



PLANNING
AND
LAND
SERVICES
DEPARTMENT

Accessory Dwelling Units

18A.35.080



2401 South 35th Street
Tacoma, WA 98409
(253) 798-4300
www.co.pierce.wa.us

Accessory dwelling units (ADU's) are intended to increase the supply of affordable and independent housing for a variety of households, increase home and personal security, provide supplemental earnings for people with limited incomes, and increase residential densities. This should occur by utilizing the existing infrastructure and community resources throughout the County while protecting the existing character of single-family neighborhoods.

APPLICATION.

The owner occupant shall apply for a Building Permit for an ADU. A complete application form must demonstrate that all size thresholds and design standards are met.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS.

The creation of an ADU shall be subject to the following general requirements:

Number. One ADU shall be allowed per lot of record as an accessory use in conjunction with any single-family structure. ADUs are not included in Planning Dept. density calculations, but are included in density calculations by the Tacoma Pierce County Health Dept.

Type of Unit. An ADU shall be permitted as a second dwelling unit attached to, or detached from, the principal dwelling. A detached ADU may be any dwelling permitted in the applicable land use classification.

Size. An ADU shall be no greater than 1,000 square feet when located in an Urban Growth Area. When located outside an Urban Growth Area, the size may increase to 1,250 square feet. Total Accessory structures cannot exceed 2000 square feet on lots less than one (1) acre.

Design. The following standards shall apply when the separation between the principal dwelling and proposed accessory dwelling in less than 100 linear feet:

- The entrance to an attached ADU shall not be directed toward any front yard unless utilizing an existing doorway.
- Detached ADUs shall be no closer to the front lot line than the front edge of the principal dwelling. This provision shall not apply to waterfront lots regulated pursuant to Pierce County Shoreline Management Regulations, Title 20.

New construction of a detached ADU or conversion of an existing detached structure to an ADU shall not be permitted within the required front, side, or rear yard setback. An exception to the required rear yard setback may be allowed if the rear yard abuts an alley.

If an ADU is created by constructing a **new detached structure**, the building height of the ADU shall not be greater than the principal dwelling's building height.

PARKING.

One off-street parking space shall be required for the ADU in addition to off-street parking required for the principal dwelling pursuant to Section 18A.35.040, Loading Area Requirements and Off-Street Parking.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW.

All requirements for critical area and resource lands applicable to single family residences shall apply to accessory dwelling units. Refer to Critical Area Checklist (CARLS) to determine if your parcel has environmental constraints.

STORMWATER AND EROSION CONTROL.

An accessory dwelling unit must meet erosion control requirements outlined in the Pierce County Stormwater Management and Site Development Manual for residential structures.

UTILITIES.

If the parcel is served by sanitary sewer, a Sewer Utility permit will be required, which will include a capacity charge. In order to review for this permit, the applicant must submit a site plan showing all structures on the site, and those proposed, as well as the location of the sewer line running to the Accessory Dwelling Unit.

ON SITE SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEM.

A certified drainfield installer/engineer is required to submit all proposals utilizing on-site sewage disposal to the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department. This review also includes the source of potable water.

The Final Building Inspection and Certificate of Occupancy will not be issued until the Septic System has been installed and/or modified and the As-built is accepted by the Health Department.

FIRE.

A fire hydrant is required to be available within 350 feet of the middle of the lot frontage. If a water main capable of providing at least 500 gpm is not located within that distance or if the lot is larger than 1 acre, credits for various fire protection features may be used in lieu of providing a fire hydrant.

On-site emergency vehicle access must extend from a public or private road to within 150 feet of all portions of the perimeter of the building. To the extent that the access is common to two dwelling units, the minimum width is 24 feet. Portions of the access serving only a single dwelling unit shall be at least 15 feet wide. An approved turnaround shall be provided when the required access exceeds 150 feet in length.

AFFIDAVIT.

An affidavit affirming that the owner will occupy the principal dwelling or the ADU and agreeing to all the general requirements as provided in this Title is required.

- An ADU shall be converted to another permitted use or shall be removed if one of the two dwelling units is not owner occupied.

NOTICE OF TITLE.

Prior to issuance of Building Permits, the owner occupant shall record a notice on the property title acknowledging the existence of the ADU with the Pierce County Auditor. Such notice shall be in a form as specified by the Department and shall include as a minimum:

- the legal description of the property which has been approved for an ADU;
- the applicability of the restrictions and limitations contained in this Section;
- a copy of the County-approved floor/site plan; and
- the property owner's signature on the notice, which shall be notarized prior to recording the notice.

Pierce County Development Center
2401 South 35th Street
Tacoma, WA 98409-7490
(253) 798-7200 1(800) 992-2456
Hours: M,T,TH,F 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM
Wed. 9:00 AM - 4:30