

# Detailed Analysis of Bonus ADU Program

Neighbors For A Better San Diego

April 14, 2025



# Introduction

As San Diego considers revisions to the Bonus ADU program, it is important to understand how the program has been used to date, and how potential changes might affect future projects.

- This presentation summarizes the Bonus ADU program from its introduction in 2021 to the beginning of 2025.

The analysis focuses just on the Bonus ADU program. Per the DSD permit dashboard, more than 80% (over 5,000) ADUs have been built without the Bonus ADU program and would be unaffected by proposed changes to the Bonus ADU program.

- Housing and Community Development's (HCD) reinterpretation of state law to allow 2 ADUs by right on any single-family parcel would further accelerate the construction of ADUs outside of the Bonus ADU program.

# Basis for analysis

## Data from San Diego Housing Commission

- Bonus ADU Projects from 2021 through February 14, 2025, with deed-restrictions for affordable ADUs submitted through DSD
- 282 Bonus ADU projects, 1588 units
  - 161 projects, 792 units in single-family zones (RS)
  - 121 projects, 796 units in multi-family zones (RM/Other)
- Total ADUs in Bonus projects includes by right ADUs and conversions of existing multi-family (RM) units and non-habitable space (outside Bonus ADU program)

# Results

To provide context for the City Council's initiative to reform the Bonus ADU Program, NFABSD has summarized the distribution of the program by:

- Zone (RS, RM, Other)
- Lot Size
- Fire Risk
- Limited Street Access (incl. Cul-de-sacs)
- Distance to Transit
- CTCAC Opportunity Level
- Number of ADUs per Project
- Accessible ADU Bonus

# Distribution by Zone

- Bonus ADU Program is evenly split between single-family (RS) and other zones.
- 50% of units from Bonus program are in RS zones.
- 50% of units are in multi-family (RM) and other zones

<b>ZONE</b>	<b># PROJECTS</b>	<b>% PROJECTS</b>	<b># ADUs</b>	<b>% ADUs</b>
<b>RS</b>	161	57%	792	<b>50%</b>
<b>RM</b>	110	39%	726	<b>46%</b>
<b>OTHER</b>	11	4%	70	<b>4%</b>
<b>ALL ZONES</b>	282	100%	1588	100%

# Breakdown by Single-Family Zones (RS)

- Over half of all Bonus ADU projects are in RS-1-7
  - 43% of total Bonus ADUs are produced in RS-1-7 zones

ZONE	# PROJECTS	% PROJECTS	# ADUs	% ADUs	ADUs Per Project
RS-1-2	2	0.7%	39	2.5%	3 to 36
RS-1-4	1	0.4%	2	0.1%	2
RS-1-6	6	2.1%	46	2.9%	3 to 16
<b>RS-1-7</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>51.4%</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>42.8</b>	<b>1 to 37</b>
RS-1-14	7	2.5%	25	1.6%	2 to 8
<b>TOTAL RS</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>57.1%</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>49.9%</b>	<b>1 to 37</b>
<b>ALL ZONES</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1588</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1 to 37</b>

# Breakdown by Multi-Family Zone (RM)

- 46% of total ADUs produced in Bonus ADU projects are in multi-family zones
- RM-1-1 is the most used RM zone, followed by RM-2-5 and RM-3-7

ZONE	# PROJECTS	% PROJECTS	# ADUs	% ADUs	ADUs Per Project
RM-1-1	64	23%	401	<b>25%</b>	3 to 19
RM-1-2	7	2.5%	44	2.8%	3 to 11
RM-1-3	5	1.8%	33	2.1%	4 to 12
RM-2-5	18	6.4%	125	<b>7.9%</b>	3 to 19
RM-3-7	13	4.6%	106	<b>6.7%</b>	4 to 16
RM-3-8	2	0.7%	9	0.6%	2 to 7
RM-4-10	1	0.4%	8	0.5%	8
<b>TOTAL RM</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>2 to 19</b>
<b>ALL ZONES</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1588</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1 to 37</b>

# Impact of March 4 Council Resolution

Exclude Bonus ADUs in RS zones with minimum lot sizes of 10,000 sf

- RS-1-1, 1-2, 1-3, 1-4, 1-8, 1-9, 1-10, 1-11
- Only RS-1-2 and RS-1-4 have had Bonus ADUs projects
- Would have affected 1% (3 of 282) of Bonus ADU projects

