



Accessory Dwelling Units

Summary of Zoning Regulations & Application Process for Accessory Dwelling Units

| | Internal / Attached | Detached |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Approval / Application Process | 1. If your proposed ADU meets Fridley's zoning regulations, you may apply for a Building Permit . 2. Once construction is finished and you have received a Certificate of Occupancy, apply for a Rental License . | 1. First, apply for a Special Use Permit . 2. Once approved, apply for a Building Permit . 3. Once construction is finished and you have received a Certificate of Occupancy, apply for a Rental License . |
| Number of ADUs per lot | Only one ADU is allowed per lot. Only a detached single family home may have an ADU; townhomes and duplexes are not eligible. Property must be zoned R-1, R-2, R-3, or S-1 . | |
| Owner Occupancy | The property owner must reside in either the main house or in the ADU as their primary residence. This restriction must be recorded on the deed prior to issuing the ADU's Certificate of Occupancy. | |
| Floor Area | <i>Minimum</i> | 250 square feet of habitable space |
| | <i>Maximum</i> | 50 percent of the principal structure |
| | | Additionally, the total area of all accessory structures on the property may not exceed 1,400 square feet. |
| Height | 30 feet | 21 feet if above a garage, otherwise, 14 feet |
| Setbacks | <i>Front Yard</i> | Must be located to the rear of the main house |
| | <i>Interior Side Yard</i> | 10 feet |
| | <i>Corner Side Yard</i> | Zoning district setbacks apply |
| | <i>Rear Yard</i> | 10 feet |
| | <i>Distance from Main House</i> | 10 feet |
| Parking | Adequate off-street hard surface parking must be provided for the main home and the ADU. All lots having a minimum lot area of 9,000 square feet or resulting from a lot split shall have at minimum a double garage. | |
| Design | <i>Stairways</i> | Exterior stairways shall be located to minimize visibility from the street and from neighboring property. The ADU should be architecturally compatible with the principal structure's siding, color schemes, roofing materials, roof type and roof pitch. |
| | <i>Balconies & Decks</i> | Balconies and decks shall not face an interior side or rear lot line. Rooftop decks are prohibited. |

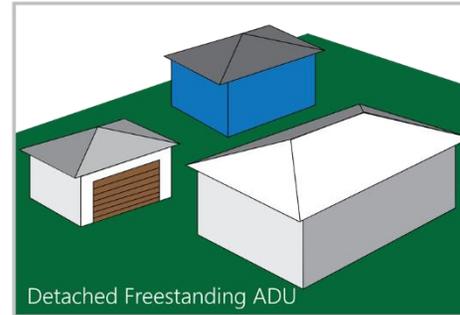
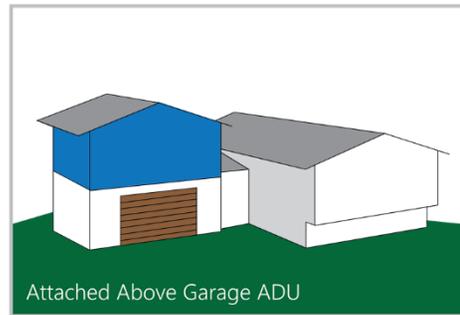
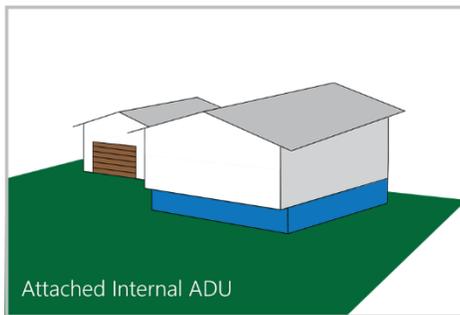
This table summarizes applicable standards for ADUs. Please refer to [Fridley City Code Chapter 205](#) for the complete requirements.

All ADUs must meet current residential, building, mechanical, and electrical code standards at the time of permitting.

Accessory Dwelling Units, Defined

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU): a subordinate habitable permanent dwelling unit complying with the Minnesota State Building Code, which is located on a lot with a principal single-family residential dwelling (principal structure). The following are the types of accessory dwelling units:

1. An **attached accessory dwelling unit** that is located within the same structure as a principal structure, as illustrated below.
2. A **detached accessory dwelling unit** that is located as a freestanding structure on the same lot as the principal structure. The freestanding structure may also contain a detached garage, as illustrated below



