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# Accessory Dwelling Unit

DR013



## What is an Accessory Dwelling Unit?

An accessory dwelling unit (ADU), sometimes referred to as a “mother-in-law apartment”, is a habitable living unit that provides basic requirements for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation. ADUs are a great way to provide affordable, extra livable space to relatives or tenants. ADUs also help to create additional density within residential neighborhoods on existing lots.

ADU is a broad term meaning that the unit is accessory to the primary unit on a lot. It may be a unit added to, created within, or detached from the primary single-family home. Many people choose to build stand alone ADUs, carriage houses, basement apartments, and sometimes separate but attached extensions to their house.

While in most cases it is easy to

determine when a new structure constitutes an ADU, instances of basement ADUs can be less easy to classify. Is the property owner just utilizing extra space for living quarters and sharing existing facilities or is the house being formally partitioned?

To help determine when a new unit may have been created, the City looks at certain factors:

- The added presence of 220 voltage, which usually services a separate, full-ranged oven and cooking area;
- Duplicative facilities that would normally be expected in a residential unit (such as a master bathroom); and/or
- The formal partitioning of space by adding new walls and/or providing



separate access to a basement unit.

## When and Where ADUs Are Permitted

One ADU is allowed on each residential lot within a residential zone and in conjunction with any new or existing single-family home. However, the primary dwelling unit or the ADU must remain owner-occupied by an owner of the property. The owner-occupied unit cannot be rented to others.

An ADU may be allowed as a Detached ADU or located within the primary dwelling unit. Some ADUs located within the primary dwelling unit may be created as an addition to the existing home.

A detached ADU or an ADU created through an addition to the existing home must conform to all site requirements such as setback, height, impervious surface and lot coverage restrictions (which are provided in the [Supplemental Residential Submittal Requirements](#) form downloadable from [redmond.gov/buildingpermits](http://redmond.gov/buildingpermits)).

## Size and Parking Requirements for an ADU

### ADU Size Located in Existing Single-Family Home

The ADU shall not be larger than 1,500 square feet. If the ADU occupies an entire single floor, the Technical Committee may allow for an increase in the allowed size of the ADU in order to efficiently use all of the floor area.

### Detached ADU Size

The total square footage of a detached ADU shall not exceed 40% of the total square footage of the primary dwelling unit and the accessory dwelling unit combined, excluding any garage area. In no case shall the ADU exceed 1,000 square feet.

### Parking Requirements

One off-street parking space is required for an ADU in addition to the two parking spaces required for the primary dwelling unit.

Parking spaces must be located on a paved surface and may be located in the driveway, garage or carport that serves the existing single-family home.



Photo by [Robert Garcia](#).

## Required Submittals

An ADU worksheet and an Affidavit of ADU owner occupancy document is required to be completed and signed

by the owner and submitted with the Building permit application (which are provided in the [Accessory Dwelling Unit Submittal Requirements](#) form downloadable from [redmond.gov/landuseforms](http://redmond.gov/landuseforms)).

## Permits and Notification

ADUs fall under three categories depending upon the type of ADU being constructed: Remodel, Addition, or Accessory Structure. Permit fees are assessed on the valuation of construction and are very low-cost for

this type of construction.

As a matter of courtesy, property owners who propose an ADU must notify their adjacent neighbors of the project in writing.

### Applicable Code Sections

**RCZ 21.08: Residential Regulations**

**RZC 21.08.20: Accessory Dwelling Units**

**Questions:** 425-556-2494 or [planneroncall@redmond.gov](mailto:planneroncall@redmond.gov).

You can also visit us in person at the Development Services Center located on the 2nd floor of City Hall. Open Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm.

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