



ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
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ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT REQUIREMENTS

Accessory dwelling units (ADUs), or “in-law units,” are permitted in all single-family residential zoning districts or on any lot located in a multi-family zoning district with an existing permitted and approved single-family home. Requirements for ADUs are summarized below and specific requirements for **detached** and **attached** units are noted. For more information, see Section 18.32.020(M) of the Municipal Code, which can be accessed on-line at <http://gcode.us/codes/unioncity>.

An ADU may be created through the conversion of existing living space, conversion of a garage, the addition of new habitable space, the conversion of a legally permitted existing detached accessory structure, or through the construction of a new detached unit.

PERMITS:

- A building permit is required for any improvements necessary to ensure that the unit meets current standards.

REQUIRED FACILITIES:

- ADUs must provide a kitchen, bathroom, and sleeping area for the sole use of the unit.
- Adequate water and sewer service must be provided. Combined utilities with the main house or separate utilities are allowed.

SETBACKS AND LOCATION:

- **Detached** ADUs must be 5 feet from other structures, 5 feet from the rear and side property lines, and 15 feet back from the street side property line (20 feet for key lots).
- **Detached** ADUs must be located in the rear half portion of the lot (i.e. backyard).
- **Attached** ADUs shall conform to the same setbacks as the main house.

SIZE:

- On lots measuring less than 8,500 square feet - ADU must be between 275 and 640 square feet, with a maximum of one bedroom.
- On lots that measures 8,500 square feet or greater - ADU must be between 275 and 800 square feet, with a maximum of two bedrooms.
- No more than 25 percent of the existing home can be converted into an **attached** ADU.
- The living area of an **attached** ADU shall not be larger than 50 percent of the main house.

HEIGHT:

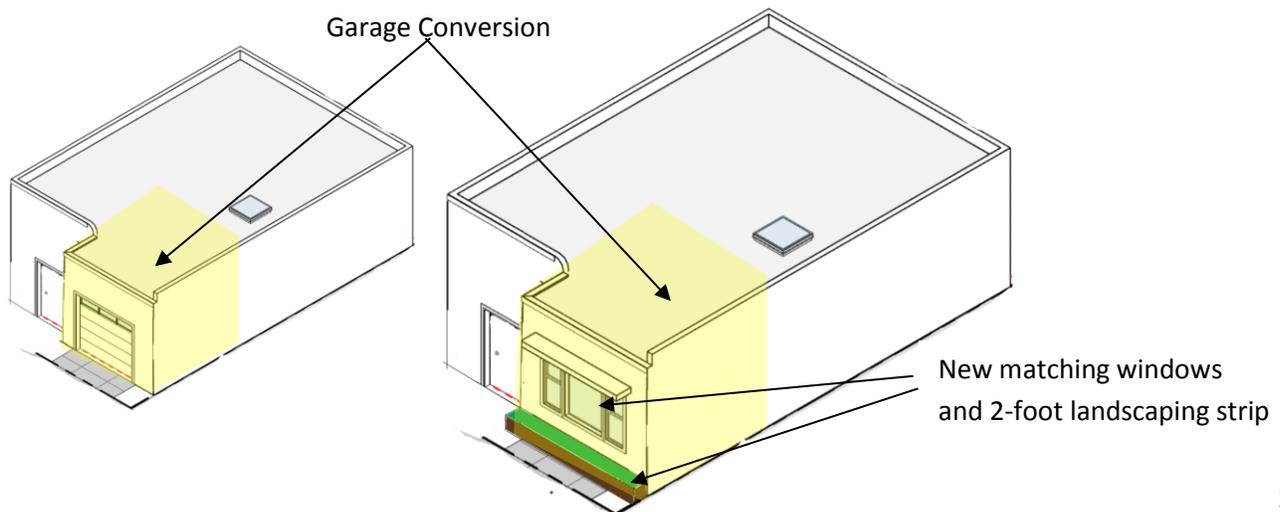
- **Detached** ADUs are limited to one story and a maximum height of 12 feet unless a higher roof pitch is needed to match the main house.

LOT COVERAGE:

- The maximum lot coverage for the zoning district shall not be exceeded.
- A maximum rear lot coverage of 30 percent is permitted for **detached** ADUs.

DESIGN:

- The ADU must match existing home in terms of exterior materials and design, including roof materials, roof pitch, roof eaves and overhang, color scheme, siding, trim elements and detailing of window and door frames, and architectural features. This includes the use of manufactured homes.
- In the event an exact match cannot be achieved, the entire structure shall be repainted/re-roofed.
- The ADU shall be located and designed so as to not disrupt the privacy of, or create noise impacts on adjacent residents and yards.
- All exterior doors to the ADU shall be setback a minimum of ten (10) feet from adjacent property lines, and a three (3) foot covered entry way is required.
- An ADU shall be clearly subordinate to the main house on the parcel by size, location and appearance.
- **Detached** ADUs shall provide window treatment that includes mullions (window grids) and decorative window trims.
- **Attached** ADUs cannot have exterior doors on the façade as the entrance to the main house.
- Outside stairways to an **attached** ADU are subject to the setback standards of the principal dwelling and shall not be visible from the public street.
- If the conversion of an existing garage to an **attached** ADU includes the removal of the garage door, then the front façade shall be designed with one or more windows, architectural detailing, trim, colors and materials consistent with the primary dwelling. A minimum of two feet of landscaping and irrigation shall be added between the ADU and the abutting driveway.



PARKING:

- One (1) additional on-site parking spot (9' by 18') is required for the ADU (no additional parking is required for homes within one-half mile of the Union City Bart Station*).
- Parking spaces that are displaced due to a garage conversion must be replaced onsite.
- The required parking for the ADU may be in an existing driveways, on concrete aprons adjacent to driveways, or on other compact material for vehicle parking adjacent to driveways.
- The required parking must be fully contained on private property, and shall not overhang into any portion of the public right-of-way, including the sidewalk.
- Access to the required parking shall be through an existing driveway (additional approvals from Planning and Public Works are required for driveway expansions, new driveways, curb cut expansions, and new curb cuts).
- If an existing driveway is expanded to accommodate a new parking spot for an ADU, then the entire driveway must be replaced to appear uniform. A minimum landscaped setback of three (3) feet shall be provided between the driveway and the neighboring property.
- If the front or street side yard landscaping is removed to accommodate a new parking spot, then remaining landscaping shall be upgraded to meet the requirements of Section 18.112 of the Municipal Code and the Landscape Standards Policy Statement.

OTHER:

- Prior to final inspection of the ADU, any dead, dying, or damaged landscaping shall be replaced on the lot.
- A three (3) foot tall fence is allowed to separate common yards for the uses of the main house and the ADU.
- All utility connections to the ADU shall be undergrounded, in the event that new utility connections are required, the new and existing connection shall both be undergrounded.
- A new street address for the ADU is required to assist in emergency response.
- ADUs cannot be rented out for short-term rentals (less than 30 days).
- ADUs that are rented out for long-term rental (30 days or more) are required to have a business license and must follow all City ordinances related to rental properties.
- ADUs are subject to impact fees (Capital Facilities, Park Facilities, Traffic Signalization, and other fees imposed by outside utility districts.)

*Refer to Section 18.32.160.B.3.b for additional exemptions