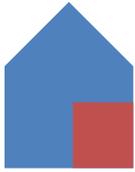
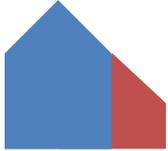




Accessory Dwelling Units

What is an Accessory Dwelling Unit?

An Accessory Dwelling Unit, or ADU, is a small residence on a property with a larger primary dwelling. The ADU is an independent space with its own kitchen, bathroom and sleeping area. ADUs may be converted from an existing structure or newly built within, attached, or detached of the primary dwelling. Accessory dwelling units fall into the following categories:

	<p><u>Junior ADU</u> - An ADU that can be created within the walls of an existing single-family residence. The Junior ADU is a living area that may or may not share a bathroom area with the primary dwelling, but does include its own kitchen and sleeping area. A Junior ADU requires that property owners record a Deed Restriction declaring that they will live on the property.</p>
	<p><u>Internal ADU</u> – An ADU created from the converted space of an existing structure. The existing structure may be expanded only for the purposes for providing ingress/egress and the expansion shall not exceed 150 square feet. When the existing structure is expanded it will be considered an Attached ADU (see below).</p>
	<p><u>Attached ADU</u> - An ADU built from either 1) new construction that shares at least one wall with the primary dwelling or 2) expansion of an existing structure.</p>
	<p><u>Detached ADU</u> - A free-standing ADU apart from the primary dwelling. May be created from an existing detached structure or from new construction. Detached ADUs require Title 24 energy calculations certified by CalCERTS or CHEERS. Detached ADUs from new construction are required to install solar panels.</p>
	<p><u>Internal ADU with Multi-Family Dwelling</u> – An ADU created from existing portions of an attached multi-family building not used for living space.</p>
	<p><u>Detached ADU with Multi-Family Dwelling</u> – A free standing structure created from new construction on a property with an existing or proposed attached multi-family building.</p>

ADU Development Standards

	Junior ADU	Attached/Detached/Internal ADU	Internal ADU on Multi-family Lot²	Detached ADU on Multi-family Lot²
Maximum floor area of ADU¹	500 SF	Whichever is greater: 50% of the main house up to 1,200 SF OR 1,000 SF for ADUs with 2 or more bedrooms and 850 SF for ADUs with 1 or less bedrooms	Size of the existing area of multi-family building not being used as living space	Whichever is greater: Average size of a dwelling unit up to 1,200 SF OR 1,000 SF for ADUs with 2 or more bedrooms and 850 SF for ADUs with 1 or less bedrooms
Maximum number of ADUs allowed	One (1) Junior ADU on a property with a single-family dwelling	One (1) attached OR one (1) detached ADU on a property with a single-family dwelling	Up to 25% of the number of the existing dwelling units	Two (2) detached ADUs
Setbacks¹	Junior ADU must be built within the walls of the primary residence.	Front yard: 20-feet Side and rear yards: 4 feet	Must be built within the walls of the multi-family building	Front yard: 20-feet Side and rear yards: 4 feet
Height¹	Junior ADU must be built within the walls of the primary residence.	25 FT	Must be built within the walls of the multi-family building	25 FT
Parking	No additional parking is required	No additional parking is required if within 1/2 mile of a bus stop, otherwise one (1) off-street parking space is required.	No additional parking is required	No additional parking is required if within 1/2 mile of a bus stop, otherwise one (1) off street parking space is required.
Expansion of existing structures	Not allowed	May expand up to 150 SF of an existing structure only to provide required unit access	Not allowed	Must be built from new construction.

Notes:

- 1) ADUs converted from existing structures are not required to comply with maximum size, setback, and height restrictions. However, they may only be expanded up to 150 SF only to provide required unit access.
- 2) Multi-family lots are lots where there is a building with two (2) or more attached units.

ADU Design Standards

- Air conditioners and HVAC equipment may not be visible from the public view.
- New entrances and doorways to an ADU shall not be located on walls facing the front yard.
- Building design shall substantially match the colors and building materials of the primary dwelling.
- Removal of garage doors shall be allowed when replaced with windows in similar scale to the wall and include trim, shutters or other exterior treatments.