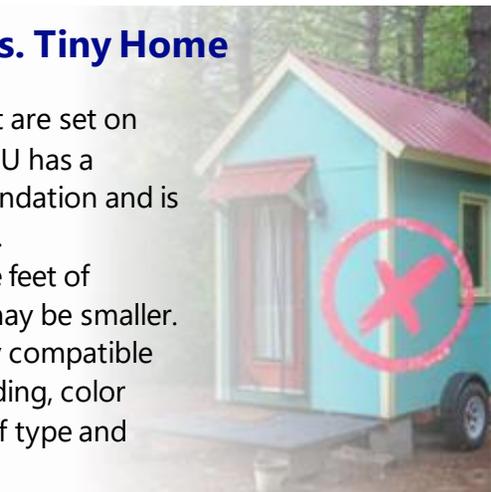
Accessory Dwelling Unit vs. Duplex

Although they share some similar characteristics, ADUs are usually different from duplexes (two-family houses) in their size, timing of construction, and use.

- An ADU is smaller than the main home (maximum 50% of the principal structure in Fridley). Duplex units are usually about the same size.
- Duplexes are usually built as one construction process; ADUs are often built after the main home is occupied.

Accessory Dwelling Unit vs. Tiny Home

- Most tiny houses on the market are set on trailers and have wheels. An ADU has a permanent, frost-protected foundation and is connected to municipal utilities.
- An ADU has at least 250 square feet of habitable space. A tiny house may be smaller.
- An ADU must be architecturally compatible with the principal structure's siding, color schemes, roofing materials, roof type and roof pitch.



Accessory dwelling units – key requirements

Fridley's requirements for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are summarized below.

To get a building permit for an accessory dwelling unit (ADU), property owners must:

- Create construction drawings and site plans. Plans should show both the existing (current) conditions/layout, and the proposed conditions/layout after the ADU is constructed.
 - Site plans should show setbacks from property lines.
 - Existing & proposed layouts should show the square footage of the principal home and the ADU.
 - Building plans should follow requirements of the 2020 Minnesota Residential Code.
 - The site plan should show adequate off-street parking for the principal home and the ADU (see Zoning section).
- Submit the plans to the Fridley Building Inspections Department, and, if necessary, the Fridley Planning Department.
 - A [Special Use Permit](#) is required for a detached ADU. [Special Use Permit](#) applications are accepted once a month on dedicated [Application Deadlines](#). Public Hearings are held for Special Use Permit applications.
 - The application fee for a Special Use Permit for a detached ADU is \$1,000.
 - A detached ADU must have a SUP before it can receive a building permit.
- Before the Certificate of Occupancy for the ADU is issued, there should be a restriction recorded against the property requiring owner occupancy with respect to at least one of the units. [Download a draft owner-occupancy covenant](#).
 - A [Fridley rental license](#) for the non-owner-occupied unit is required. Apply for a [rental license](#) after the ADU receives a Certificate of Occupancy.

Building

RAINWATER

Manage rainwater runoff. Typically roof water discharges within the yard to avoid water intrusion to the neighboring buildings. Additionally, see plumbing section.

FROST

- Buildings containing dwellings must have frost footings. Existing detached garages are not typically on frost-protected footings. Other footing materials or systems shall be designed in accordance with accepted engineering practice.
- Frost-protected shallow foundations shall meet the requirements of International Residential Code (IRC) Sections 403.3.1 and 403.1.4. Note that this method requires a

heated main floor level and would not apply to a building with garage use on the main level.

PROPERTY LINE

- The ADU must be located at least 10 feet from the property line.

GARAGE

- For ADUs attached to a garage, garage to be separated from the ADU, including the exit, with one-hour fire assembly and 20-minute doors.
- The ADU exit shall discharge directly outside the structure without entering the garage, or through a fire-rated stair.
- Ceiling between garage and dwelling unit shall have R-30 insulation.
- If an ADU is constructed above a detached garage, the maximum building height is 21 feet. Otherwise, the maximum building height of a detached garage or ADU is 14 feet.
 - Building height is measured to the midpoint distance between eaves and ridge of a gable, hip or gambrel roof; to the highest point of a flat roof; and to the deck line of a mansard roof.
- All R-1 lots having a minimum lot area of 9,000 square feet or resulting from a lot split shall have a double garage. All R-1 lots having a lot area less than 9,000 square feet and greater than 7,500 square feet may have a single garage. All R-2 lots require a 2 stall garage for each dwelling unit.

HABITABLE SPACE AND CEILING

- At least 250 square feet of Habitable Space is required in the ADU. Habitable Space must meet the Minimum Standards for Principal Structures found in Fridley City Code 220.10
 - Habitable space in the ADU shall have a ceiling height of not less than seven feet. When the dwelling has a sloped ceiling, at least 50% of the required floor area of the room shall have a ceiling height of at least seven feet and no portion of required floor area may have a ceiling height of less than five feet tall. (220.10)
- Typically, the Principal Unit must have at least 1,020 square feet of finished floor area. (205.07.04)
 - For lots less than 9,000 square feet, the dwelling shall have a first floor area of not less than 768 square feet of accessory buildings or an attached garage.

