

DETACHED ACCESSORY BUILDINGS

The Zoning Ordinance requires every home to have a minimum rear yard distance of 30 feet. This is measured from the furthest most point of the home to the rear lot line. In most cases, you will have more than 30 feet. The size of the structure depends on how much rear yard you have. Corner lots have different requirements.

- Structure is to maintain 6 feet from any lot line if it has a permanent foundation
- Must also maintain 10 feet from the house
- A shed may be placed 1 foot from any lot line if the shed is movable
- An accessory structure under 400 square feet to 200 square feet may have a footing depth of 12 inches if soil conditions allow and not located in a side yard
- A shed 200 square feet or less does not need a foundation and may be located in a side or rear yard 1 foot from a lot line if movable.
- A shed may not be located in a front yard or front yard setback
- The combined lot coverage of all detached structures shall not exceed 25% of a rear yard area, or exceed the ground floor living area of the principal building, whichever is less.
- Each property may have one shed not to exceed 80 square feet that is exempt from the accessory structure lot coverage calculations.
- A site plan must be submitted and **approved** before any work can be started. Any information given over the phone does not constitute approval.

Residential Zoning FAQs Accessory Structure Placement

Q1. What is an accessory structure?

A1. An “accessory structure” is a building or other structure that is smaller in size and secondary in purpose to the principal use of the property. It can be attached to the house or it can be a separate structure. Most often, an accessory structure is a garage or shed, but can also include carports, gazebos, and greenhouses.

Q2. Why does the Zoning Ordinance regulate accessory structures?

A2. The Zoning Ordinance ensures that the accessory structure will be properly placed on the lot in relation to the house and the property lines, the structure will be compatible with the house and the neighborhood, and minimum greenspace requirements will be met.

If your property is located in an historic district, the structure must also be approved by the City’s Historic Preservation Commission. The zoning and historic preservation reviews can be done when you come in for the building permit.

Q3. What types of permits are required before I can build (or add onto) my accessory structure?

A3. **Zoning Permit.** A zoning permit is required for accessory structures that are 120-200 sq.ft. in size.

Building Permit. A building permit is required for accessory structures that are 200 sq. ft. or larger in size. See the Building Department’s *Permit Guide for Residential Garages* for more information.

Curb Cut or Driveway. If a new curb cut or driveway is planned, the Department of Public Works (DPW) will review the proposed location.

Q4. What information must I provide for zoning review?

A4. The following information is needed:

- **Building Permit Application.**
- **Zoning Information Attachment** as required (see A3 above).
- **Site Plan** (overhead view) showing the exact locations and dimensions of all property lines, existing buildings, driveways, streets, alleys and the proposed accessory structure and any proposed driveways or curb cuts.
- Elevation drawing (side view) of the proposed accessory structure identifying all building materials.

Q5. How large can my accessory structure be?

A5. It depends on the Zone District, the size of the lot, and other accessory structures already on the property.

Q6. How high can my accessory structure be?

A6. It depends on the Zone District and the lot size. Height is measured from the finished grade to the mid-point of the roof (between the peak and the top of the wall).

Q7. What other zoning requirements must be followed?

A7. In addition to square footage and height, the following requirements apply:

Detached Accessory Structures:

- Must be architecturally compatible with the house.
- Must be located at least 6 ft. from rear and side lot
- Cannot be located in the front yard.
- Must be placed at least 10 ft. from house.

Attached Accessory Structures:

- Must meet the setback requirements for the house.

Detached Accessory Building

