



# CITY OF BLAINE

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## ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

### A PROPERTY OWNER'S GUIDE TO ADU DEVELOPMENT

An **Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)** is a complete living unit that is secondary to a single family home located on the same lot. They are often called “Mother-In-Law” suites, “Granny Flats,” or “Garden Cottages.”

As demographics change, ADUs offer a desirable flexibility in housing choices. Sometimes ADUs are occupied by an adult child living at home, a parent, a grandparent, or caretaker. In other instances the property owner may choose to “downsize” and move to the ADU, renting the primary home and thereby staying in the neighborhood. An ADU can offer homeowners a way to supplement their income and defray the cost of home mortgages. ADUs can provide a source of rental income.



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# WHAT EXACTLY IS AN ADU?

An accessory dwelling unit is a separate living space on the same property as a single family home. The accessory unit is “complete” in that it includes living and sleeping space, a bathroom and a kitchen. In Blaine, accessory dwelling units are only permitted on lots that contain a detached single-family home, and only in certain zoning districts. Accessory dwelling units are separated into two types: attached or detached.

The official definition of an accessory dwelling unit is as follows:

“Accessory Dwelling Unit” means a complete dwelling unit as defined by the International Building Code that is located on the same lot as a detached single-family dwelling meeting the standards in 17.102 BMC. Accessory Dwelling Units may be attached to the primary single family dwelling or detached from the primary single family dwelling. (BMC 17.142)



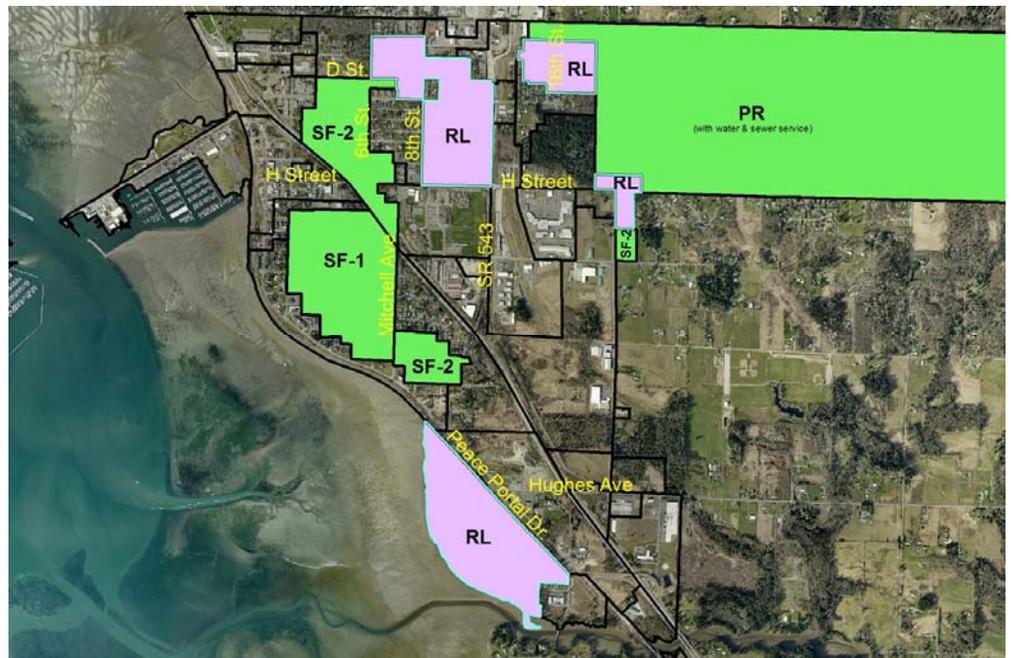
*“For owner-occupiers who live alone, for the widowed, retired, or infirm, or for young families with small children, the opportunity to exchange services with tenants next door offers substitutes for social supports that were provided by the extended family in earlier generations.”*

*Martin Gellen,  
Accessory Apartments  
in  
Single-Family Housing*

# WHERE ARE THEY PERMITTED?

ADUs are allowed within the SF-1, SF-2 and PR zoning districts as an outright permitted use. ADUs are allowed in the Residential Low-Density zoning district as a Conditional Use. In all these locations the ADU must be connected to municipal water and sewer services.

ADUs are not permitted on every lot. There are minimum lot size requirements and ADUs can only be added where setbacks, lot coverage, and other dimensional requirements can be met.



Green = Outright allowed      Pink = Allowed through Conditional Use Permit

# WHAT ARE THE RULES?

THIS IS A SUMMARY. REFER TO SECTION 17.102 OF THE BLAINE MUNICIPAL CODE FOR THE COMPLETE RULES.

