



CITY OF
SOUTH LAKE TAHOE

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS

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What are Accessory Dwelling Units?

Accessory dwelling units have been known as in-law units, granny flats, and secondary units. They provide a dwelling space in addition to the primary residence to house long term tenants or visiting family members and friends. ADUs are allowed on any parcel in the City of South Lake Tahoe that is zoned for single family or multifamily dwellings.



Detached ADU

Detached ADUs are independent structures. They have their own entrances, cooking, and sanitation facilities. A detached garage converted to an ADU is a detached ADU. Movable Tiny Homes may be installed as Detached ADUs.



Attached ADU

Attached ADUs share a wall, floor, or ceiling with the primary residence. They have independent cooking and sanitation facilities, as well as a private entrance



Converted ADU

Converted ADUs are attached ADUs that were created by converting an existing space such as an attached garage or pool house.



Junior ADU (JADU)

JADUs are located entirely within a single-family dwelling through the conversion of a bedroom. They must have an independent access point and cooking facility. Sanitation facilities may be shared or private. JADUs are limited to 500 square feet.

Steps to an ADU

1

Know Your Options Find out if you can add coverage (impervious surface) to your parcel through a [TRPA Site Assessment](#). If you cannot add coverage, a JADU or Converted ADU is still an option!

Full Site Assessment - \$558 minimum + \$127 IT surcharge

A full site assessment is needed if your parcel has not been assigned a land capability score, which determines allowable coverage. A full site assessment also verifies existing coverage.

Partial Site Assessment - \$446 minimum + \$127 IT surcharge

If you already have a land capability score and only need verification of land coverage, have a partial site assessment done.

2

Acquire a **Residential Unit of Use (RUU) Development Right** in one of the following ways. An RUU is required for an ADU of any type. Each ADU requires a RUU.

Option A

Full RUU from City – no cost

The City of South Lake Tahoe is offering a limited number of RUUs free of charge. To receive one, include a written request with the City Building Permit application (Step 6).

Option B

TRPA Bonus Unit – no cost

When submitting your TRPA Single Family Dwelling Application (Step 5), indicate you would like to receive a Bonus Unit.

Bonus Units are granted for ADUs within ½ mile of transit stops, ½ mile from a town center, or within areas zoned for multi-family housing. ADUs built with Bonus Units must be deed restricted and rented to tenants of affordable, moderate, or achievable incomes.

View the [TRPA Residential Bonus Unit Program Fact Sheet](#) to learn more about the income restrictions.

Option C

Residential Allocation + Potential RUU

A limited number of allocations are available from the City for \$711 plus a \$1,042 deposit.

Potential RUUs are available at market rate through the [TDR Marketplace](#).

Option D

Full RUU – market price

RUUs can be bought through a private transaction. See [TDR Marketplace](#) for available RUUs and rates.

3

Work with a professional architect or designer to **develop plans.**

Costs to develop plans and cost of construction materials will vary.

See **“Designing your ADU”** for size, color, setback, and other design standards.

4

Obtain Approval from **utility districts** (i.e. South Tahoe Public Utility District, Liberty Utilities, Southwest Gas, etc.)

South Tahoe Public Utility District	Stpud.us	(530) 544-6474
Liberty Utilities	libertyutilities.com	(800) 782-2506
Southwest Gas	Swgas.com	(877) 860-6020

**** Steps 5 and 6 may be submitted simultaneously.*

5

Submit a **Single Family Dwelling Application** to TRPA, indicating you wish to build an ADU.

Indicate on this application if you would like to receive a Bonus Unit. Fees with this ★ symbol are waived if a Bonus Unit is being utilized.

- Application Fee - \$1.57/s.f. or \$787 minimum ★
- BMP Fee - \$152
- IT Surcharge - \$138
- Admin Fee - \$242 (refundable)
- Mobility Mitigation Fee - \$5,000 - \$10,000 ★
- BMP Security Deposit - \$2,000-\$3,000
- Water Quality Mitigation Fee - \$1.86/s.f. of coverage

6

Apply for a **City of South Lake Tahoe Building Permit.**

If you wish to receive a RUU free of charge from the City, submit a written request with your building permit application. All fees below apply.

- Permit Fee – 2% of building valuation
- Technology Fee – 2% of permit fee
- General Plan Maintenance Fee - .1% of building valuation
- State Building Standards Fee - \$1 per \$25,000 of valuation
- Lake Tahoe School District Fee - \$4.79/s.f. (waived for ADUs under 750 s.f.)

Designing Your ADU

When designing your ADU, use the existing residence as a model. New construction ADUs should match of the existing residence color, roof pitch, architectural style, and materials if possible.

What kind of ADU can I build? How many?

Parcels with an *existing or proposed single family dwelling* may have one of the following combinations:

- a. One detached ADU and one Junior ADU
- b. One detached ADU and one attached ADU

Parcels with an *existing or proposed multifamily dwelling* may have both of the following:

- a. Up to two limited detached ADUs
- b. Converted ADUs, the number of which may not exceed 25% of the existing units

What setbacks are required for ADUs?

Depending on location, setback requirements may vary. Typical setback requirements in residential zones are:

Front: 20'

Side, street: 15'

Side, interior (parcels less than 80 feet wide): 5'

Side, interior (parcels greater than 80 feet wide): 10'

Rear: 15'

Rear, corner: 5'

Rear, street: 5' when there is no vehicle access from the rear, 15' when vehicle access is provided

Where setback standards prevent an ADU from being built, one limited detached ADU per single family parcel and 2 limited detached ADUs per multifamily parcel may be permitted. Limited detached ADUs:

- a. Are 800 s.f. or smaller
- b. Are not greater than 16 feet tall
- c. Have rear and side setbacks of at least 4 feet

What is the maximum size of an ADU?

Attached One bedroom or studio: 850 s.f.
Two bedrooms or more: 1,000 s.f.

Detached One bedroom or studio: 850 s.f.
Two bedrooms: 1,000 s.f.

Junior 500 s.f.

Converted Area of converted space + 150 s.f. for an entrance if needed

A single story ADU cannot exceed 18 feet in height. A two story ADU is subject to the maximum allowable height for the parcel, which is determined by TRPA Code or Area Plan regulations.

Do I need to provide parking for the ADU?

One off-street parking space is required for each attached and detached ADU, unless one of the following applies:

- The ADU is located within one-half mile walking distance of public transit
- The ADU is located within a historic district
- The ADU is a converted or junior ADU
- When on-street parking permits are required, but not offered to the occupant of the ADU
- When there is a designated car share vehicle parking space located within one block of the ADU

Are solar panels required?

Newly built, detached ADUs require solar panel installation. They may be located on the ADU or primary residence. If the property's sunlight is limited by natural or manmade barriers, the project may be exempt from this requirement.



Resources and Incentives

Discounted development rights and land coverage from
the City of South Lake Tahoe

- Limited number of RUUs available at no cost.
- Land Coverage available at no cost for deed restricted affordable housing and at discounted rate for non-deed restricted ADUs.

Accessory Dwelling Unit Grant Program

- This program provides up to \$40,000 to reimburse homeowners for pre-development costs associated with building ADUs. Funding is available those with low-to-moderate income levels. In El Dorado County, this includes households making less than \$202,000 per year.

[Accessory Dwelling Unit Grant Program](#)

Solar Panel Incentives and Credits

- Some new construction ADUs require solar panels to be installed with the project. Explore the following programs to see where you can save.

[Federal Solar Investment Tax Credit \(ITC\)](#)

[Self-Generation Incentive Program](#)

[Property Tax Exemption](#)