

INFORMATION ON ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUs)

An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is defined as an attached or detached dwelling unit secondary to the principal dwelling unit(s) on a property. ADUs are typically a small attached/detached fully separated living unit having its own kitchen, bathroom, and bedroom. Sometimes called a Granny flat or Mother-in-law suite, this housing type is not entirely new but has become more popular in the past several years.



Attached



Detached (Stand Alone)



Above Garage

ADU STANDARDS SUMMARY

For the complete standards, view the Oshtemo Township Zoning Ordinance
Section 48.160 – Accessory Dwelling Units.

- Only one (1) ADU is permitted per property.
- The size requirements for an ADU are 350 - 900 square feet, including bathroom, kitchen, and sleeping area. In no circumstances will the ADU exceed the total square footage of the principal dwelling.
- No more than three (3) individuals, meeting the definition of a family, may reside in an ADU.
- An ADU must be built on property zoned AG, RR, R-1, R-2, R-3, or VC.
- An ADU shall be furnished with its own kitchen, full bathroom, and sleeping area.
- Certain yard setbacks and lot coverage maximums of the underlying zoning district apply, depending on whether the ADU is attached or detached.
- A building permit and a Certificate of Occupancy are required for an ADU.
- The height of an ADU shall not exceed 15 feet, nor the height of the principal dwelling, unless approved by Planning Commission.
- An ADU must meet the building code and be connected to public or private utilities.
- The exterior design of an ADU shall be compatible with the existing residence.
- Mobile homes, trailers on wheels, RVs, or similar structures or conveyances are not considered ADUs.

ADU PERMIT PROCESS

Applications and fee to establish an ADU shall be made to the Planning and Zoning Department consisting of but not limited to the following:

1. A site plan showing all existing and proposed structures on the property, setbacks of the proposed ADU from all property lines and structures, designated parking area for the ADU and principal dwelling, and elevation drawings, where necessary.
2. A floor plan and building plan showing the kitchen, bathroom, sleeping area, entry stairs, and gross square footage, connecting wall or floor to the principal residence, where necessary, and elevations including windows, doors, porches, walls, and other exterior features.
3. A Deed Restriction by the owner of record acknowledging one of the two dwellings will be occupied by the owner of record and the ADU cannot be sold separately from the principal dwelling unless removed from the property or the property is subdivided in compliance with all ordinance requirements.
4. An affidavit by the owner of record indicating which of the dwellings will be occupied by the owner of record.

ADU Q&A

Q: Do I have to get a building permit for my ADU?

A: Most likely. Contact the Building Department at 269-585-4150 or building@oshtemo.org for more information.

Q: Can I build an ADU above the detached garage/pole barn?

A: Yes, if the new total height will not exceed the height of the primary house and the structure can meet Building Codes. However, if the new total height exceeds the height of the primary house, approval by the Planning Commission will be required for review of any neighborhood impacts.

Q: Do ADUs have to meet setback distances?

A: Yes. Detached ADUs follow the setbacks for accessory buildings, typically 10 feet, or the height of the building, from the side and rear property lines. Attached ADUs follow the setbacks for the principal dwelling in the zoning district the property is located in.

Q: Can my grown child live in the ADU?

A: Yes; however, no more than three people, meeting the definition of a family, may live in an ADU.

Q: Do I have to connect my ADU to water and sanitary facilities?

A: Yes. All ADUs must be connected to a water supply and sanitary facilities. It is recommended to reach out to the Public Works Department at publicworks@oshtemo.org to see what facilities will be required.

Q: Can I build several ADUs on a single lot and rent them out?

A: No. Only one ADU on a single lot is allowed. An ADU may be rented but only long-term (not less than 180 days).

Notes:

- This is not an exhaustive outline of all requirements for accessory buildings. To find a complete copy of Ordinance Sec. 48.160, Accessory Dwelling Units, please visit: <https://oshtemo.org/About-Oshtemo/General-Zoning-Ordinances/>
- If you reside in a subdivision/site condominium, please review HOA/Deed Restrictions for additional requirements.