



RESOURCE GUIDE FOR

# Accessory Dwelling Units

PLAN | DESIGN | PERMITS | REVIEW | BUILD



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# ADUs in Capitola

## ADUs = Accessory Dwelling Units

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) are independent homes located on the same property as another primary dwelling home. ADUs are also referred to as in-law suites, casitas, or second units. They generally include amenities for living, sleeping, cooking, and sanitation. ADUs can be constructed for long-term renters or individuals associated with the primary dwelling unit owners. In Capitola, the development standards for building an ADU vary on the size, shape, and existing property location. ADUs are allowed in any zoning district where single-family or multifamily dwellings are a permitted use and on any parcel with an existing or proposed single-family or multifamily dwelling. Additionally, ADUs cannot be utilized as vacation rentals (less than 30 days), and the City has fee-waiver incentives available for those planning to construct ADUs for more affordable housing for Capitola.



## About this ADU Resource Guide

In 2020, new state laws took effect related to development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU). The new laws allow all properties within residential zones to build an ADU on the property. The laws also required cities throughout California to create an administrative review process for ADUs that comply with state standards. Essentially, the process has been streamlined to help produce more housing throughout California. This guide was created through the use of an SB2 grant to assist homeowners with the review process for ADUs and ultimately to support the city's goals for creating more affordable housing options.



### City Resources

420 Capitola Avenue, Capitola, CA 95010  
Phone: 831-475-7300  
Email: [Planning@ci.capitola.ca.us](mailto:Planning@ci.capitola.ca.us)  
City Website: <https://www.cityofcapitola.org/>

### ADU Resources, Permits, & Forms:

<https://www.cityofcapitola.org/communitydevelopment>

### Capitola Municipal Ordinance

<https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/Capitola/>

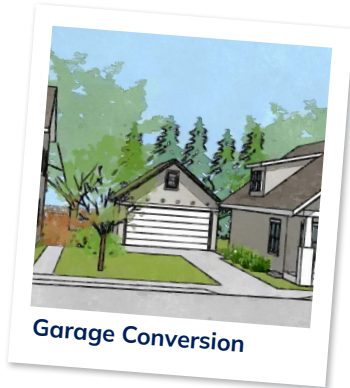
### Chapter 17.74 - Accessory Dwelling Units

<https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/Capitola/#!/html/Capitola17/Capitola1774.html>



# Types of ADUs

Before you jump-in to planning and designing your ADU, it is important to understand the different types of ADUs, since each type has specific development standards. Below is a summary of each type of ADU. The Guide will provide standards for each type on the following pages.



## Internal / Conversion

### Internal ADU - see page 8

An Internal accessory dwelling unit is an ADU that is fully contained within the existing space of the primary dwelling unit or an accessory structure.

### Junior ADU (JADU) - see page 8

Junior accessory dwelling unit (JADU) is an ADU that is no more than 500 square feet in size and contained entirely within a single-family residence.



## Detached

### One-Story Detached - see pages 9 & 10

A One-Story Detached ADU is an ADU that does not share a common wall with primary dwelling unit and can either be new construction or built into an existing detached structure.

### Two-Story Detached - see page 12

A Two-Story Detached ADU is an ADU that does not share a common wall with a primary dwelling unit, but instead has two-stories of living space in a single accessory dwelling unit or a second story living space above an existing or proposed ground floor garage.



## Attached

### One-Story Attached - see page 11

An Attached ADU means an accessory dwelling unit that shares at least one common wall with the primary dwelling unit and is not fully contained within the existing space of the primary dwelling unit. An Attached ADU is new construction of an addition to the primary dwelling.

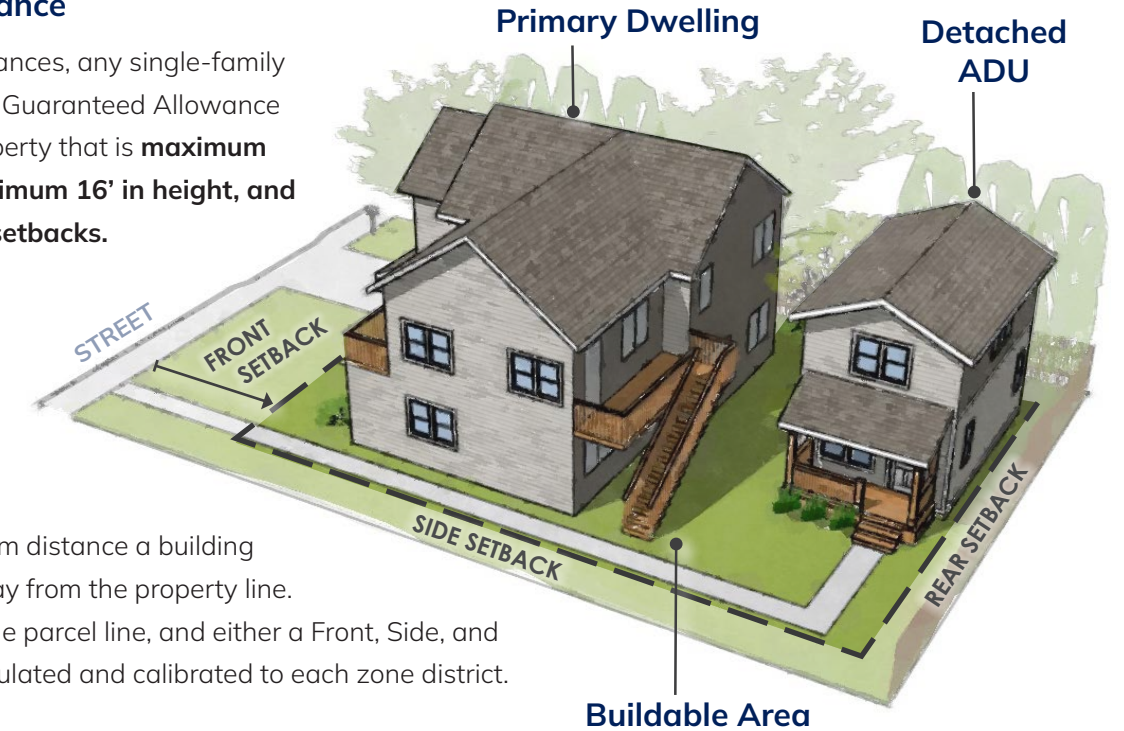
### Two-Story Attached - see page 13

A Two-story Attached ADU means an attached accessory dwelling unit that is configured as either two stories of living space attached to an existing primary dwelling unit, or a new addition of a second-story living space above a ground-floor garage or living space in an existing primary dwelling unit.

# Terms to Know

## Guaranteed Allowance

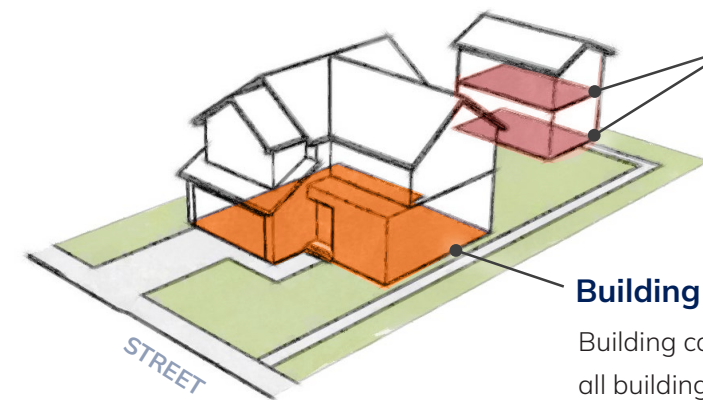
No matter the circumstances, any single-family home in Capitola has a Guaranteed Allowance of an ADU on their property that is **maximum 800 sq. ft. in size, maximum 16' in height, and 4' minimum property setbacks.**



## Setbacks

A setback is the minimum distance a building needs to be located away from the property line.

The setback varies by the parcel line, and either a Front, Side, and Rear Setback and is regulated and calibrated to each zone district.



## Floor Area

Floor area is the total combined square footage of all floors of all buildings on a parcel. The "Floor Area Ratio" is the total floor area divided by the parcel area.

## Building Coverage

Building coverage means the land area covered by all buildings and accessory structures on a parcel.

## Capitola ADU Quick Facts

- ADUs can be built with existing or proposed single-family or multifamily dwellings
- ADUs may not be used for short-term or vacation rentals (less than 30 days)
- Permits, costs, and timelines for ADU construction depend on the complexity of the ADU design
- ADUs cannot be sold separately from the primary dwelling - ADUs are Deed Restricted
- For a JADU, the property owner must occupy either the primary dwelling unit or the JADU
- If your ADU is to be an affordable long-term rental to low or very low income households, you can be eligible for permit fee waivers
- A prefabricated or modular home is allowed as an ADU (must have permanent chassis)
- Vehicles and trailers (with or without wheels) are not allowed as ADUs



# Design & Planning

Now that you are familiar with the different ADU types and key terms, its time to begin designing your ADU! Keep the following factors in mind as you design your ADU, as design decisions will impact the level of review required to obtain a permit, and certain standards will apply based on the type and size of the ADU you want to build.



## Designing your ADU

Use construction resources like the Pre-Designed ADU Plans or work with local design professionals (contractors, architects) to create your ADU.

The Development and Design Standards for each Type of ADU are listed here on the following pages 8-13 to help you understand the Capitola ADU Ordinance!

## Pre-Designed ADU Plans

The City of Capitola has Pre-Designed ADU architectural plans for Detached ADUs, available for your project! These plans were created to help expedite the review time of your ADU. The building department will require additional information including a current survey of the property and soils report.

