






## Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

### What is an ADU?

Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) — also accessory apartments, second units, *granny flats* — are secondary independent units for separate living with a kitchen and bathroom for one or more occupants (maximum 3). These dwellings can be attached or detached from the primary residence. The goals of this policy are to help expand housing options, affordability, and accessibility to reach the town’s vision: the creation of a vibrant, attractive, and environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable and equitable community in which the Town of Herndon residents and businesses prosper. (This guide serves as a user tool and does not supersede any provisions of the zoning ordinance.)

### Can I have an ADU on my property?

Types of ADU	 	
Size Limit	<p>Floor area ≤ 40% of the gross floor area of the principal dwelling, or 1,200 sq ft. (whichever is less)</p> <p><i>*Covered/screened porches do not count towards the max. floor area. Porches otherwise enclosed do not count towards the max. floor area unless the space is conditioned. Detached ADUs and any associated porches count towards the minimum lot coverage allowed in the underlying zoning district.</i></p>	<p>Floor area ≤ 900 sq. ft.</p>
Special Exception Required?	<p><u>Not required</u> for a single-family house. <u>Required</u> for a townhouse.</p>	<p>Not required</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance with building code standards required. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximum height is 15 feet.</li> <li>• Maximum 3 occupants (including minors).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Zoning Inspection Permit required to verify compliance with the zoning ordinance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One (1) ADU allowed per lot.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
	<p>ADUs not permitted in mobile homes or recreational vehicles.</p> <p>ADUs cannot be sold separately from the principal dwelling.</p> <p>ADUs cannot be used as a <a href="#">short-term rentals</a> (Airbnb, VRBO, etc.).</p>	
Location	<p><b>Setbacks:</b> Shall meet setback requirements of the underlying zoning district.</p> <p><b>External entrance</b> for internal/attached ADUs shall be located on the side/rear of the structure. On corner lots, the entrance may face the secondary front setback. Sliding doors not permitted as main exterior entrance.</p>	<p><b>Setbacks:</b> 10 feet from the rear and side property lines and 10 feet from the principal structure. May be incorporated into a detached accessory structure that does not meet the above setbacks provided the detached accessory structure legally existed on or before Oct 26, 2021</p>
Occupancy standards	<p><b>No more than two (2) bedrooms or occupied by three (3) persons.</b> Either the accessory dwelling unit or the principal dwelling shall be occupied by the owner of the principal dwelling as their primary residence.</p>	
Parking	<p>Minimum: 1 off-street parking space with access to a street for the accessory dwelling unit, in addition to the two off-street spaces required for the principal dwelling.</p>	

## How can I get an ADU approved? \*

### Step One

Obtain a [Zoning Inspection Permit](#). Questions? Contact the Department of Community Development at [community.development@herndon-va.gov](mailto:community.development@herndon-va.gov) or 703-787-7380.

### Step Two

Only if constructing an addition or detached structure; **obtain approval of the site changes following one of the two applications identified below.**

**If the addition or detached structure is less than 749SF and/or disturbs less than 2,499SF of land**

Obtain an approved [Building Location Survey](#). Questions? Contact Community Development at [community.development@herndon-va.gov](mailto:community.development@herndon-va.gov) or 703-787-7380

**If the addition or detached structure is more than 750SF and/or disturbs more than 2,500**

Obtain a [Single Lot Development Plan](#). Questions? Contact Plan Review at [planreview@herndon-va.gov](mailto:planreview@herndon-va.gov) or 703-435-6853

### Step Three

Obtain all necessary [building and trade permits](#). Questions? Contact Building Inspections at [buildinginspections@herndon-va.gov](mailto:buildinginspections@herndon-va.gov) or 703-435-6813.

\*Unless seeking ADU within a townhouse, in which case, a Special Exception is required. Contact Community Development at [community.development@herndon-va.gov](mailto:community.development@herndon-va.gov) or at 703-787-7380 for more information on the Special Exception process.

Additional Community Development Info Sheets are available online at [www.herndon-va.gov](http://www.herndon-va.gov)