

Overview

An **Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)** is an attached or detached residential dwelling unit which provides complete independent living facilities with permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation.

A **Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit (JADU)** is a residential dwelling unit that is no more than 500 square feet in size and contained entirely within any portion of an existing or proposed single-family dwelling. A JADU may include separate sanitation facilities or share sanitation facilities with the existing structure.

ADUs and JADUs are allowed in any residential zoning district and must be located on the same lot with an existing or proposed primary dwelling unit. The Accessory Dwelling Unit regulations (City Council Ordinance No. 1021) can be found in their entirety in the Brentwood Municipal Code ([Section 17.100.005](#)). *Recordation of a Deed Restriction is required to be filled with the Contra Costa County Clerk-Recorder for the ADU or JADU prior to building permit issuance. See attached Deed Restriction form.*

General Requirements and Development Standards

Single Family Residential District	
Allowable Number	Maximum of two (2); One (1) attached or detached plus one (1) JADU
Design	The roof slope, siding materials, and colors are required to match the primary dwelling. Outdoor lights shall be shielded and directed downward. <i>(Must be indicated in submittal)</i>
Maximum Size (Total Floor Area)	Attached ADU: 50 percent of the square footage of the existing single-family dwelling or 850 square feet for a studio or one-bedroom unit or 1,000 square feet for two or more bedrooms, whichever is greater. No accessory dwelling unit may exceed 1,200 square feet. Detached ADU: 1,000 square feet JADU: 500 square feet
Minimum Setbacks	<i>Front:</i> Applicable zoning district <i>Side yard (includes street side yard for corner lots):</i> 4 feet <i>Rear yard:</i> 4 feet <i>Building Separation:</i> 4 feet from any other building on the lot JADU: setbacks are subject to the applicable zoning district.
Maximum Height	16 feet, measured to the highest point of roof
Coverage	None required. Any ADU \geq 800 square feet in size is allowed, if it meets all development standards applicable to its zoning district.
Owner Occupancy	Owner occupancy is not required for an ADU (may be repealed January 2025); however, a JADU requires owner occupancy.
Rental	Short-term rental prohibited (less than 30 days)
Parking	One (1) space per unit. May be tandem on driveway or in setback areas (unless finding is made that proposed parking area is not feasible due to life safety reasons), No parking required if within: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ½ mile walking distance from transit • A primary residence or accessory structure Or Where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On street parking is required but not offered to inhabitant of the ADU

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A car share vehicle is located within one block
Garage Conversion	No replacement parking required when converting to an ADU. Replacement parking required when converting to JADU.

Mutli-Family Residential District Development Standards

Allowable Number	<p>One of the following options but not both:</p> <p><i>Option A</i> Attached ADU (converted from existing non-living space) Minimum allowed: One (1) Maximum allowed: 25 percent of the number of the total multi-family units (example: Five attached ADUs are allowed in a 20 unit complex)</p> <p>OR</p> <p><i>Option B</i> Maximum allowed: two (2) on lots with multi-family dwellings, subject to all development standards including maximum height (16 feet) and minimum side and rear yard setbacks (4 feet)</p>
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All other development standards for ADUs in single-family residential districts apply.

Conversion Development Standards

Conversion of an Existing Accessory Structure	A conversion includes converting space within a proposed or existing single-family dwelling, an existing multi-family dwelling, an existing accessory building that was legally constructed, or in the same location and to the same dimensions as an existing accessory building that was legally constructed in accordance with any applicable building permits for use as an accessory dwelling unit. An ADU converted from an existing accessory building or a single-family dwelling may be developed on the same parcel as a JADU. There are no setback or height requirements for an existing legally constructed space that is converted to an ADU or for a building that is constructed in the same location and to the same dimensions as an existing legal structure.
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Process and Timeframe

- 1. Submit a Complete Application.** Submit a [Building Permit application](#) with all required plans and documents. Having all necessary documents will help in the review process and minimizes the need to contact you, your designer, or contractor for additional information needed to complete the review.
- 2. Ministerial Review Process.** All ADU and JADU proposals are subject only to a staff-level review for compliance. The ministerial review for compliance is through submittal of a Building Permit application and is processed within 60 days. In the event additional information is required or the application is incomplete, additional time will be needed to process it. The review involves the following:
 - a. Planning Division** to ensure all applicable development standards are met.
 - b. Development Services Division** to ensure that all California Building and Energy Code requirements are met.
- 3. Building Permit issuance.** A Permit Technician will call you once the permit is ready to be issued.

For additional information related to the application submittal, permit status, fees, or utility connections contact the Development Services Division at 925.516.5405 or building@brentwoodca.gov.

FAQs:

Does my ADU or JADU need a separate entrance?

An accessory dwelling unit shall have a separate exterior entrance and exit from the primary dwelling unit.

Why do I need a deed restriction and how do I obtain the required Deed Restriction?

A Deed Restriction is to be recorded with the [Contra Costa County Clerk-Recorder](#) which includes applicable limitations and restrictions set forth in the [BMC Section 17.100.005](#). Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant is required to provide evidence that the deed restriction was filed for recording with the County. Do not wait to file with the Clerk-Recorder as this process may delay the issuance of your permit.

Is a separate address required for my ADU?

No, a separate address is not required. The City does not provide separate addresses for ADUs or JADUs.

Can I convert my existing attached garage for the main home into an ADU or JADU?

Yes, an existing attached garage can be converted into an ADU and no replacement parking is required; however, replacement parking is required if parking for the main house is converted into a JADU.

Where do I measure the setbacks?

Setbacks are measured from the closest point of the accessory dwelling unit, which includes any and all appurtenant features, to the property line.

Can I attach a garage or porch to an ADU?

An attached garage, porch, or other type of attached accessory building must meet all Accessory Building standards (e.g., size, setbacks, etc.) per the [BMC Chapter 17.660.006](#) as they have separate regulations from the ADU ordinance.

What if my HOA says ADUs are not allowed or I have a deed restriction that says ADUs or JADUs are not allowed?

Under California State Law, deed restrictions and HOA rules that ban ADUs are void. However, restrictions that do not effectively prohibit the construction of an ADU or JADU are allowed.

Can I extend water and sewer connections from the main house to the detached ADU?

Detached accessory dwelling units generally may not have water and wastewater utility connections as an extension from the primary dwelling unit. Utility services may be extended from the private utility lateral, between the public utility main and the primary dwelling unit, or may be a separate connection to the public utility main. For more information contact the Development Services Division at 925.516.5405 or at Building@brentwoodca.gov.

Are fire sprinklers required?

Fire sprinklers are not required if they are not required for the main home. However, California Building Code requires 1-hr construction or fire sprinklers for ADUs setback less than five feet from another structure or the property line. For more information contact the Development Services Division at 925.516.5405 or at Building@brentwoodca.gov.