

“The purpose of an ADU is to provide affordable housing for the Whitefish workforce and residents, support smaller households, and offer an extra income stream for property owners.”

FAQ

What is a building footprint? The area within the perimeter of a building measured at the exterior foundation including any patios with a roof and covered or uncovered decks and stairs.

Does an ADU require additional parking? No parking is required for an ADU.

Is a building permit required? Yes, a building permit must be obtained before starting construction or renovations for an ADU.

Where are ADU's allowed? ADUs are allowed in all zoning districts accessory to a single-family residence.

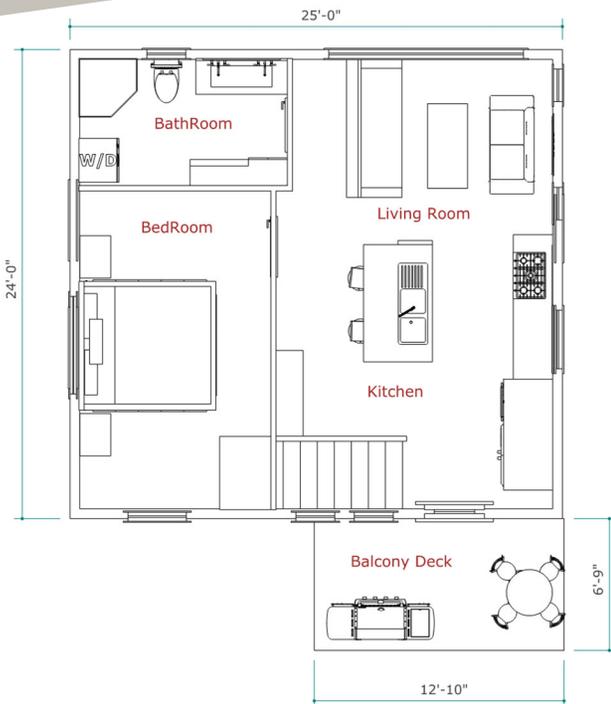
Can I use my ADU as a vacation rental? Only if it is located in a zoning district zoned for short-term rentals and provided the owner has an approved STR permit.

Can I add a second story to my existing garage? Yes, as long as it complies with zoning setbacks.

Note: Older buildings may not have insulated slabs for water & the structural support necessary for a second story. Please confer with a specialist before developing plans.

Planning & Building Dept.

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ADUs

**Quick Guide to
Accessory Dwelling Units
in Whitefish**



What is an ADU?

An **Accessory Dwelling Unit**, also known as an ADU, a mother-in-law apartment or backyard cottage is a small apartment or detached house located on the same lot as the main single-family home.

According to Whitefish City Code, an ADU is:

- A room or rooms on the same lot as primary dwelling that may be occupied by persons who are not members of the primary dwelling family.
- Is independently habitable and provides the basic requirements of shelter, heating, cooking, and sanitation.

Note: Only one ADU or guesthouse is permitted on a lot accessory to a single-family home.

Best Practices

- Protect neighborhood privacy by thoughtful upper-level deck and window placement. Main windows should look toward main house or toward the alley rather than into the neighbor's yards.
- Exterior finish materials, windows, trim, and rooflines should complement the primary residence.
- Design the unit with private indoor and outdoor spaces for owners and occupants. Outside decks and patios make small units feel larger and improve livability by providing connection to the outdoors.
- While outdoor stairs to second floor ADUs provide more interior space, interior stairs are preferred. If outdoor main access stairs are used, they should be covered so tenants can navigate them safely in the winter.
- Landscaping such as trees and tall shrubs adds visual screening around buildings and add to livability.

Design

Guidelines:

ADUs can be either attached to or detached from the principal home. Attached ADUs are connected to or located within the primary dwelling, such as converted basements, attics, attached garages, or additions. Detached ADUs are separate from the main house and can include converted detached garages, new cottages, or living spaces over garages. No additional parking is required for ADUs.

An ADU can be up to 1,000 square feet or 75% of the size of the main house, whichever is smaller. ADUs must comply with zoning rules for setbacks and lot coverage. While all ADUs are exempt from impact fees, water and wastewater impact fees may apply if an upgrade to the property's meter size is needed. Additionally, ADUs with a footprint of 600 square feet or less are eligible for reduced setbacks of 6 feet for rear and side yards.

ADUs must stay connected to the main house and cannot be sold or transferred separately.

Benefits of ADUs

- Provides affordable housing options
- Offers a supplemental income stream for homeowners
- Promotes more efficient use of existing infrastructure
- Supports multigenerational living
- Enhances property value