



ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

To maintain the character and safety of single family residential neighborhoods, Planning review and Building permit(s) are required for accessory dwelling units. Please refer to SMC 19.68 for additional information.

An accessory dwelling unit (formerly accessory living units; also known as granny flats, in-law quarters and secondary dwelling units) is a dwelling unit accessory to the primary residence that provides independent living accommodations for one or more persons.

PLANNING DIVISION REQUIREMENTS

The Planning Division reviews all accessory dwelling units to ensure they comply with size, location, design and other requirements of the Sunnyvale Municipal Code. The required permit is a Miscellaneous Plan Permit (MPP).

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

The following are the planning review requirements for all accessory dwelling units:

- Detached accessory dwelling units may not be located in front of the main residence.
- The entrance or stairway to an accessory dwelling unit may not be located on any building side facing the street upon which the existing unit faces nor be located on same side of dwelling as main unit's entrance.
- Exterior materials, colors, design and appearance of an accessory dwelling unit should be consistent with the primary residence on the same lot.
- The property must be owner-occupied for a minimum of 20 years upon construction of the accessory unit (see sidebar).

REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW OR EXPANDED ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

The following are the planning review requirements for new or expanded accessory dwelling units. New or expanded accessory dwelling units refer to any new accessory dwelling units proposed as part of a new addition to the primary residence or in a new or expanded detached structure.

Allowed Zoning Districts	R-0, R-1, R-2 and Residential DSP Blocks
Minimum Lot Size	8,500 sq. ft. for R-0 and R-1 5,000 sq. ft. for R-2 and Residential DSP Blocks
Size	150 sq. ft. minimum 700 sq. ft. maximum
Parking	1 additional off-street parking space unless eligible for parking exemption
Additional Design Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,000 sq. ft. open space minimum for R-2 lots • Compliance with base zoning district standards

NUMBER OF ACCESSORY UNITS
Only one accessory unit is permitted per lot.

DEED RESTRICTIONS
Prior to issuance of the building permit, the applicant shall file a deed restriction on the property that states the property shall be owner-occupied for a period of twenty years from the date the deed restriction is recorded.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CONVERTED ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

The following are planning requirements for converted accessory dwelling units. Converted accessory dwelling units refer to accessory dwelling units proposed entirely within an existing legal structure (as part of the primary residence or in an existing detached structure).

Allowed Zoning Districts	R-0 and R-1
Minimum Lot Size	None
Size	150 sq. ft. minimum
Parking	None (see sidebar)
Additional Design Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The space for ADU conversion need to be legal and permitted.• Sufficient side and rear setback required for fire safety.• Minimal exterior changes allowed (egress related).

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PLANNING REVIEW

The following are submittal requirements for all accessory dwelling units for planning review.

- Application signed by the property owner (1 copy)
- A Draft Copy of Deed Restriction (1 copy)
- Site Plan showing the location of the accessory dwelling unit, main home, required parking and property lines (2 copies)
- Floor plans for house and/or accessory structure (2 copies)
- Architectural Elevations (2 copies)
- Photos of existing structures on-site (1 copy)
- Fee (non-refundable) _____

BUILDING PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

Building permits are required for all accessory living units to ensure safe construction and conformance with code requirements.

No fire sprinklers are required for new accessory dwelling units if fire sprinklers are not required for the primary residence on the same lot. No new or separate utility hookups are required for converted accessory dwelling units; however, a utility fee may be required for new or expanded accessory dwelling units.

A recorded deed restriction on owner occupancy must be submitted to the City's Planning Division prior to issuance of a building permit. For any other building permit submittal requirements, including specific fire sprinkler requirements and other Code standards, please consult with the Building Division staff.

CONVERTING GARAGES TO ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

Replacement parking for the primary residence is required when a garage is converted to an accessory dwelling unit. The replacement parking spaces must be located on the same lot. Applications involving replacement parking proposals in conjunction with converted accessory dwelling units may require design review.