You can choose from Studio, One-Bedroom, or Two-Bedroom designs to best fit your needs. These construction plans include different exterior design options, material selection guidelines, and completed construction documents. Explore the architectural styles and select what ADU design best fits with your property. You will see these Pre-Designed ADU Plans referenced often within the Guide, and you can find more details about obtaining and using these plans on Page 20.



## Level of Review for ADUs

The Development and Design Standards and Permitting Process required for your project vary depending on the type of ADU you plan to construct and the size and location of your ADU. Below is a summary of the minimum **Level of Review** required based on the type and sizes of the ADU. While the following pages provide a summary of standards for each review type, there may be site conditions or other factors that will require a higher level of review for your specific project, and you should consult the Planning Department to verify the level of review needed based on your unique project.

### LEVEL 1 REVIEW

*ADUs Subject to 'Limited Standards':*

ADUs that comply with the '**Limited Development Standards**' from the Capitola ADU ordinance are eligible for a **Level 1 Review** and shall be approved with a **Planning Administrative Permit** over a **60-Day Review** period. A building permit application may be submitted concurrently with the Planning Administrative Permit application. An application using the Pre-Designed ADU Plans must comply with setback requirements to be reviewed as a Level 1 Review.

**Junior ADU (JADU)** pg. 8  
(Less than 500 sq. ft.)

**Internal/Conversion ADU** pg. 8

**One-Story Detached** pg. 9  
(Less than 800 sq. ft.)

### LEVEL 2 REVIEW

*ADUs Subject to 'Full Review Standards':*

ADUs that comply with the '**Full Review Standards**' from the Capitola ADU ordinance are eligible for a **Level 2 Review**. Similar to Level 1 Review, the city staff shall review and approve an application for an **Administrative Permit** over a **60-Day Review** period, however projects must meet all of the **Development and Design Standards** (e.g. entrance orientation, privacy features, etc.) for ADUs in this category.

**One-Story Detached** pg. 10  
(800-1200 sq. ft.)

**One-Story Attached** pg. 11

### LEVEL 3 REVIEW

*ADUs Requiring a Design Permit:*

A **Level 3 Review** is required for ADUs that **vary from the Development and Design Standards** or ADUs that are two-stories tall. Sometimes properties have unique design features or site conditions that limit an applicant's ability to comply with the development standards of the ordinance, so this level of review provides a process to accommodate variation in site conditions. A variance is not required. **Level 3 Review** requires a **Public Hearing** and **Planning Commission** approval of a **Design Permit** based on the **Findings** presented in the ordinance.

**Attached Two-Story ADUs** pg. 12  
(over >16' in height)

**Detached Two-Story ADUs** pg. 13  
(over >16' in height)

**ADUs Deviating from Standards  
Historic Properties\*** pg. 16

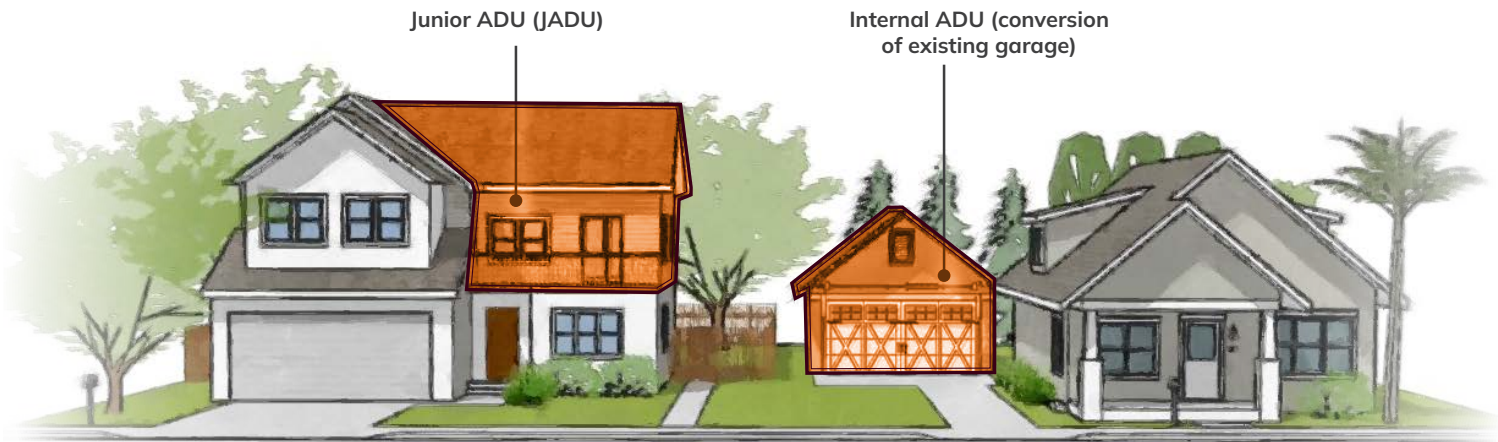


# Internal ADU & JADUs

LEVEL 1 REVIEW

Internal ADUs & Junior ADUs are spaces within an existing single-family dwelling or accessory structure, such as a shed, pool house, etc., that are converted to an ADU, or ADUs that are built within a new single-family dwelling.

**Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit (JADU)** is an ADU that is no more than 500 square feet in size. The JADU is contained entirely within a single-family residence, and can share a bathroom with the primary residence but must have its own cooking facilities. JADUs do not require full fire-rated construction of shared walls and ceilings (if they have interior access to the primary dwelling), and the owner must live on-site in one of the units. Parking is not required.



To qualify for "Level 1" Review, the Internal ADU or JADU must comply with the following.

- One internal ADU or JADU is allowed per parcel with a proposed or existing single-family dwelling.
- The internal ADU or JADU is within the proposed space of a single-family dwelling or existing space of a single-family dwelling or accessory structure.
- ADU or JADU in an existing accessory structure may include an expansion of not more than 150 square feet for ingress and egress.
- An expansion beyond the physical dimensions of the existing accessory structure shall be limited to accommodating ingress and egress.
- The unit has an independent, exterior access from the outside of the building. JADUs can be accessed through a common hall. Adding a second story staircase would trigger a Level 3 Review.
- The side and rear setbacks are sufficient for fire and safety.
- The junior accessory dwelling unit complies with Government Code Section 65852.22.

## Internal ADUs within Non-Livable Multifamily Space

One or more Internal ADUs within existing multifamily buildings are allowed within portions of the building that are not used as livable space (such as storage rooms, boiler rooms, passageways, attics, basements or garages).

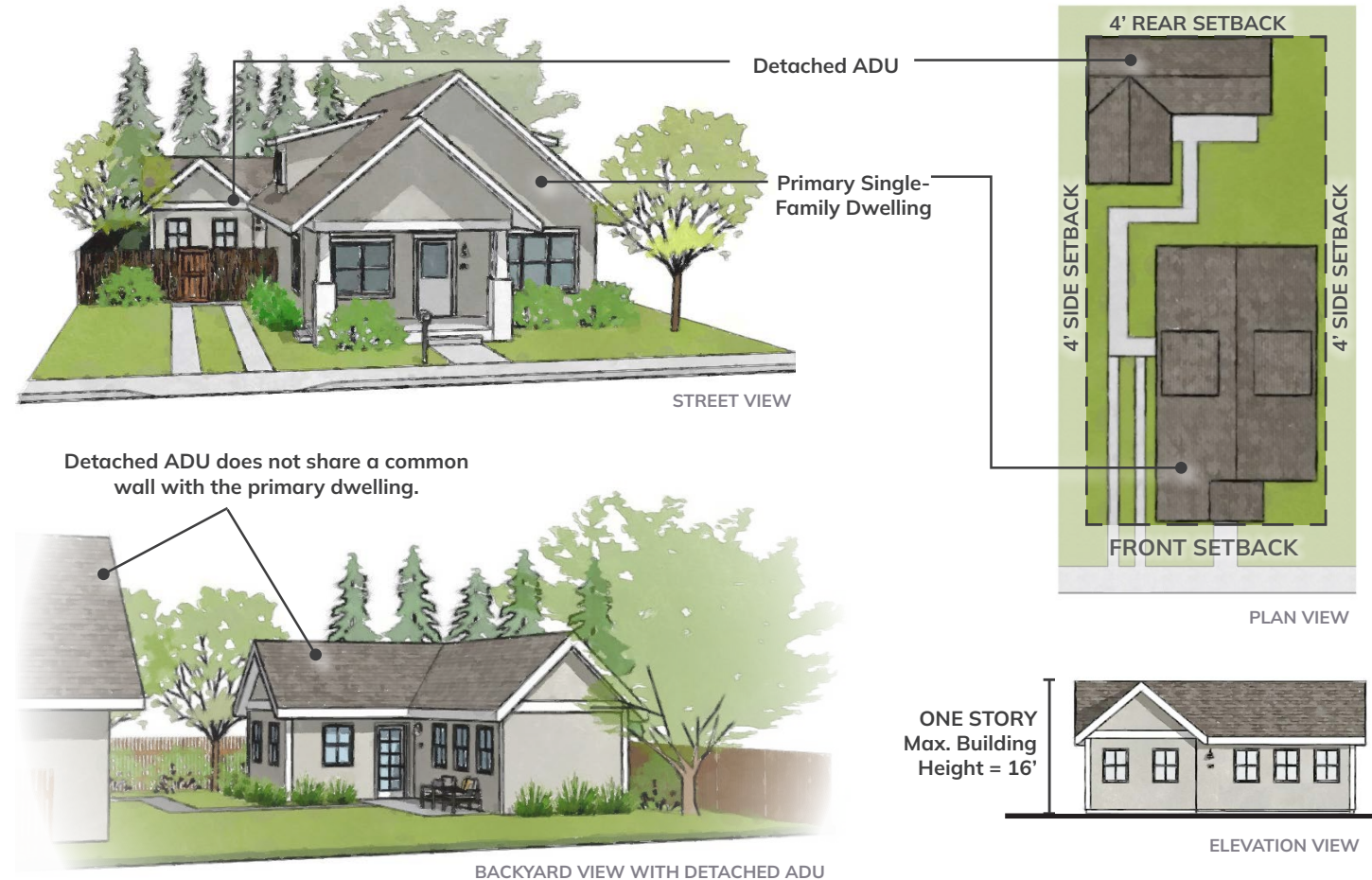
- At least one ADU is allowed within an existing multifamily dwelling up to a maximum of 25% of the existing multifamily dwelling units; and
- Each unit shall comply with state building standards for dwellings.