STAIRS

- Width: 36" (minimum)
- Rise: 7-¾" (maximum)
- Run/Tread: 10" (minimum)
- Headroom: 6'-8" (minimum)
- Handrails: Shall be provided on not less than one side of each flight of stairs with four or more risers

EGRESS WINDOWS

Each sleeping room shall have an egress window per R310 2020 IRC.

- Minimum opening area: 5.7 sq ft
- Sill Height: 44 inches above the floor (maximum)

SMOKE AND CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and all electrical to be hard wired, per R314 (SA) and R315 (CO) 2020 IRC.

Plumbing

Water and sewer connections are specific to a Property Identification number. If feasible, dedicated water and/or sewer services to a detached ADU should be constructed. However, a detached ADU may be served through water and sewer service extensions from the primary structure to the ADU. The layout and design of any new services shall be in accordance with engineering design standards and governing ordinances as well as the Minnesota Plumbing Code.

DOMESTIC WATER SERVICES

A licensed master plumber or Minnesota registered engineer shall confirm that the total demand (or loading) from the primary structure and the ADU can be served by the existing service in accordance with the methods outlined in the Minnesota Plumbing Code.

- If a service is undersized, it shall be discontinued and a properly sized service shall be designed and installed. The minimum depth of cover for a new water service is 8'-0".
- If the existing service is constructed of lead materials, it shall be replaced in its entirety prior to a service extension to an ADU.
- A water service extension from a primary residence to an ADU shall be protected from freezing as described in Minnesota Plumbing Code Sections 312.6 and 609.1.

WATER SERVICE METERS

- If the ADU is served through a water service extension from the primary structure, a single water service meter shall be supplied and read by the city. The meter shall be housed within the primary dwelling unit or principal structure as per governing ordinances. Submetering will be the responsibility of the property owner if desired.
 - Fridley Ordinance 220.09 prohibits discontinuance of basic services (including water service) for rental dwellings, except for temporary interruptions while repairs or alterations are made.
- If the ADU is served with its own dedicated line, it shall have a water service meter separate from the primary structure and shall be supplied and read by the city.

SANITARY SEWER SERVICES

The plumbing designer shall confirm that the service is adequately sized to accommodate the total demand (or loading) from the primary structure and the ADU. If an existing service is not appropriately sized, it shall be discontinued, and a properly sized service shall be designed and installed.

- Sewer piping exiting an ADU should be gravity drainage piping. If pumping is required, the pumping equipment should be located in the primary dwelling. Where this configuration is not practicable, pumped underground sewer piping from an ADU to a primary dwelling may be allowed on a case-by-case basis subject to acceptance by plumbing plan review prior to installation.
- Pumped underground sewer piping, when accepted, shall be located a minimum of 10'- 0" from any buried water piping as described in Minnesota Plumbing Code 4714.609.6.1.
- Pumped underground sewer piping, when accepted, shall be provided with freeze protection equivalent to that required for buried water piping.
- All connections to the city sewer mains and within the right-of-way must be gravity drains.
- Exterior sewer piping draining from the ADU shall be protected from freezing as described in Minnesota Plumbing Code Section 312.6.

STORM WATER

All storm water shall be appropriately discharged to avoid water intrusion or negative impacts to the neighboring properties.

Mechanical

- There shall be an atmospheric separation between a garage and dwelling unit - i.e., a dwelling unit cannot share a ventilation system with a garage. The dwelling shall have an independent HVAC system within the dwelling unit. If a mechanical closet is provided in the garage, it shall meet the MN Mechanical and Fuel Gas Code (MMC)/(IFGC) Section 303.
- Fuel-fired appliances shall not be installed in sleeping rooms, bathrooms and storage closets. See MMC (IFGC) Section 303.
- Location of mechanical intake and exhaust should be 10 feet away from each other. See MMC Sections 401.4 and 501.3.
- Exhaust openings shall be 3 feet from property lines and 3 feet from operable openings into buildings.

Electrical

Electrical permits are administered by the City of Fridley, not the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI).

Rental Licensing

HABITABILITY

Habitability requirements apply to rooms used for living, sleeping, cooking or eating purposes; excluding bathrooms, laundries, unfinished basements, utility rooms, corridors, stairways, storage spaces, and attics.