ZONE	# PROJECTS	% PROJECTS	# ADUs	% ADUs
RS-1-1	0	0	0	0
RS-1-2	2	0.7%	39	2.5%
RS-1-3	0	0	0	0
RS-1-4	1	0.4%	2	0.1%
RS-1-8	0	0	0	0
RS-1-9	0	0	0	0
RS-1-10	0	0	0	0
RS-1-11	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL IMPACT</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>2.6%</b>
<b>ALL ZONES</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1588</b>	<b>100%</b>



# Distribution by Lot Size

- 26% of projects / 37% of units are on lots 10,000 square feet or greater
- Most of projects on Large lots are RS-1-7 and RM-1-1
- Over 60% of projects on Large lots are in VHFHSZ

ZONE	# PROJECTS			# ADUs		
	Small Lots (6000 sf or less)	Medium Lots (6000 to 10,000 sf)	Large Lots (10,000 sf or larger)	Small Lots (6000 sf or less)	Medium Lots (6000 to 10,000 sf)	Large Lots (10,000 sf or larger)
<b>RS TOTAL</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>387</b>
RS-1-2	0	0	2	0	0	39
RS-1-4	0	0	1	0	0	2
RS-1-6	0	2	4	0	10	36
<b>RS-1-7</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>300</b>
RS-1-14	4	1	2	8	7	10
<b>RM TOTAL</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>191</b>
<b>RM-1-1</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>92</b>
RM-1-3	0	1	4	0	12	21
RM-2-5	7	7	4	44	48	33
RM-3-7	3	5	5	20	41	45
Other RM	4	6	0	18	43	0
<b>OTHER ZONES</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>ALL ZONES</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>697</b>	<b>590</b>

# Distribution by Fire Risk

- RS Zones account for most of the Bonus ADU projects in VHFHSZs
  - 24% of all ADUs in Bonus projects are in RS-1-7 zones in VHFHSZs
- 10% of all ADUs in Bonus projects are in RM-1-1 zones in VHFHSZs
- 24 projects (139 ADUs) are on roads with limited ingress/egress

ZONE (within VHFHSZ)	# PROJECTS	% PROJECTS	# ADUs	% ADUs
<b>RS</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>29%</b>
RS-1-2	2	0.7%	39	2.5%
RS-1-4	1	0.4%	2	0.1%
RS-1-6	5	1.8%	35	2.2%
<b>RS-1-7</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>24%</b>
RS-1-14	1	0.3%	2	0.1%
<b>RM</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>RM-1-1</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>10%</b>
OTHER RM	6	2.1%	31	2.0%
OTHER ZONES	3	0.1%	20	1%
<b>TOTAL VHFHSZ</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>683</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>ALL BONUS ADUs</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1588</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Limited Access (Egress/Ingress)

- Limited access if
  - Cul de sac (43 projects)
  - Closed loop converging to single point of ingress/egress (13 projects)
- 46% of Bonus ADUs with limited access are in VHFHSZs

Limited Access	# PROJECTS	% PROJECTS	# ADUs	% ADUs	% In VHFHSZ
YES	56	20%	300	19%	46%
NO	226	80%	1288	81%	42%
ALL BONUS ADUs	282	100%	1588	100%	

# Distribution by Distance to Transit

- 60% of Bonus ADUs in RS-1-7 and 42% of RM-1-1 are beyond accepted standard of ½ mile walking distance to existing qualifying transit

ZONE	# PROJECTS		# ADUs	
	Within ½ Mile Of Transit	Beyond ½ Mile Of Transit	Within ½ Mile Of Transit	Beyond ½ Mile Of Transit
<b>RS TOTAL</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>427</b>
<b>RS-1-7</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>411</b>
Other RS	11	5	96	16
<b>RM TOTAL</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>218</b>
<b>RM-1-1</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>170</b>
RM-1-2	4	3	23	21
RM-2-5	13	5	105	20
RM-3-7	12	1	99	7
Other RM	8	0	50	0
<b>OTHER ZONES</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>ALL BONUS ADUs</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>934</b>	<b>654</b>

# Distribution by CTCAC Opportunity Level

- 45% of Bonus ADUs are in low opportunity and high poverty areas
- Only a third of Bonus ADUs are in High and Highest Opportunity areas despite encompassing two-thirds of San Diego’s land

CTCAC Opportunity	# PROJECTS	% PROJECTS	# ADUs	% ADUs	% AREA
Low/Poverty	117	41%	717	45%	26%
Moderate	70	25%	356	22%	8%
High/Highest	95	34%	515	33%	66%
<b>ALL BONUS ADUs</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1588</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>1</sup>Based on 2024/2025 CTCAC Maps