# One-Story Detached ADU

LEVEL 1 REVIEW

< 800 sq. ft.

A One-Story Detached ADU is an ADU that does not share a common wall with primary dwelling unit and can either be new construction or built into an existing detached structure. To qualify for a Level 1 Type Review with "Limited Standards", the ADU must be no more than 800 sq. ft. in size in addition to the standards on this page.



Detached ADU does not share a common wall with the primary dwelling.

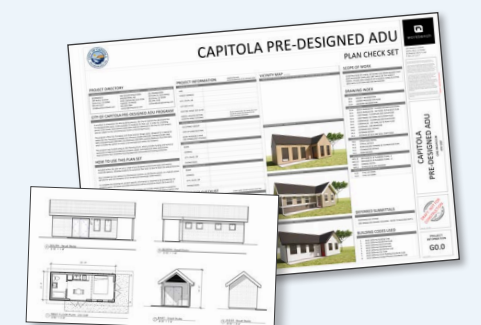
The Detached ADU must comply with the following to qualify for "Level 1" Review:

- Minimum rear and side setbacks:** 4 feet
- Floor Area, Maximum:** 800 square feet (does not apply to ADUs on multifamily parcels)
- Height, Maximum:** 16 feet.
- Single-Family Dwelling:** One detached ADU for a parcel with a proposed or existing single-family dwelling can be approved with an Administrative Permit. The detached accessory dwelling unit may be combined with a JADU.
- Multifamily Parcels:** Not more than two detached ADUs on a parcel that has an existing multifamily dwelling.

## Pre-Designed ADU Plans

The City of Capitola has permit-ready ADU drawings available for your One-Story detached ADU project! These plans are designed to qualify for the Level 1 "Limited Review" to expedite the ADU approval process, however if your property requires the Pre-Designed ADU plans to deviate from standards (i.e. property setbacks), you will have to go through a Level 2 or 3 Review.

Learn More about Pre-Designed ADU Plans on Page 20.



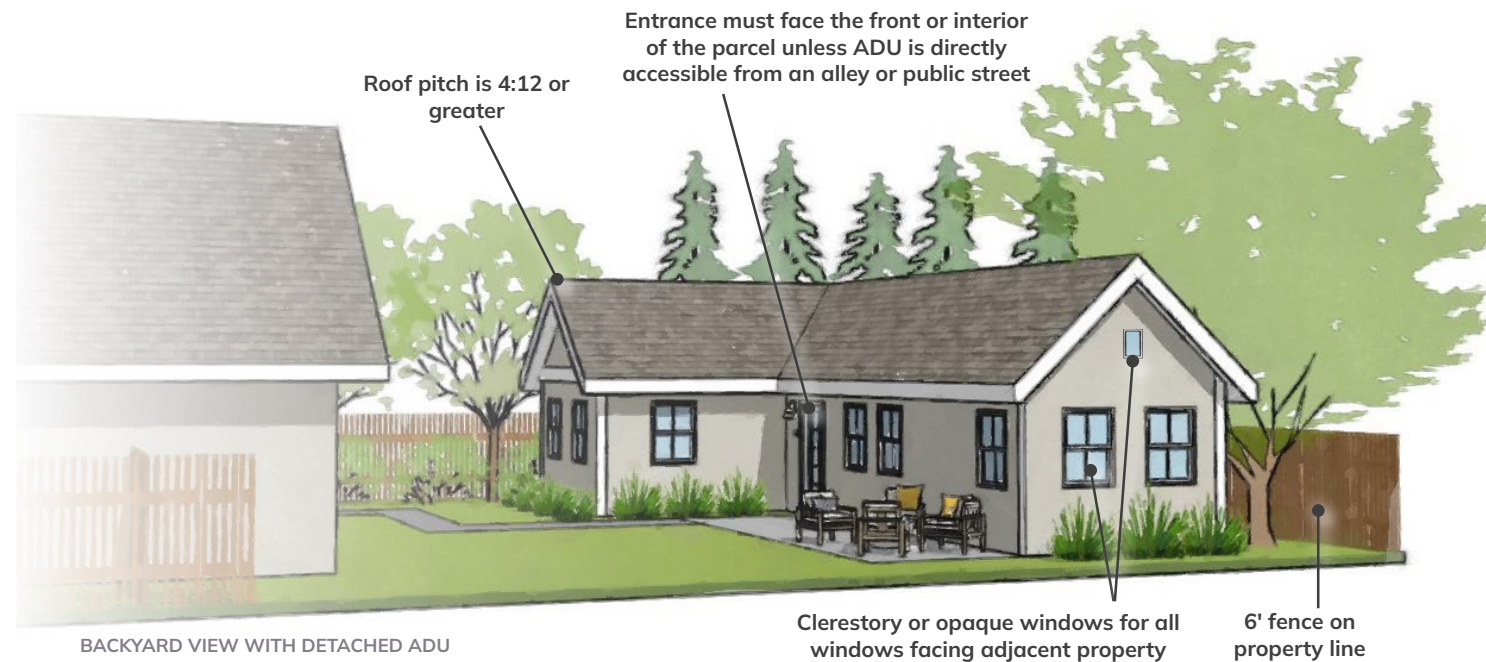


# One-Story Detached ADU

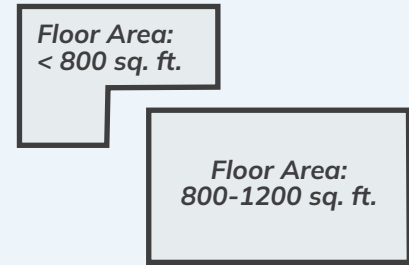
LEVEL 2 REVIEW

800 - 1200 sq. ft.

A One-Story Detached ADU is an ADU that does not share a common wall with primary dwelling unit and can either be new construction or built into an existing detached structure. To qualify for a Level 2 Review, the ADU must be between 800 and 1200 sq. ft. in size and comply with the "Full Review Standards", which are summarized on this page.



- The Detached ADU must comply with the following to qualify for "Level 2" Review:**
- Minimum rear and side setbacks: 4 feet
  - Front Setback, Minimum: Same as primary dwelling
  - Floor Area, Maximum: 1200 square feet
  - Height, Maximum: 16 feet
  - Building Coverage, Maximum: 40% in R-M Zoning District, no maximum in all other zoning districts
  - Floor Area Ratio, Maximum: as required by zoning district. Standard may not prohibit guaranteed allowance of an ADU with at least 800 square feet of floor area.
  - Private Open Space, Minimum: 48 sq. ft.



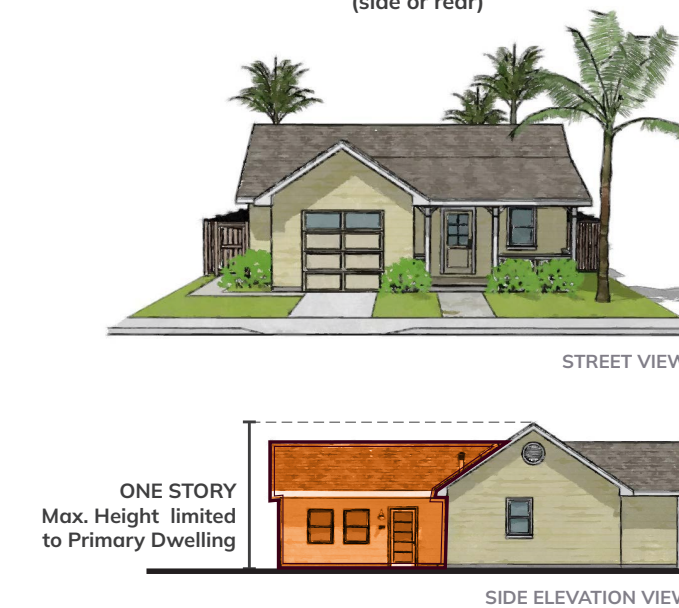
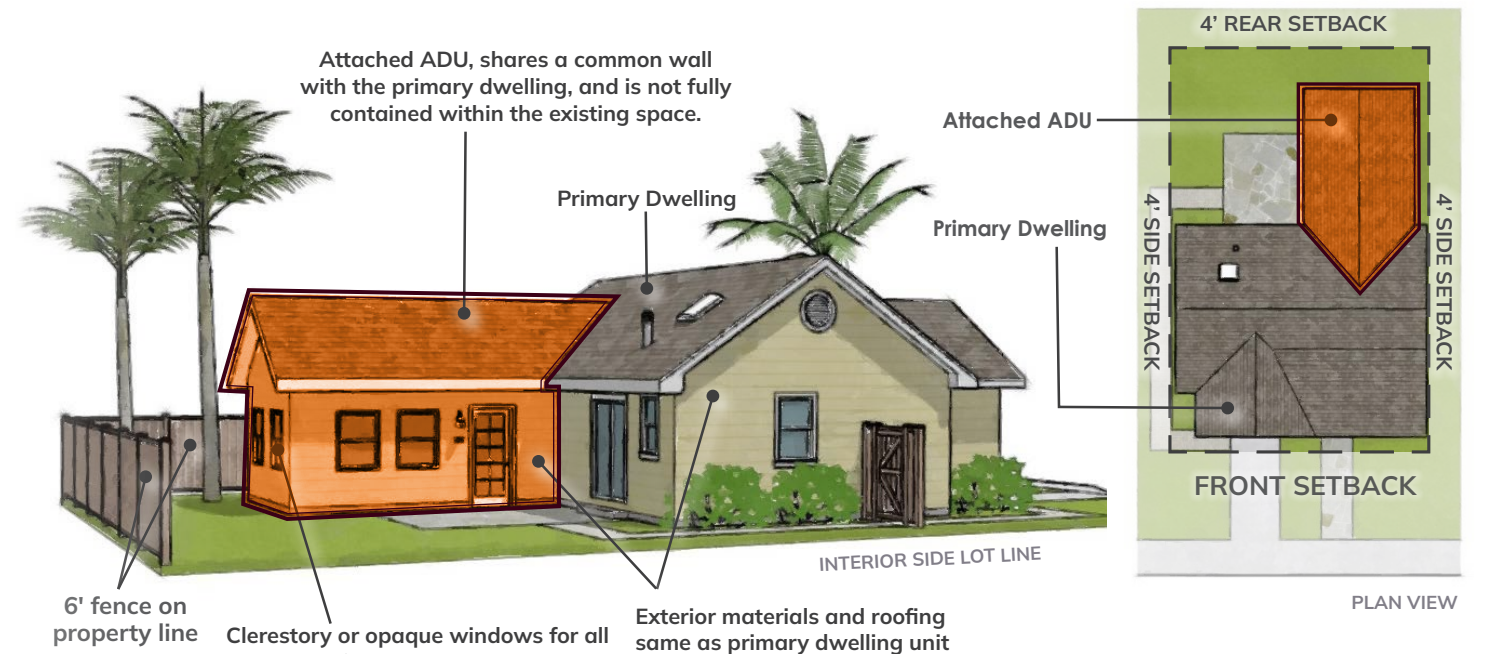
## What type of review do I need for a Detached ADU?