- Minimum Plumbing Standards. All plumbing systems in every dwelling unit and in all shared or public areas shall be properly installed and maintained in a sanitary, safe, and functioning condition, and shall be properly connected to an approved sanitary system.
- Minimum Electrical Standards: Every dwelling unit and all public and private areas shall be supplied with electric service, functioning and safe circuit breakers or fuses, electric outlets, and electric fixtures which are properly installed and maintained in a safe working condition.
 - Dwelling units shall have at least one fifteen (15) ampere branch electric circuit for each six hundred (600) square feet of dwelling unit floor area;
 - Every habitable room shall have at least one floor or wall-type electric convenience outlet for each sixty (60) square feet or fraction thereof of total floor area, and in no case less than two such electric outlets. In cases where more than two outlets are required, one ceiling or wall-type light fixture may be substituted for one required outlet. Required outlets shall, insofar as possible, be spaced equal distances apart;
 - Every water closet compartment, bathroom, kitchen, laundry room, and furnace room shall contain at least one supplied ceiling or wall-type electric light fixture and every bathroom and laundry room shall contain at least one electric convenience outlet;
 - A convenient switch for turning on a light in each dwelling unit shall be located near the principal point of entrance to such unit. A patio door entrance may be exempt if it is not a principal entrance.
- Water Heating Standards: Every dwelling unit shall have supplied water heating facilities which are capable of heating water to such a temperature as to permit an adequate amount of water to be drawn at every required kitchen sink, lavatory basin, bathtub, shower, and laundry facilities, or other similar units at a temperature of not less than one hundred ten degrees (110) Fahrenheit.
- Minimum Natural Light and Ventilation Standards: Every habitable room shall have window area of no less than eight percent (8%) of the floor area and at least one window facing directly outdoors which can be opened easily. At minimum, the total openable window area of every habitable room shall be four percent (4%) of the floor area of the room, and in no case less than four (4) square feet. In lieu of natural ventilation, a

mechanical ventilating system may be provided which is capable of providing two air changes per hour, with twenty percent (20%) of the air supply taken from the outside. Every bathroom and water closet compartment shall have at least fifty percent (50%) of the operable window requirement otherwise appropriate for the floor area, except that no windows shall be required if such rooms are equipped with an exhaust fan connected directly to the outside, capable of providing five (5) air changes per hour. For the purpose of determining light and ventilation requirements, any room may be considered as a portion of an adjoining room when one-half of the area of the common wall is open and unobstructed and provides an opening of not less than one-tenth of the floor area of the interior room or twenty-five (25) square feet, whichever is greater. Windows shall not be required in kitchens of dwelling units when such kitchen has an opening of at least twenty (20) square feet into an adjoining habitable room and when such kitchen is provided with an approved mechanical ventilation system. In addition, the window area of the adjoining habitable room referred to above shall be of sufficient size so as to provide for the light and ventilation requirements of the kitchen area as well as for said adjoining habitable room.

- Access to Dwellings: Access to and egress from each dwelling shall be provided by at least one doorway that is a minimum of thirty-six (36) inches wide and eighty (80) inches high and otherwise complies with the fire exit provisions of the City's Fire Code.
- Minimum Ceiling Height: The ceiling height of any habitable room shall be at least seven (7) feet; except that in any habitable room under a sloping ceiling, at least one-half of the floor area shall have a ceiling height of at least seven (7) feet, and the floor area of that part of such a room where the ceiling height is less than five (5) feet shall not be considered as part of the floor area in computing the total floor area of the room for the purpose of determining the maximum permissible occupancy.
- Rooms Below Grade: A room located partly or wholly below grade may be used as a habitable room of a dwelling unit provided all of the requirements of this Ordinance are met. If a room below grade is used for sleeping purposes, an emergency escape or egress must be provided. Acceptable means of egress include:
 - Escape or rescue window with a minimum net clear openable area of 5.7 square feet. The minimum net clear openable height dimension shall be 24 inches. The minimum net clear openable width dimension shall be 20 inches. The finished sill height shall not exceed 44 inches above the floor.
- Door Locks and Security: All doors leading to public or shared areas from all dwelling units shall be provided with a single cylinder deadbolt lock, which must be operable from the interior without the use of a key or tool. Deadbolt, night latch or chain locks must be mounted at a height not to exceed 48" from the finished floor and a minimum of 34" from the finished floor. The deadbolt must be capable of being locked from the exterior of the unit. Manually operated flush bolts or surface bolts are not permitted.
- Kitchen Facilities: Every kitchen in every dwelling unit shall include the following:
 - A kitchen sink in good working condition and properly connected to an approved water supply system. It shall provide at all times an adequate amount of heated and unheated running water under pressure and be connected to an approved sewer system.