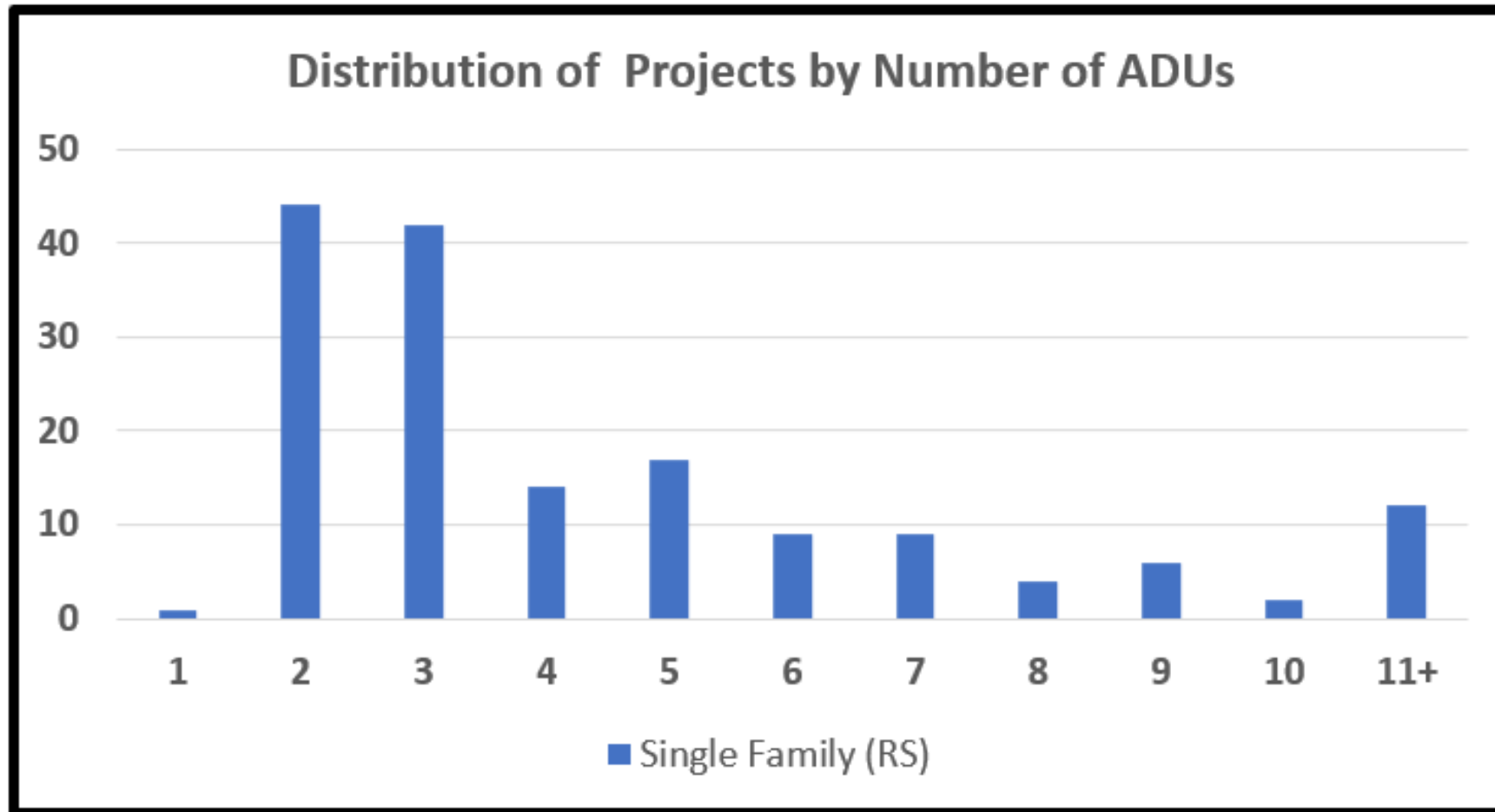
<sup>2</sup>San Diego Housing Commission Deed-Restricted ADUs as of 2/14/25

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/2024-08/2024-annual-report-on-homes-update-8-22-2024.pdf>