The primary difference between a Level 1 and Level 2 Review for a Detached ADU is the size of the floor area. Both types are approved ministerially by staff (60-Day Review Period), however Level 2 Review for Detached ADUs (800-1200 sq. ft.) are subject to additional code standards such as parking, building orientation, open space, etc. Connect with a Planner if you are unsure what Level of Review your Detached ADU Design requires.

# One-Story Attached ADU

LEVEL 2 REVIEW

An Attached ADU is an accessory dwelling unit that shares at least one common wall with the primary dwelling unit and is not fully contained within the existing space of the primary dwelling unit.



**The Attached ADU must comply with the following to qualify for "Level 2" Review:**

- Rear/Side Setback, Minimum: 4 feet
- Front Setback, Minimum: Same as primary dwelling
- Height, Maximum: Height of primary dwelling or maximum height of zoning district, whichever is less.
- Floor Area, Maximum:
  - Studio/1-Bedroom: 50% of existing primary dwelling or 850 sq. ft. (whichever is greater)
  - 2+ Bedrooms: 50% of existing primary dwelling or 1000 sq. ft. (whichever is greater)
- Floor Area, Maximum: As required by zoning district. Standard may not prohibit guaranteed allowance of an ADU with at least 800 square feet of floor area.
- Building Coverage, Maximum: 40% in R-M Zoning District, no maximum in all other zoning districts
- Private Open Space, Minimum: 48 sq. ft.

## Attached ADUs on Historic Properties

A building addition to a historic resource (as defined in Section 17.84.020) for an attached ADU shall be inset or separated by a connector that is offset at least 18 inches from the parallel side or rear building wall to distinguish it from the historic structure.

[Learn More about ADUs on Historic Properties on Page 18.](#)

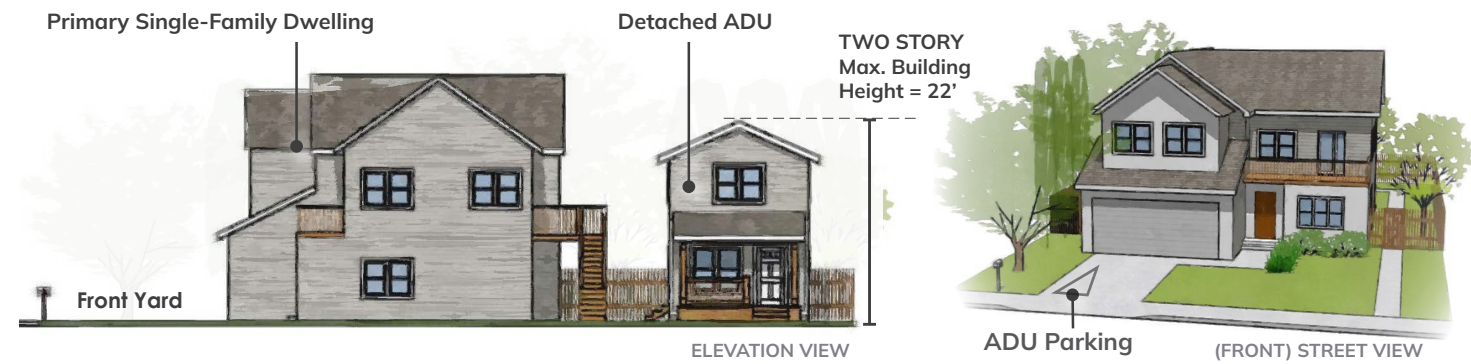
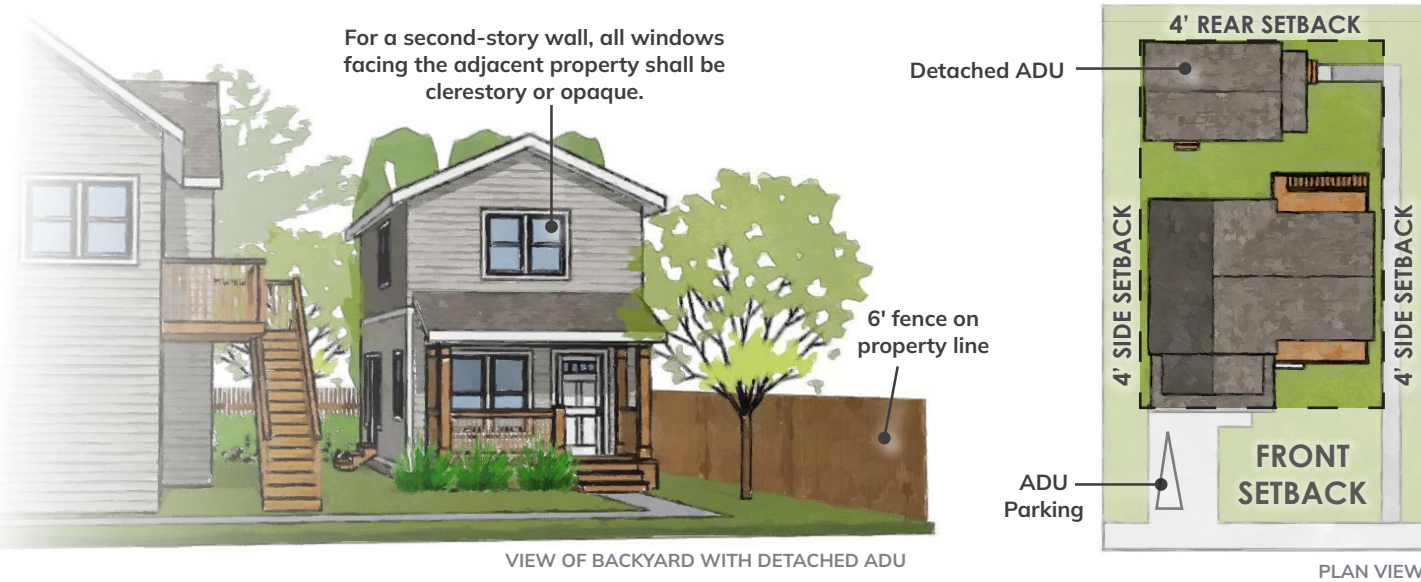
- Exterior Materials must be same as primary dwelling or horizontal wood, fiber cement, board and batten siding or shingles.
- Window and Door Materials must be wood, composite, pre-finished metal with a non-reflective finish.
- Window Proportions must be taller than they are wide or match the proportions of the primary dwelling windows.
- Window Pane Divisions must be true or simulated divided lights.



# Two-Story Detached ADU

LEVEL 3 REVIEW

A Two-Story Detached ADU is an ADU that does not share a common wall with a primary dwelling unit, but instead has two-stories of living space in a single accessory dwelling unit or a second story living space above an existing or proposed ground floor garage or other accessory structure.



The Detached ADU must comply with the following to qualify for "Level 3" Review:

- Rear/Side Setback, Minimum: 4 feet
- Front Setback, Minimum: Same as primary dwelling
- Height, Maximum: 22 feet
- Floor Area, Maximum: 1,200 sq. ft.
- Floor Area Ratio, Maximum: As required by zoning district. Standard may not prohibit guaranteed allowance of an ADU with at least 800 square feet of floor area.
- Building Coverage, Maximum: 40% in R-M Zoning District, no maximum in all other zoning districts
- Private Open Space, Minimum: 48 sq. ft.