- Cabinets and/or shelves for the storage of eating, drinking, and cooking equipment and utensils, and of food that does not require refrigeration for safekeeping; and a counter or table for food preparation.
- A stove and a refrigerator which are properly installed with all necessary connections for safe, sanitary, and efficient operation.
- Toilet Facilities: Within every dwelling unit, there shall be a nonhabitable room with an entrance door which affords privacy to a person within said room and which room is equipped with a flush water closet in good working condition. Said flush water closet shall be equipped with easily cleanable surfaces.
- Lavatory Sink: Within every dwelling unit, there shall be a lavatory sink. Said lavatory sink may be in the same room as the flush water closet or in close proximity to said water closet.
- Bathtub or Shower: Within every dwelling unit, there shall be a nonhabitable room which affords privacy to a person within said room and which is equipped with a bathtub or shower in good working condition. Said bathtub or shower may be in the same room as the flush water closet, or in another room.

OCCUPANCY

The maximum number of occupants in any rental dwelling unit shall not exceed the total of two times the number of bedrooms and the living room. No more than one family shall occupy a dwelling unit. "Family" is defined as an individual or two or more persons related by blood, marriage, or adoption; or a group of not more than five (5) persons not related by blood or marriage living together.

Zoning

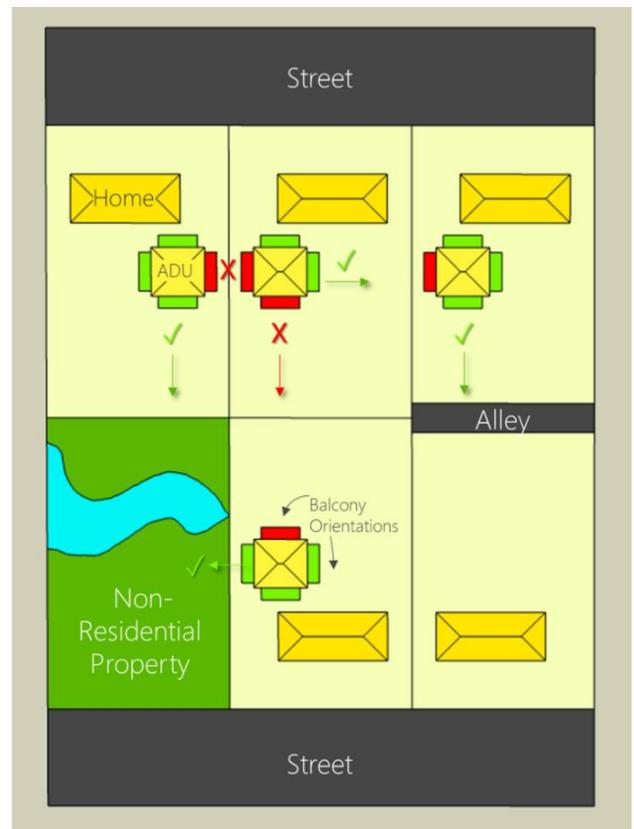
Detached ADUs require a Special Use Permit prior to building permit review. Attached ADUs are permitted by right and may apply directly for a building permit. [Read Fridley zoning requirements.](#) Download [Special Use Permit handout.](#)

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

The exterior appearance of the accessory dwelling unit shall be architecturally compatible with principal structure's siding, color schemes, roofing materials, roof type and roof pitch.

Any exterior stairway which accesses an accessory dwelling unit above the first floor shall be located in a way to minimize visibility from the street and, to the extent possible, from neighboring property.

ADU Balcony Placement Diagram



Balconies and decks above the ground floor shall not directly face an adjacent residential property's interior side yard or interior rear yard, but may face a public right of way, waterway or nonresidential property. Rooftop decks for an accessory dwelling unit are not allowed.

PARKING

Off-street parking shall be provided for all vehicles concerned with any use on the lot (principal home and ADU). Overnight street parking is not permitted during winter months. **The site plan submitted with the building permit or special use permit application shall identify adequate off-street parking for the principal home and the ADU.**

In the R-1 Zoning District, a minimum of two off-street parking stalls shall be provided for each dwelling unit. All driveways and parking stalls shall be surfaced with blacktop, concrete or other hard surface material. All lots having a minimum lot area of 9,000 square feet or resulting from a lot split shall have a double garage. Smaller lots may have a single garage. Different parking requirements may apply to single-family residential uses in the R-2, R-3, and S-1 districts. [Contact Planning staff](#) if you have questions about ADU parking requirements.