ADUs are limited in size based on the size of the primary residence and/or the size of the lot.

Detached ADUs are limited to no more than 28 feet tall. This is lower than the height limit of the primary residence.

The owner of the property must live on the site, in the ADU or in the primary residence.

There are specific rules about the design of a detached ADU (cottage.) Meet with City staff to discuss the design options early in your planning process.

Your ADU must have outdoor space available. That can be a yard, porch, patio, or deck.

The ADU should be oriented in a way that protects the privacy of adjacent properties as much as feasible.

Windows and doors should be placed in a way to protect the neighbor's privacy.

One parking space is required for each bedroom in an ADU. Studio units require one parking space.

ADUs cannot be sold separately from the primary residence and cannot be sold as condominiums.

*The City has developed ADU Templates to help in your design effort.*

*These are summarized on the back page. More detailed information is available in individual fliers.*

*You are not required to follow a template.*

# SITE PLANNING FOR A DETACHED ADU

Locate your ADU in the back yard.

Access it from the alley or side street whenever feasible.

If on a corner lot, orient the front door towards a different street than the main house.

Provide a private outdoor space like a small yard, porch, or patio area for the ADU.

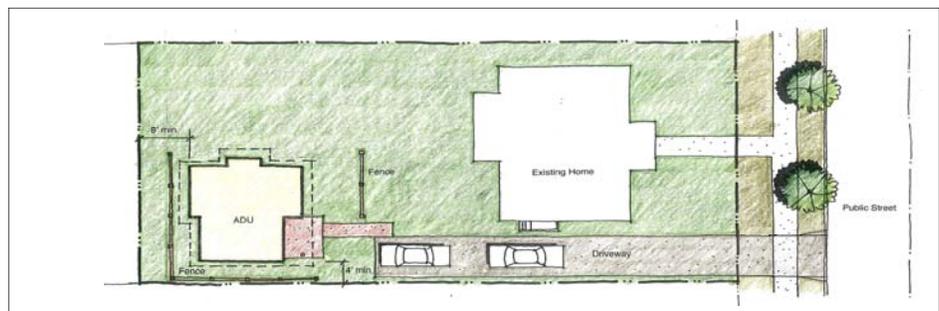
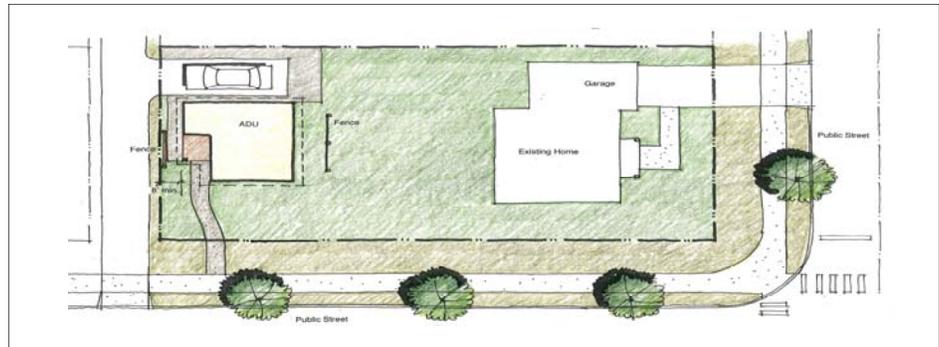
Locate the parking in a discrete location.

Keep neighboring properties in mind when making choices in locating the ADU. Protect the privacy of adjacent lots.

Orient windows and doors away from neighboring properties.

Use landscaping to shield the ADU from neighbors or the street if applicable.

Consider the topography and vegetation. Is there a discrete location to place the unit.



## Template 1

### Single-Story Cottage

This one floor unit provides a cozy living space that fits discretely into the existing development. The small size and low profile help to reduce impacts to views and the privacy of adjacent properties. It is important to include architectural features to add interest to the building.



## Template 2

### Story and a Half Cottage

This unit has an upper floor bedroom, which may not be desirable to some occupants. The design allows for a smaller building footprint. Upper floor windows can affect the privacy of adjacent properties. Give careful consideration when choosing the site for this design style.



## Template 3

### Unit Over a Garage

This upper floor unit occupies the space over a small garage. This can be a studio or one-bedroom unit. As with other units be cautious of impacting the privacy of neighboring lots when locating the doors and windows.



## Template 4

### Unit over a Larger Garage

This upper floor unit occupies the space over a larger garage. This can be more intrusive due to the larger size. As with other units be cautious of impacting the privacy of neighboring lots when locating the doors and windows. Larger buildings will need more architectural interest to avoid looking bulky or boring.