## ADUs Deviating from Standards

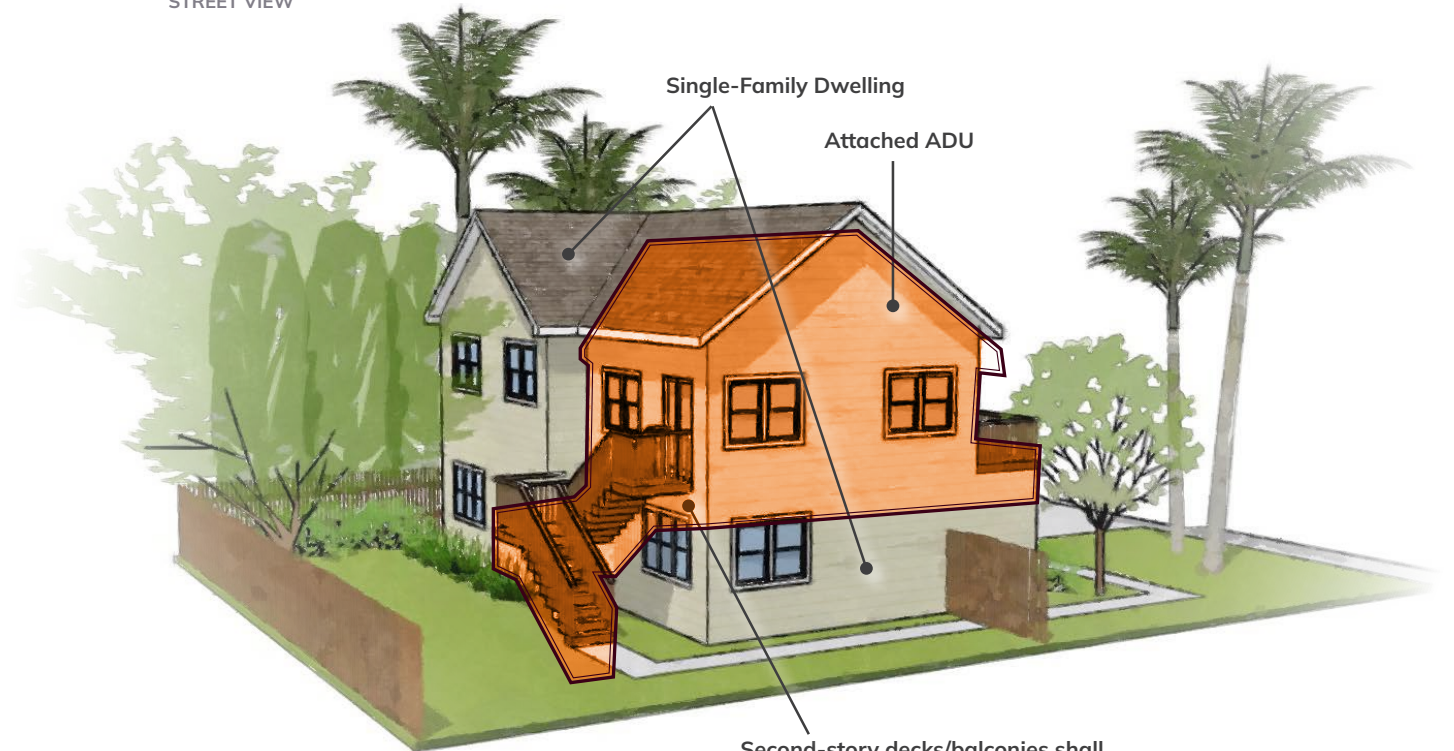
ADU designs that deviate from the Development Standards from the Capitola ADU ordinance will require a Design Permit. Some considerations for design permit approval include:

- Exterior Materials are compatible with primary dwelling unit through architectural use of building forms, height, materials, landscaping, etc. and is in harmony with the neighborhood aesthetic and scale
- Does not impair public views along scenic and coastal areas or alter privacy, light, or solar access to adjacent properties
- ADU has access to adequate water and sewer services
- Adequate open space and landscaping provided for ADU and primary residence, and provides privacy/screening of adjacent properties

# Two-Story Attached ADU

LEVEL 3 REVIEW

A Two-story Attached ADU is an attached accessory dwelling unit that is configured as either two stories of living space attached to an existing primary dwelling unit, or an addition of a second-story living space above a ground-floor garage, or living space in an existing primary dwelling unit.



The Attached ADU must comply with the following to qualify for "Level 3" Review:

- Floor Area, Maximum:
  - Studio/1-Bedroom: 50% of existing primary dwelling or 850 sq. ft. (whichever is greater)
  - 2+ Bedrooms: 50% of existing primary dwelling or 1000 sq. ft. (whichever is greater)
- Floor Area Ratio, Maximum: As required by zoning district. Standard may not prohibit guaranteed allowance of an ADU with at least 800 square feet of floor area.
- Rear/Side Setback, Minimum: 4 feet
- Front Setback, Minimum: Same as primary dwelling
- Height, Maximum: Limited to Primary Dwelling or as required by zoning district, whichever is less
- Building Coverage, Maximum: 40% in R-M Zoning District, no maximum in all other zoning districts



# Applying for ADU Permits

## Administrative Planning Permit Application:

### 1. Schedule a Pre-Application Meeting (Optional)

City staff recommends setting up a pre-application meeting with a planner and member of the building team. During the meeting, staff will review your ADU plans and provide preliminary feedback on your application and the level of review for your project.

To request a pre-application meeting, email [planning@ci.capitola.ca.us](mailto:planning@ci.capitola.ca.us) and [building@ci.capitola.ca.us](mailto:building@ci.capitola.ca.us)

### 2. Download and fill out your ADU Permit Application (Master Planning Permit Application)

Application Forms & More Information can be found at: <https://www.cityofcapitola.org/communitydevelopment>

### 3. Submit Your Application In person or email application to: [planning@ci.capitola.ca.us](mailto:planning@ci.capitola.ca.us)

Once the City receives your application, a planner will determine if the permit is subject to a Level 1, Level 2, or Level 3 review. This determination can be done in person over the counter or within 2-3 business days when emailed.

### 4. Pay Administrative Fees & Receive Building Permit Number

When an application is received, City staff will let you know the amount of your application fees. Once paid, City Staff will assign you a planning permit number.

### 5. Application Review

**Additional information & revisions may be required.** City Staff will review your submitted application and documents within the 60-day review period. Upon review, staff may approve, deny, or request revisions/additional information. If your application requires additional information, the 60-Day Review Period will begin again once revisions are received.

### 6. Planning Approval

Planning staff will issue a Final Local Action Notice (FLAN) when your permit is approved. The FLAN will include the conditions of approval. One condition is to file a Declaration of Restrictions (Deed Restriction) which will occur during the building permit submittal. This is a declaration that assures as the property-owner you will not sell the ADU individually from the primary dwelling unit.

## Building Plan Application:

### 7. Submit Building Permit Application & Documents

Building permit applications are submitted electronically. Once you have your planning permit, you may apply for your building permit. *Note: Level 1 applications can apply for planning and building permits simultaneously.*

Go to <https://www.cityofcapitola.org/building/page/building-permit-applications-electronic-submittal> and follow the directions to submit a building permit electronically and pay fees.

#### Required Application Documents:

- Building, architectural, and structural plans in one document
- Soils report (not required for remodels)
- Structural Calculations
- Building Energy analysis report for residence
- Building Energy analysis report for ADU
- Truss layout, calculations, and review letter from engineer
- Special inspection form completed (when required)
- Construction Waste Management Plan (CWMP) form completed

### 8. File a Declaration of Restrictions (Deed Restriction)

Request an appointment with Planning Staff to meet at City Hall and sign the Declaration of Restrictions for your ADU. The City has a notary on-site.

### 9. Building Plans Review and Comments Generated

Building, Planning, and Public Works staff will review your ADU building plans. Staff will provide comments in writing within 60 days either approving, denying, or requesting addition information or revisions. If required to submit additional information, the 60-Day Review Period will begin again.

### 10. Receive Building Permits & Begin Construction!

#### To Pay Fees:

Either mail your payment to City of Capitola, 420 Capitola Avenue, Capitola, CA 95010 or drop your payment in after hours drop box (second story of City Hall – South end of building).

#### Questions?

Contact Planning Staff:  
[planning@ci.capitola.ca.us](mailto:planning@ci.capitola.ca.us)

Contact Building Staff:  
[building@ci.capitola.ca.us](mailto:building@ci.capitola.ca.us)

Call: 831-475-7300  
420 Capitola Avenue, Capitola, CA 95010



## ADU Process Checklist

### 1 ADU Pre-Design & Research

- Become familiar with your Zoning District and the District's Development Standards.
- Understand how your property's Development Standards will influence your ADU Design.
- Be mindful of certain Zoning Districts like RM-D, Historical, and Coastline Areas that require additional design and permit considerations.



### 2 Design your ADU

- Design your ADU based on the Development Standards within the Capitola ADU Ordinance and highlighted in this resource guide.
- Use local contractors and architects or take advantage of the City's Pre-Designed ADU Plans to help expedite your design and approval process.
- Know the Development Standards for your 'ADU Type', including ADU size, placements, and design requirements. These standards dictate what type of Permit Review Level is necessary for your ADU project:

#### LEVEL 1 REVIEW

**Administrative Review** - Building Department and other City Department staff will perform a **60-Day Administrative Review** to ministerially approve the required Planning and Building Permits for your ADU project.

#### LEVEL 2 REVIEW

#### LEVEL 3 REVIEW

**Discretionary Review** - For designs that are two-stories tall or do not comply with development standards here in the guide and City Code, your ADU Design will need to undergo a **Discretionary Review for a Design Permit**. This process can include a public hearing and Planning Commission Review, and has no limit on review time.

### 3 Apply for ADU Permits

- Submit all necessary application forms and fees in a timely manner.
- File a Declaration of Restrictions (Deed Restriction)
- Work with city staff, ask questions, and keep track of timelines and dates.
- If required to resubmit your ADU application, please address all comments from City Staff to ensure approval for the resubmittal.



