

ZOA25-0002 – SB 9 Update

PALM DESERT CITY COUNCIL
DECEMBER 11, 2025



Zoning Ordinance Overview

- Consideration of a recommendation by the Planning Commission to approve Zoning Ordinance Amendment (“ZOA”) Case No. ZOA25-0002
- State Government Code §65857 - Requires Planning Commission to consider zoning amendments prior to recommendation to City Council
- City’s zoning ordinance must comply with SB 450 which became effective January 1, 2025
- Ensures City compliance and reduces exposure to HCD enforcement

Background: Senate Bill 9

- Signed by Governor Newsom on September 16, 2021
 - Intended to address housing affordability and supply
- Key Provisions
 - **Two-Unit Projects** – requires ministerial approval of up to two primary dwelling units on a single lot in a single-family residential zone
 - **Urban Lots Splits** – requires ministerial approval of parcel maps to subdivide one lot into two legal parcels in a single-family zone

Background: Urgency Ordinance 1373

- Adopted by City Council on December 16, 2021
- Amended PDMC Chapter 25.34 (Special Use Provisions)
- Added Chapter 26.30 (Urban Lot Splits)
- Re-adopted on January 13, 2022

Background: Senate Bill 450

- Signed by Governor Newsom on September 19, 2024
 - Intended to strengthen and clarify SB 9
- Key Provisions
 - **60-Day Timelines** – 60 days to approve or deny complete SB 9 applications or deemed approved
 - **Objective Standards Only** - Only objective zoning, subdivision, and design standards may apply
 - **State Enforcement** – Expands HCD enforcement of SB 9 ordinances and actions
 - **Clean-Up/Clarification** – Technical and conformance changes to SB 9 statutes

Proposed Zoning Amendments

- Amends PDMC 25.34.180 (Two Unit Projects) and 26.30.010 (Urban Lot Splits)
- Key Provisions
 - 60-day Review Deadlines
 - Reliance on Objective Standards
 - Integration of State Enforcement Provisions

California Environmental Quality Act

- The adoption of the proposed ordinance amendment is exempt from CEQA pursuant to California Government Code sections 65852.21(k) and 66411.7(n)

Public Noticing

- Published November 26, 2025, in *The Desert Sun*
- No public comments received prior to meeting

Recommendation

Adopt an Ordinance entitled:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA, AMENDING CHAPTER 25.34 (SPECIAL USE PROVISIONS) AND CHAPTER 26.30 (URBAN LOT SPLITS) OF THE CITY OF PALM DESERT MUNICIPAL CODE RELATING TO URBAN LOT SPLITS AND TWO-UNIT PROJECTS AND DETERMINING THE ORDINANCE TO BE EXEMPT FROM CEQA

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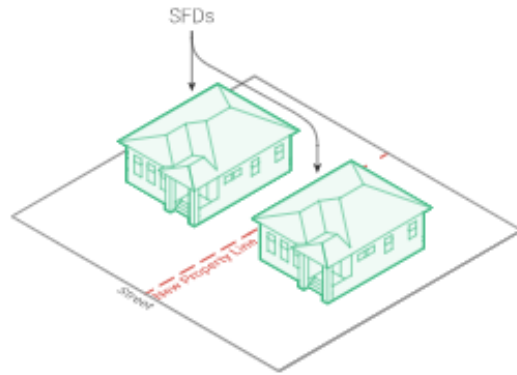
Single-Family Development Standards