# Distribution by ADUs per Project - Single Family

54% (87/161) of Single-Family Bonus projects add 3 or fewer ADUs

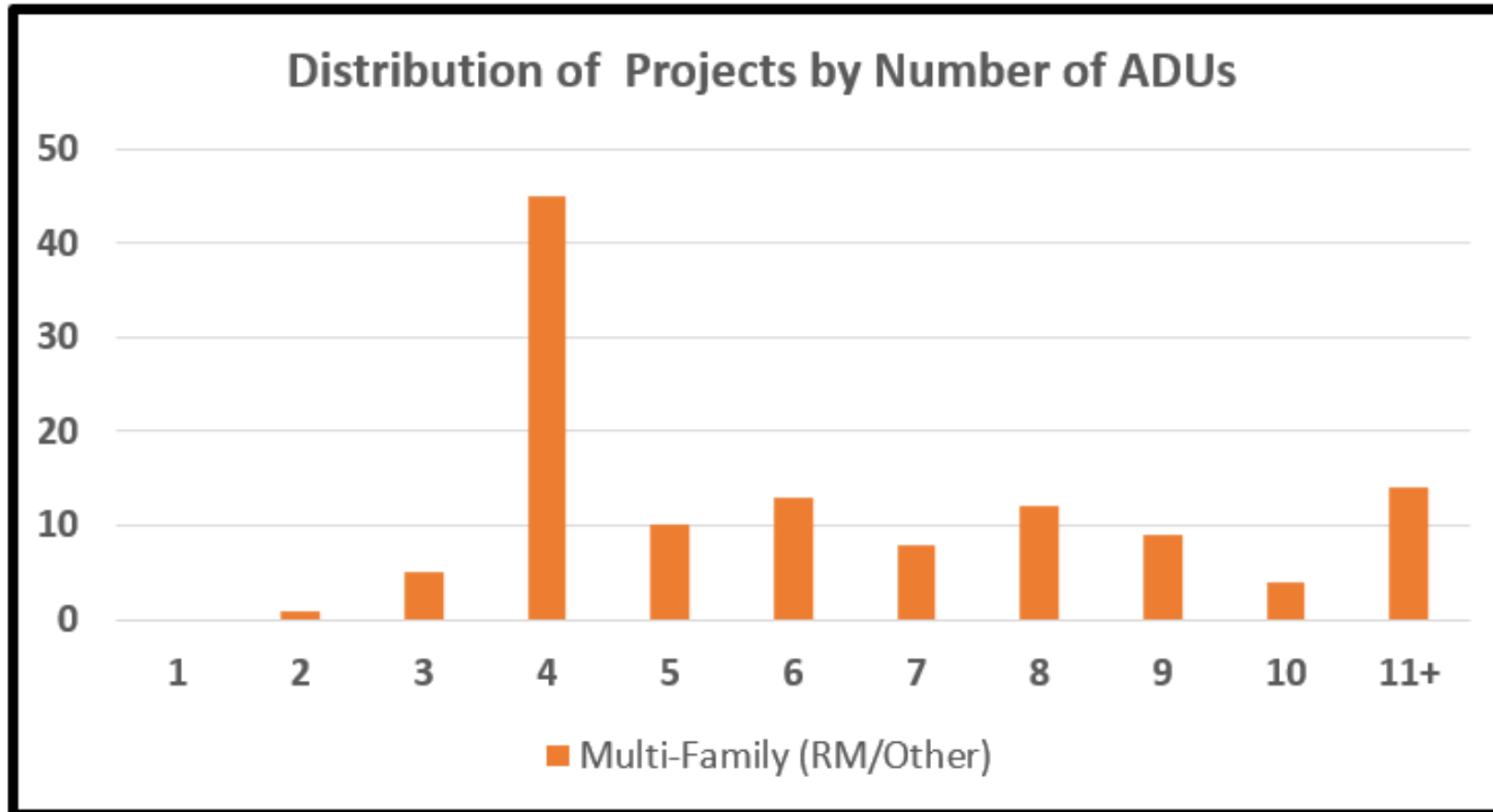
- 27% (215/792) of units added through the Bonus ADU program in SF zones



# Distribution by ADUs per Project - Multi-Family

61% (74/121) of Multi-Family Bonus projects add 6 or fewer ADUs

- 41% (325/796) of units added through the Bonus ADU program in MF zones
- Recent statewide increase from 2 ADUs to as many as 8 ADUs will impact future projects



# Accessible ADU Bonus

ADU Bonus based on accessible (ADA compliant) units went into effect on March 16, 2026

- For developments of 5 or more ADUs, allows a Bonus ADU if one unit is built as ADA compliant (instead of deed-restricted unit)
- Must comply with Chapter 11A of the California Building Code, including that the pedestrian path of travel to transit must be ADA compliant.

Of 46 Bonus ADU projects since enactment of Accessible ADU code, none of the projects in the San Diego Housing Commission data included an accessible ADU.



# Thank you!

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