# Additional Information

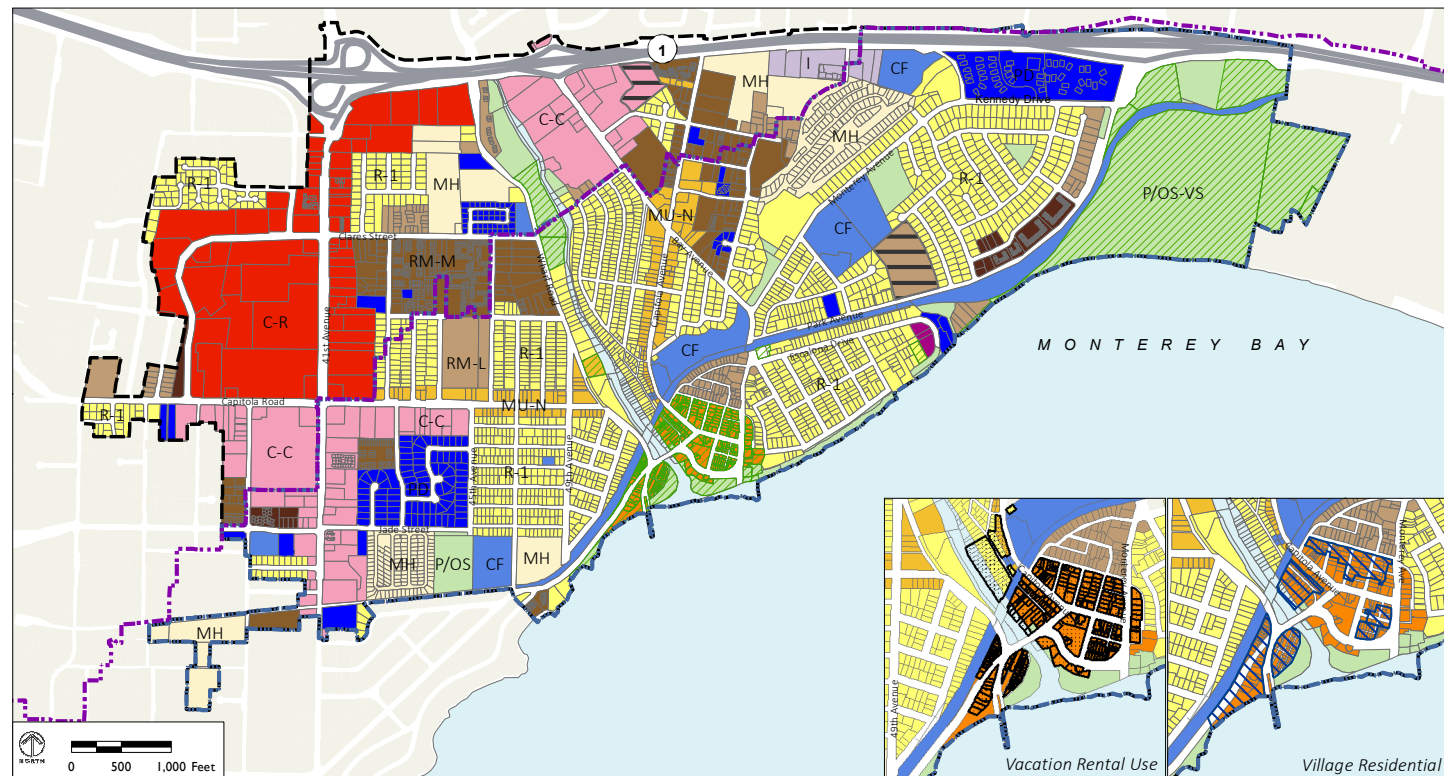
## Research Your Property's Zone District

ADUs are allowed on any zoning district where single-family or multifamily dwellings are a permitted use. A "Zoning district" is a specifically delineated area or district in a municipality within which uniform regulations and requirements govern the use, placement, spacing, and size of land and buildings.

Development Standards for building your ADU and the ADU permitting process depend on what Zoning District your property is located in. The Development Standards highlighted within this guide and the City Code assist homeowners in streamlining the ADU Design, Build, and Permitting process - however Certain Zoning Districts like RM-D, Historical, and Coastline areas require additional design and permit considerations.



## CAPITOLA ZONING MAP



Residential Zoning Districts	Mixed-Use Zoning Districts	Other Zoning Districts	Overlay Zones*	City Limit
R-1 - Single-Family Residential	MU-V - Mixed Use Village	I - Industrial	AHO - Affordable Housing Overlay	City Limit
RM-L - Multi-Family Residential, Low Density	MU-N - Mixed Use Neighborhood	P/OS - Parks and Open Space	CZ - Coastal Zone	Santa Cruz Coastal Zone Boundary
RM-M - Multi-Family Residential, Medium Density	C-C - Community Commercial	CF - Community Facility	VRU - Vacation Rental Use	
RM-H - Multi-Family Residential, High Density	C-R - Regional Commercial	PD - Planned Development	VR - Village Residential	
MH - Mobile Home Park		VS - Visitor Serving	VS - Visitor Serving	

\*See Local Coastal Program Habitats Map for boundaries of Environmentally Sensitive Habitats Area Overlay Zone.

## Development Standards & Zone Districts

Once you know your Zoning District, you are ready to research the Development Standards for your district. "Development Standards" are regulations in the zoning code that limit the size, bulk, or placement of structures and other improvements or modifications to a site.

ADUs have specific Development Standards based on the size and type of ADU, however setbacks and building heights are the "Same as Primary Dwelling Unit." Refer to the City of Capitola Municipal Code for more information.

Table 17.16-2: Development Standards in the R-1 and RM Zo

	R-1	RM
<b>Site Requirements</b>		
Parcel Area, Minimum [1]	5,000 sq. ft.	N/A
Parcel Width, Minimum [1]	30 ft.	N/A
Parcel Depth, Minimum [1]	80 ft.	N/A
Floor Area Ratio, Maximum	See Section 17.16.030(B)(1)	N/A
Building Coverage, Maximum	N/A	40%
Open Space	N/A	Section 17.16.030(C)(2)
Parcel Area per Unit, Minimum	N/A	RM-L: 4,400 sq. ft. RM-M: 2,900 sq. ft. RM-H: 2,200 sq. ft.
Parking and Loading	See Chapter 17.76	

## ADU Development Standards by Zoning District

### Zoning Districts with Additional ADU Standards:

- Historical Districts
- Coastal Zone
- R-1 Zoning District
- R-M Zoning District
- Mixed Use Zoning District

If your property is in one of these Zoning Districts, you can find more detailed information on the following pages.



### Find your Zoning District:

Learn what Zoning District your property is in by visiting <https://www.cityofcapitola.org/communitydevelopment/page/zoning-maps>

### Find your Zoning District Development Standards:

City of Capitola Municipal Code - Chapter 17 - Zoning <https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/Capitola/>



## By Zoning District



### Coastal Zones

A proposed ADU that is located in the Coastal Zone may require a Coastal Development Permit (CDP). Speak with city staff for more information about this type of application to see if this applies to your ADU project. See also *Exceptions to Parking for Coastal Zones* on following page.

### R-1 Zoning District

In the R-1 Zoning District, ADUs in Riverview Terrace and on Wharf Road have front setback exceptions. Planning Commission may approve a reduced front setback to reflect existing setbacks on neighboring properties within 100' on the same side of the street.

### Mixed Use Zoning District

In Mixed Use Zoning Districts, there are minimum front setbacks for ADUs. Maximum setbacks or build-to requirements do not apply.

### R-M Zoning District

40% Building Coverage Maximum Standard may not prohibit ADUs with at least an 800 square feet of floor area.

## Historic Properties

“Historic property” means a designated historic resource or potential historic resource. The Planning Commission may allow exceptions to design and development standards for ADUs proposed on a property that contains a historic resource. To allow such an exception, the Planning Commission shall find that the exception is necessary to preserve the architectural character of the primary residence. See also *Exceptions to Parking* on following page for Historic Districts.

If a Design Permit is required for an ADU on a property with a historic resource, the proposed project is subject to the Historic Preservation requirements. Third-party review of the proposed project may be required. Historic Preservation requirements may not be required for ADUs approved ministerially with an Administrative Permit.

### Attached ADUs on Historic Properties

A building addition to a historic resource (as defined in Section 17.84.020) for an attached ADU shall be inset or separated by a connector that is offset at least 18 inches from the parallel side or rear building wall to distinguish it from the historic structure.

- Exterior Materials** must be same as primary dwelling or horizontal wood, fiber cement, board and batten siding or shingles.
- Window and Door Materials** must be wood, composite, pre-finished metal with a non-reflective finish.
- Window Proportions** must be taller than they are wide or match the proportions of the primary dwelling windows.
- Window Pane Divisions** must be true or simulated divided lights.

### Additional Building Requirements

#### Solar Panels

State law requires **new construction** ADUs to include photovoltaic (solar) panel systems, which may be installed on either the main residence or the ADU.

#### Utility Connections

Electrical utilities generally must be placed underground to the nearest utility pole unless the existing dwelling is served overhead (17.96.120).

#### Fire Sprinklers

Fire sprinklers in an ADU are required only if they are required for the primary residence under the current Fire Code.