Table 25.10-3: Residential Zoning District Development Standards

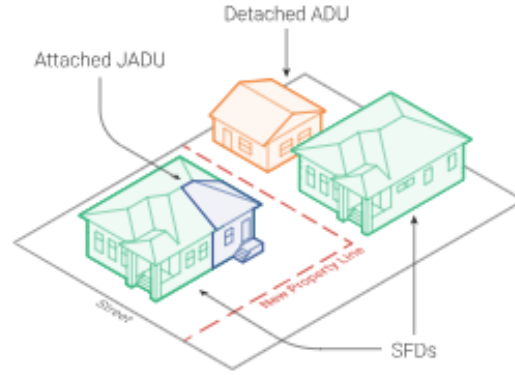
Measurement/ Zoning District	RE ³	R-1 ³				R-2	R-3	R-1M ¹	HPR ⁴	P.R. ⁵
	≥1 ac	≥15,000 sf	≥10,000 sf, but ≤15,000 sf	<10,000 sf						
Residential Density										
Density (du/ac), min – max	1 - 2	2 - 3	3 - 4	5 - 8	3 - 10	7 - 40	7	1/5 ac	4 - 40	
Lot Dimensions										
Lot size, min	40,000 sf	15,000 sf	10,000 sf	8,000 sf	3,500 sf	3,000 sf	20 ac/ 5,000 sf	-	-	
Lot size, max	1 ac	No max	14,999 sf	9,999 sf	No max	No max	No max	-	-	
Lot width, min	150'	90'	90'	70'	50'	40'	500'	-	-	
Lot depth, min	200'	125'	100'	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Setbacks										
Front yard, min	30'	25'	20'	20'	12'	10'	20' /5'	-	-	
Side yard, min	15'	15'	8'	5' ⁶	5'	8'	10' /5'	-	-	
Combined both sides, min	30'	30'	20'	10' ⁶	10'	10'	-	-	-	
Street side yard, min	30'	15'	10'	10'	10'	10'	20' /-	-	-	
Rear yard, min	50'	20'	20'	15'	15'	10'	10' /5'	-	-	
Residential accessory structures	See Section 25.40.050 (Accessory Buildings and Structures)									
Coverage										
Lot coverage, max percentage of lot area	30%	35% ²	35% ²	35% ²	60%	75%	-	10%	50%	
Building Measurements										
Height, max	15' (18' ARC) ⁷	15' (18' ARC) ⁷	15' (18' ARC) ⁷	15' (18' ARC)	15' (30' ARC) ⁸	40'	18'	-	40'	
Number of stories, max	1	1	1	2	2	3	1	1	3	
Dwelling unit size, min	1,500 sf	1,250 sf	1,000 sf	1,000 sf	600 sf	450 sf	-	-	-	
Dwelling unit size, max	-	-	-	-	4,000 sf	4,000 sf	-	4,000 sf	-	
Site area per dwelling unit, min	-	-	-	-	4,000 sf	2,500 sf	-	-	-	
Building pad area, max	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,000 sf	-	
Open Space										
Group usable open space per dwelling unit, min	-	-	-	-	-	300 sf	-	-	-	
Notes:										

SB 9 Development Scenarios

Urban Lot Splits



Lot Split with two new rectangular parcels and a Single Family Dwelling (SFD) on each lot



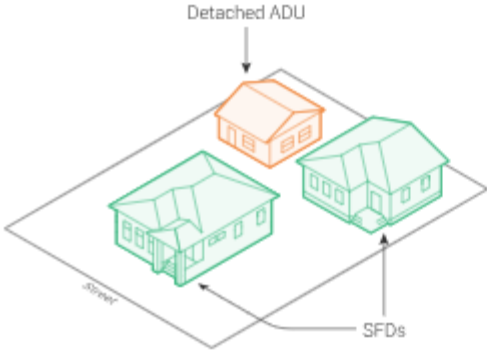
Lot split with flag lot configuration with SFD and Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit (JADU) on one lot and an SFD and a detached Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) on the other lot

- Max number of lots is two
- No parcels may be less than 40 percent of the original parcel
- Max two units/lot
- Min lot size: 1,200 SF
- Must allow up to two 800 SF units/lot

