



City of Carmel-by-the-Sea Community Planning and Building Department

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

What is an ADU?

An accessory dwelling unit (or ADU) is defined as an attached or detached residential dwelling which provides complete independent living facilities for one or more persons, including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation, which is located on the same parcel as a single-family dwelling (CMC 17.68.030).

What regulations apply to ADUs?

Accessory dwelling units are permitted in the Single-Family Residential (R-1) Zoning District on lots 4,000 square feet in size or larger. Accessory dwelling units must conform to all requirements of the R-1 zoning district, including but not limited to height, setbacks, lot coverage, base floor area, landscape, and historic preservation requirements. No more than one ADU may be constructed on any lot. The ADU may not be sold separately from the existing single-family home.

What are the size requirements for an ADU?

Floor Area: An accessory dwelling unit attached to an existing single-family home shall have a minimum floor area of 150 square feet and the maximum floor area shall not exceed fifty percent of the living area (excluding the garage) of the existing single family home. A detached accessory dwelling unit shall have a minimum floor area of 150 square feet and maximum floor area of 600 square feet. All of the existing and proposed structures, including ADUs, shall not exceed the allowable base floor area for the lot.

Building Height: An attached ADU constructed as an addition to an existing single-family home shall not exceed the height of the existing single-family home. Detached ADUs shall have a maximum height of 12 feet, unless located above an existing detached garage, in which case the maximum height of the R-1 zoning district applies.

What the parking requirements for an ADU?

An ADU wholly constructed within an existing and legally created space of a single-family home does not require on-site parking. Construction of a new ADU (whether an attached addition or new detached structure) does not require on-site parking if located within one-half mile of a public transit stop. If the ADU replaces an existing garage, carport, or covered parking structure, then replacement on-site parking shall be provided that is counted as 200 square feet of floor area and is subject to the maximum base floor area for the lot.

What are the permit requirements for an ADU?

All ADUs are exempt from design study and public hearing requirements. ADUs constructed wholly within an existing and legally created space of a single-family home shall only require approval of a building permit. Construction of a new ADU (whether an attached addition or new detached structure) shall require a building permit and shall also require a coastal development permit if the attached addition or new detached structure exceeds 10 percent of the existing floor area for all structures on the site.