ADU Building Code Requirements

Fire Sprinklers - Fire sprinklers are required in ADUs when the building code required the primary residence to have fire sprinklers.

Solar Panels - Solar panels are required for detached ADUs created from new construction. A separate building permit application is submitted for solar panel installations.

Energy Calculations - Energy calculations compliant with Title 24, Part 6 “Building Energy Efficiency Standards” will be required for a new or converted detached ADU.

ADA and Aging-in-Place compliance - ADUs shall comply with ADA and Aging-in-place design requirements. This includes having at least one bathroom with wall reinforcement for the future installation of grab bars.

Application Procedure and Requirements

1. Submit a building permit application with the following information
 - a. Building Permit application signed by the property owner or licensed contractor.
 - b. Two sets of plans. Plan sheets must be at least of 11” x 17” in size and include the following: Site plan, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing details; existing/proposed floor plans; exterior elevations; foundation plan; building cross section; framing plan; and roof plan.
 - c. For detached ADUs, energy calculations prepared in accordance to Title 24 and certified by CalCERTS or CHEERS.
2. City Staff review plans and submittals for completeness and code compliance. Responses are provided to the Applicant/Contractor within two weeks.
3. City staff approves plans for code compliance.
4. Applicant/contractor pays building permit fees and other applicable fees.
5. For Junior ADUs the applicant/contractor submits a copy of the recorded deed restriction.
6. City staff issues building permit to applicant/contractor.

Fees

Building Permit and Plan Review Fees – Building Permit Fees are calculated based on the valuation of the project and Table 3-A of 1997 Uniform Administrative Code. Additional fees for plumbing, electrical, and mechanical work also apply. Typical building permit and plan review fees for a detached ADU from new construction may range from \$1,400 for a 500 SF detached ADU to \$2,220 for a 1,200 SF detached ADU. ADU projects with lower valuations, junior ADUs, or ADUs converted from existing structures will have lower permit and review fees.

Development Impact Fees - ADUs 750 SF or greater are subject to development impact fees to be paid in proportion to the size of the primary residence. For example, an ADU that is 30% the size of the primary residence will pay 30% of the development impact fees that the primary residence would have to pay. ADUs in a multi-family dwelling will pay in proportion to average size of all multifamily units.

Sewer and Water Capacity Fees - ADUs shall pay sewer and water capacity fees if the ADU will be connected to a new utility lateral or if the ADU will be built along with a new single-family dwelling.

Utility Service Fees - Utility service fees will be reassessed to accommodate the additional residential utility use of an ADU. Junior accessory dwelling units are not subject to an increase in utility service fees.

School Impact Fees – ADUs that are 500 SF or greater are subject to school impact fees paid to each school district that the property is located.

Air Pollution Control District Rule 310 Fees – The Imperial County Air Pollution Control District requires that detached ADUs from new construction submit a Rule 310 application.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where do I start the process?

It is recommended that applicants speak to Planning & Zoning Division staff before applying for a permit to construct an ADU. Speaking to staff regarding your objectives and property will provide you with the information and options to make an informed decision. The Planning & Zoning Division staff are available at City Hall at 1275 W. Main Street, by phone at (760) 337-4545 or email at ecplanning@cityofelcentro.org for questions.

Can I apply for and build an ADU on my own?

Property owners may apply for a building permit for an ADU, however, to reduce delays in reviewing plans, building plans should be prepared by an architect, engineer, or other design professional with experience preparing building plans. A property owner may apply for a building permit as an “Owner-Builder” and acts as their own general contractor for the project.

How long does it take to receive a building permit an ADU?

Upon the submission of a complete application with plans, applicants will receive comments within two (2) weeks. Excluding the time it takes for the applicant to respond to any corrections or comments, the Community Development Department has up to 60 days to review an application for an ADU.

What is and when do I need to record a deed restriction?

State law requires that a deed restriction be recorded for properties that have a junior ADU requiring the property owner reside on the property. The deed restriction will be appearing on the title of the property. The recorded deed restriction shall be submitted before the Building Permit is issued. Please refer to the document “Junior ADU Deed Restriction Instructions” for further detailed information.