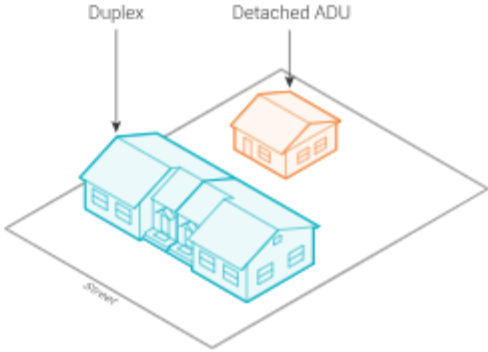
Image Source: Los Angeles City Planning

SB 9 Development Scenarios

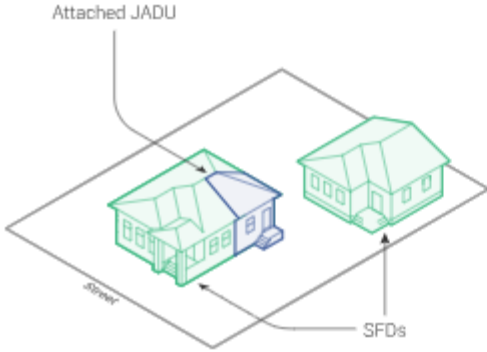
Two Unit Developments



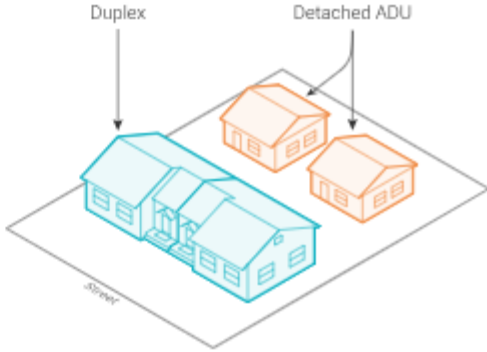
2 SFDs + 1 detached ADU



Duplex + 1 detached ADU



2 SFDs + 1 JADU

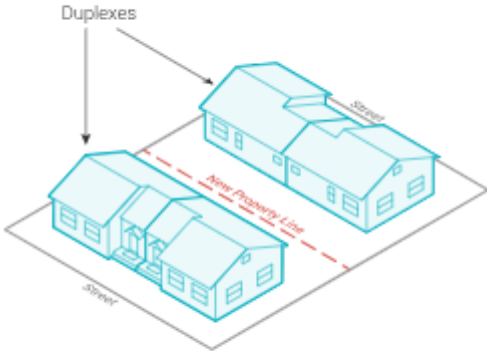


Duplex + 2 detached ADUs

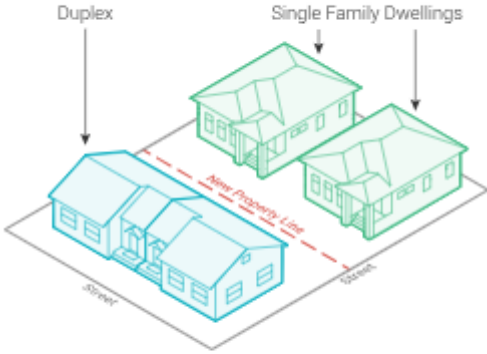
Image Source: Los Angeles City Planning

SB 9 Development Scenarios

Urban Lot Splits & Two Unit Developments



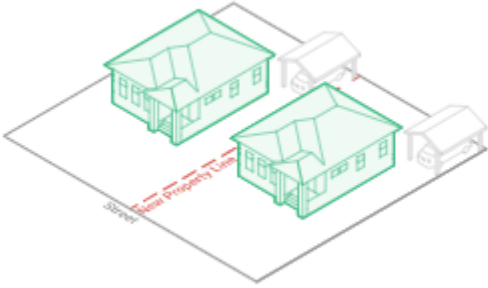
Duplex on each lot



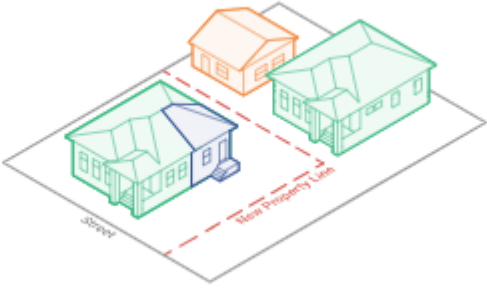
Duplex on one lot and 2 SFDs on one lot

Image Source: Los Angeles City Planning

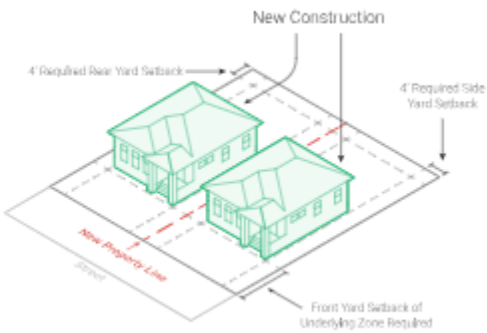
SB 9 Development Scenarios



Urban Lot Split with SFDs and required parking on each lot



Urban Lot Split with SFDs and ADU/JADUs; Zero parking spaces required per unit if within 1/2 mile of a High Quality Transit Corridor or Major Transit Stop



Urban Lot Split with setbacks shown. Side and rear yard setbacks are required to be a minimum of 4 feet. Front yard setbacks shall be the same as required by the underlying zone. No setback is required for a legally existing structure.

Image Source: Los Angeles City Planning