## Parking

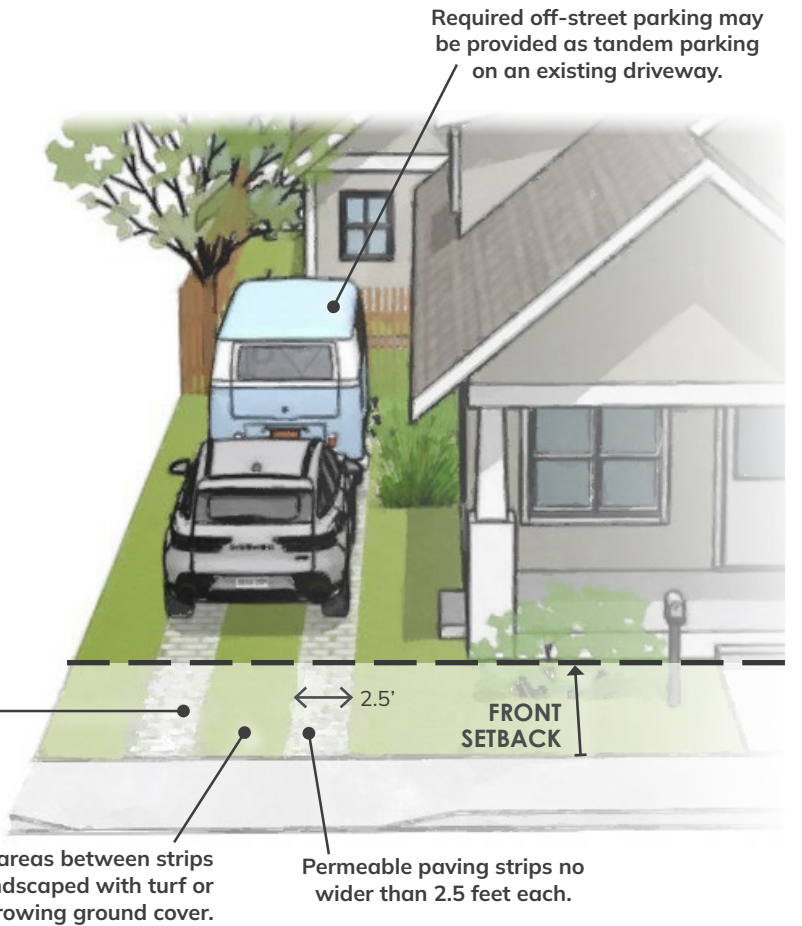
The following parking provisions apply to ADUs in all areas in Capitola. Parking spaces that are required for an accessory dwelling unit are in addition to parking required for the primary residence.

**No additional parking is required for an Internal or Junior ADU.** The floor area of an Internal or Junior ADU shall not be included in the parking calculation for the primary residence.

**Alley-Accessed Parking:** Parking accessed from an alley shall maintain a 24-foot back-out area, which may include the alley.

A parking space in a required front setback area\* shall be a “ribbon” or “Hollywood” design with two parallel strips of pavement.

\*Required off-street parking may be located within minimum required setback areas from front, side, and rear property lines.



Unpaved areas between strips shall be landscaped with turf or low-growing ground cover.

Permeable paving strips no wider than 2.5 feet each.

### Exceptions to Parking

One off-street parking space is required for an Attached or Detached ADU, except in the following cases:

- Located within 1/2 mile walking distance of public transit
- Located within a Historic District
- An Internal or Junior ADU
- Located within one block of a Car Share Vehicle Pick-up/Drop-Off
- Replaces or occupies a garage, carport, or covered parking structure

### Parking Requirements for Coastal Zone & Outside Cliffwood Heights



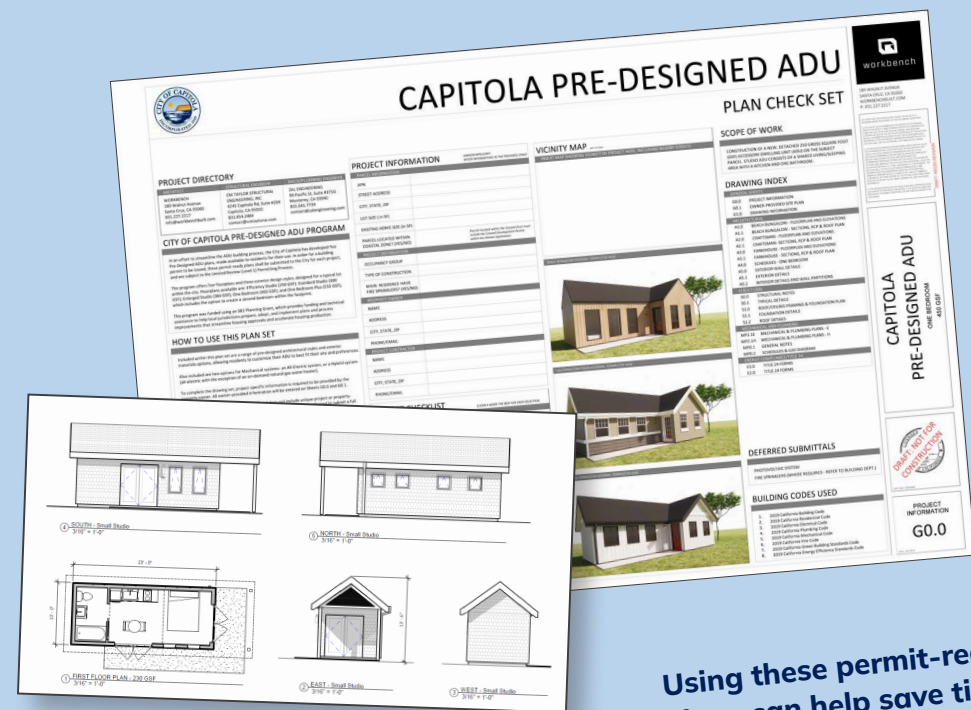
The following parking standards are required for ADUs in the Coastal Zone and outside Cliffwood Heights neighborhood:

- One off-street parking space is required for any type of ADU
- One off-street parking space is not required when primary residence has four or more existing off-street parking spaces
- When an ADU Replaces or occupies a garage, carport, or covered parking structure - replacement parking stalls are required for the demolished/converted parking structure (covered or uncovered)





# Pre-Designed ADU Plans



Using these permit-ready designs can help save time on getting your ADU approved!

ADU Plans were prepared for the City of Capitola by Workbench

## Pre-Designed ADU Plans

*\*Pre-Designed Architectural Plans are only available for One-Story, Detached ADU projects.*

The City of Capitola has pre-designed ADU architectural plans available for your ADU project! The program offers five floor plans and three exterior design styles, designed for a typical lot within the city. These construction documents include design details, material guidelines, and architectural standards. Pre-Designed ADUs go through the Limited Review (Level 1) Permitting Process if the 4' side and rear setback requirements are met. However, while these ADU designs have already been pre-approved by the City, additional site-specific information (like a parcel survey and soils report) is required for a building staff review to demonstrate how the ADU will fit within your property.

**Interested in using a permit-ready ADU design?**  
**Here's how to get started:**

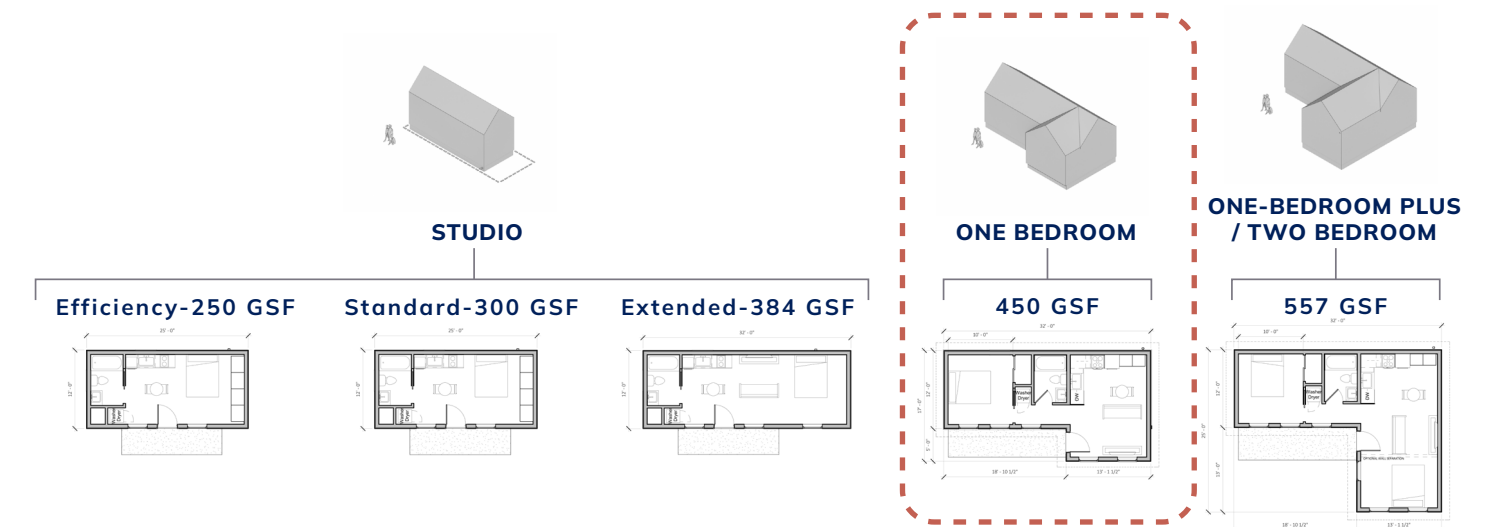
### 1. Get Plans from the City Website

<https://www.cityofcapitola.org/communitydevelopment>

### 2. Select ADU unit type, size, and layout

Choose the best option from the Pre-Designed ADU Plans. Begin with ideal ADU size that works best for your property and intention of use. Floor plans available are:

- Efficiency Studio (250 GSF);
- Standard Studio (300 GSF);
- Extended Studio (384 GSF);
- One Bedroom (450 GSF);
- One Bedroom Plus (555 GSF), which includes an optional second bedroom.





