

Second Dwelling Units



INFORMATION

What is a "second dwelling unit?"

A *second dwelling unit* is defined as a dwelling unit that provides complete, independent living facilities for one or more persons. It shall include permanent provisions for living, sleeping, cooking, and sanitation on the same parcel or parcels as the primary unit is situated. These units are sometimes referred to as "granny flats."

What is their purpose?

The State Legislature enacted laws allowing second dwelling units to address the critical shortage of affordable housing in California.

Where are they allowed?

Second dwelling units are allowed on properties located in the Very Low (VL), Low (L), and Low Medium (LM) Residential zones. Each zone has its own set of use site development regulations. Note that the regulations for the same zone may vary in different areas of the City, such as within planned communities (Terra Vista and Victoria) and the Etiwanda community. Furthermore, second dwelling units are limited to parcels of 10,000 square feet in area or more.

What permit do I need?

A building permit is required for detached structures of **120** square feet or greater, and for any size room addition to an existing home, including patio covers. Permits are also required for any remodeling involving removal or

construction of walls, openings, new, or changes to, electrical or plumbing. Please contact the Building and Safety Department at (909) 477-2710 to obtain the necessary permits prior to construction.

Can I use part of, or add to, my existing house as a second dwelling unit?

Yes. In the event that you decide to use part of, or add to, the house, the maximum floor area dedicated to this purpose is 30 percent of the primary dwelling unit's floor area. The minimum parking requirement still applies. Note, if you choose to add to your house, development regulations for additions shall apply.

How close can I build to my property lines?

The City is divided into different areas called "zones." Each zone has its own set of development standards. The requirements for the same zone may vary in different areas of the City, such as within planned communities (Terra Vista and Victoria) and the Etiwanda community.

By checking your street address (or assessor's parcel number), the Planning Department can determine your zone and the applicable building setbacks required for your lot. There are setback requirements from the front, side, and rear property lines. Note that the front yard building setbacks are measured from the curb face. Within the rear yard area, special development standards apply.

If the second dwelling unit is detached from the primary residence, then it will be classified as an accessory structure and will be subject to site development regulations for these structures.

How high can I build?

Like building setback, the height limit is based upon the type of structure and the zone. As a general rule, accessory buildings are subject to the same height limit as the residence; however, they are limited to 16 feet (one-story) within the rear yard setback. Contact the Planning Department for specific information about your lot.

What is the maximum floor area?

Second dwelling units are limited to **640** square feet if your lot is between 10,000 – 20,000 square feet in area. If your lot is over 20,000 square feet in area, then the maximum size is **950** square feet. In addition, the total area of the lot can be "covered" by buildings depends upon the zone. Lot coverage is any area of the property covered by buildings (measured from the outer edge of roof eaves), solid patio covers, projecting balconies, decks, and similar features. Lot coverage does not include driveways, patio slabs, open trellis/lattice style patio covers, sidewalks, landscaping, pools, or sport courts. Contact the Planning Department for specific information about your lot.

Can I use a mobile home?

Yes. However, the use of such a structure is limited to one or two occupants 60 years of age or older and related to the occupants of the primary residence by blood, marriage, or adoption. Furthermore, a mobile home must be located in the rear yard and screened from public view.

Are there any other requirements?

Yes, One enclosed parking space (9' x 19' minimum inside dimension) is required for each

bedroom within the second dwelling unit. This parking space is in addition to the 2 parking spaces required from the primary house. Note that if there is already a 3-car (or more) garage on the property that meets the City standard, you already fulfill this requirement.

In addition, if your house uses a septic system and your lot is less than ½-acre (about 21,780 square feet) in area, then you will have to contact the *California Regional Water Quality Control Board* at (909) 781-6288 to determine any other requirements or limitations before you submit your application for a conditional use permit.

For Further Information:

Contact the Planning Department at (909) 477-2750 or visit us at 10500 Civic Center Drive. Our offices are open Monday through Thursday, between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.