADUs to be built on a property when those ADUs are designated and guaranteed as affordable housing, was recognized as a top housing innovation in the country.

**“Being recognized by Ivory Innovations for aggressive changes to our local Land Development Code to allow for a large-scale increase in ADU production is an honor for the City of San Diego,” said Development Services Department (DSD) Assistant Director Gary Geiler, leader of the City’s Accessory Dwelling Unit program. “Coupling density bonuses for affordable units and the ability to utilize high-cost land parcels more efficiently with multiple ADUs by waiving Development Impact Fees has created a wave of new development in San Diego and beyond.”**

The ADU Bonus Program was launched in 2021 to incentivize the construction of affordable ADUs. The program allows for one unrestricted ADU to be permitted for every affordable deed-restricted unit at a very low-, low- or moderate-income level. In addition, the DSD team prioritized ADU reviews, delivering the reviewed permits quickly and ministerially, contributing to cost savings by the ADU developer.

The affordable ADUs must be comparable in size, bedroom mix, amenities and features to the market-rate ADU(s). To date, there have been over 220 approved deed-restricted units as a result of the program. The City’s density bonus ADU policy has been adopted by the State of California for other municipalities to utilize, scaling up this housing solution. Since 2019, over 4,500 ADUs have been approved for construction throughout San Diego.

**“San Diego’s bonus ADU program is a great example of what cities can accomplish when they truly want to build more housing: Be creative about opening up locations, make the process transparent and easy to navigate and provide meaningful incentives in exchange for affordable homes,”** said Ivory Prize Advisory Board Member Jenny Scheutz, Author of Fixer Upper and Senior Fellow at Brookings.

Ivory Innovations is a nonprofit that operates as an applied academic institution at the University of Utah's David Eccles School of Business dedicated to catalyzing high-impact innovations in housing affordability. Ivory Innovations seeks to promote the most compelling ideas in housing affordability by working across sectors, providing monetary awards for groundbreaking innovations and leveraging its network and resources.

Other programs designed to address affordable housing needs in San Diego have included [Affordable Housing Permit Now](#), which was announced by Mayor Todd Gloria in 2023 and expedites permit processing times for qualifying developments and contributed to the [9,700 new San Diego homes](#) permitted in 2023. Additionally, the [Complete Communities Now](#) program, in response to an executive order issued by Mayor Gloria, requires DSD to review qualifying housing projects within 30 days.

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