### 3. Choose Desired Architectural Style & Mechanical Systems

After you have selected which size and layout of your ADU, next choose the desired architectural style for your ADU project. Included within this plan set are a range of pre-designed architectural styles and exterior materials options, allowing residents to customize their ADU to best fit their site and preferences. Also included are two options for Mechanical systems- an All-Electric system, or a Hybrid system (all-electric with the exception of an on-demand natural-gas water heater).

#### ONE BEDROOM



### 4. Prepare Additional Materials for your Application

The Pre-Designed plans provided by the City are already considered "Permit-Ready" however additional materials that are site-specific to your property are required. This is to ensure building safety of your selected ADU design on your property, as well as identifying any changes needed to the ADU foundation. *Additional design work to the ADU foundation may be required based on your soil conditions.*

These additional materials will be reviewed by the Building Staff when you submit your ADU Permit Application (see page 14 for more information of this process). If you are working with a contractor, they can help you in sourcing these necessary materials. If you are not using a contractor for your ADU build - speak to a member of Planning or Building Staff for assistance on getting this information.

#### Additional Materials Required with your ADU Application:

- Geotechnical/soils report
- Survey for new construction
- Site plan / parcel survey
- Energy calculations

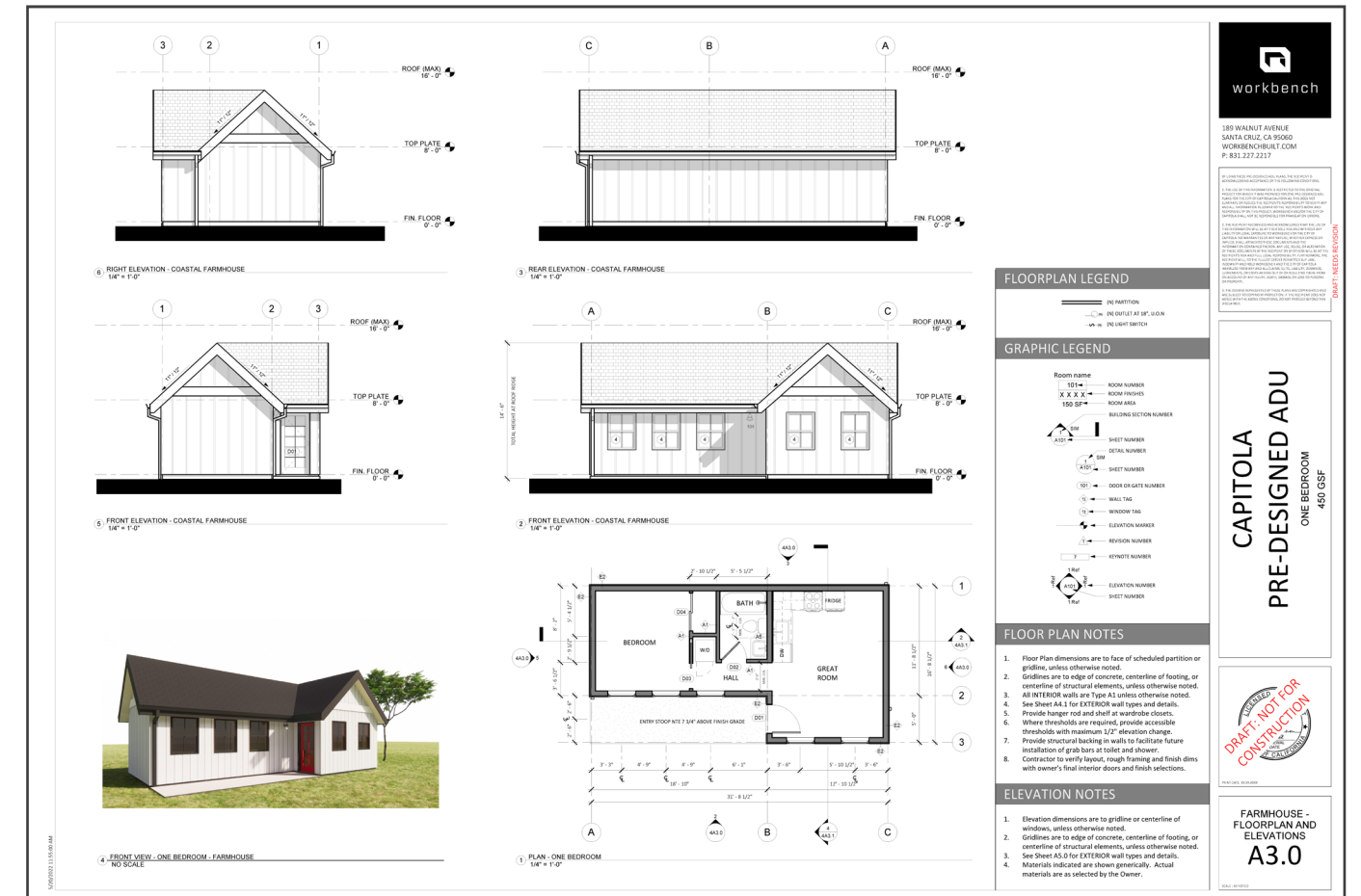
### 5. Get Full Set Online & Fill in Details

To complete the drawing set, project-specific information is required to be provided by the property owner. **All owner-provided information will be entered on Sheets G0.0 and G0.1.**

The Architectural and Electrical Plans for each exterior design option are self-contained within their own sheets. The contractor will reference the sheets for the chosen option during construction.

**Reference the Project Checklist on Sheet G0.0 for specific direction.**

The Structural Plans, Architectural Details, Architectural Schedules (door, window, and fixture), Mechanical Plans, and Plumbing Plans are contained onto specific sheets for these purposes. These sheets will be referenced for all exterior design options.



**This plan set is considered "Permit-Ready" - meaning the drawings have been reviewed and approved by the City, but site-specific information will need to be reviewed. In order to receive a building permit, applicants will need to submit a full application for review by the Planning and Building Departments.**

This will include the Permit-Ready Drawing Set, a parcel survey, an Administrative Permit Application and a Building Permit Application (using the Master Planning Application), and any other supplementary application materials that may be required based on their specific property and project. Refer to the City of Capitola Planning Department for your specific project requirements.





# Frequently Asked Questions

## How long does it take to plan, design, and build an ADU?

Generally, the amount of time it will take will vary based on several factors, including the design selected, whether your ADU is built on-site or built ahead of time in a factory, and the availability of your architect or builder.

## Can ADUs be used as vacation rentals?

No. The City does not allow any vacation rentals (units with occupancy for less than 30 days) in residential neighborhoods. All ADUs require a deed restriction which prohibited short-term rentals. ADUs and primary dwellings may be rented for 30-days minimum.

## Can ADUs be used as long-term rentals?

Yes! Capitola encourages the use of ADUs for long-term rentals (more than 30 days).

## Does the owner need to live on the property the ADU is located?

The property owner must occupy either the primary dwelling unit or the junior accessory dwelling unit on the property. Owner occupancy is a requirement for JADUs, which also must be recorded as a deed restriction. This is not a requirement for other types of ADUs.

## Can an ADU be sold separately from a primary residence?

Sale Prohibited. No ADU or JADU may be sold or otherwise conveyed separately from the lot and the primary dwelling (in the case of a single-family lot) or from the lot and all of the dwellings (in the case of a multi-family lot).

## Can I convert an existing structure on my property into an ADU?

An internal accessory dwelling unit may be constructed regardless of whether it conforms to the current zoning requirement for building separation or setbacks. If an existing structure is demolished and replaced with an accessory dwelling unit, an accessory dwelling unit may be constructed in the same location and to the same dimensions as the demolished structure. If any portion of an existing structure crosses a property line, the structure may not be converted to or replaced with an accessory dwelling unit. For existing structure within 4 feet of a property line, the applicant must submit a survey demonstrating that the structure does not cross the property line.

## Does the city offer Fee Waivers for affordable housing units?

The City may waive development fees for accessory dwelling units that will be rented at levels affordable to low or very low income households. Applicants of affordable accessory dwelling units shall record a deed restriction limiting the rent to low or very low-income levels prior to issuance of a building permit. Landlords of accessory dwelling units shall be relieved of any affordability condition upon payment of fees in the amount previously waived as a result of affordability requirements, subject to an annual consumer price index increase commencing with the date of application for building permit.

## There is a second dwelling on my property that I believe was created without permits. Can it be legalized?

Generally yes. Legalization requires that the ADU still meet current building and zoning codes. In addition to the standard Building and Planning review, an inspection by the Building Department must also be conducted.

## Do I need to use the City's Pre-Designed ADU Plans to build an ADU in Capitola?

Using the City of Capitola's Pre-Designed ADU Plans can help expedite your design, building and permitting process - but they are not required to build an ADU.

## What will an applicant need if they utilize the Pre-Designed ADU plans?

- Geotechnical/soils report as required by the Building Department
- Survey for new construction
- Site plan
- Energy calculations



## City Resources

### Questions?

Contact Planning staff:  
**Email:** [Planning@ci.capitola.ca.us](mailto:Planning@ci.capitola.ca.us)

Contact Building staff:  
**Email:** [Building@ci.capitola.ca.us](mailto:Building@ci.capitola.ca.us)

**Call:** 831-475-7300  
420 Capitola Avenue, Capitola, CA 95010  
**City Website:** <https://www.cityofcapitola.org>

**ADU Resources, Permits, & Forms:**  
<https://www.cityofcapitola.org/communitydevelopment>

**Capitola ADU Ordinance:**  
Chapter 17.74 - Accessory Dwelling Units  
<https://www.codepublishing.com/CA/Capitola/>



*Prepared for the City of Capitola by:* **METTAURBANDESIGN**

*Pre-Designed ADU Plans provided by:*  **workbench**