

Detached residential accessory buildings

Accessory buildings include anything with a roof that provides shelter for persons, animals or personal property, such as detached garages, storage sheds, gazebos,

To ensure that accessory buildings are scaled accordingly for the neighborhood, the zoning ordinance establishes regulations for their height and location. This handout is a summary of the regulations. The regulations can be found in Section 36-162 of the zoning ordinance, and is available to view on the city website.

Setbacks

A “setback” or “yard” is the minimum distance required between a property line and the proposed building. All setbacks are measured from the property line only. Landmarks, physical features and structures, such as fences, cannot be used to estimate the location of the property line. There are two ways to determine your lot lines:

- Locate your lot’s corner stakes/irons. You can use a metal detector to find them. Usually, they are 3/4-inch diameter metal pipes that are 12 inches long. They were set in each of the corners of your property when the lot was subdivided. The invisible line connecting the four property irons forms your property line. The top of the stakes should be a few inches below the sod.
- If you cannot find the irons, then the only option available is to hire a registered land surveyor. By law, only a licensed surveyor can install stakes if yours are missing.

Location requirements (setbacks and yards)

- Accessory building must be located in the backyard. An accessory building may be located in a side yard only if it is used as a detached garage and, for corner lots, the side yard does not border the side street.
- Accessory buildings must be a minimum of 2 feet from any side or rear lot line, measured from the lot line to the edge of the eave.
- Accessory buildings located adjacent to an alley must be at least two feet measured from the alley lot line to the wall, and 16 inches measured from the alley lot line to the eave.
- Detached garages located in the side yard must meet the same side setback as is required for the house. Contact the zoning department to determine what the required setback is.
- If less than 6 feet from a principal building on the same lot, the accessory building is considered part of the principal building and must meet principal building setbacks.

Size

- In all R-1, R-2 and R-3 districts, the total cumulative ground floor area of all accessory buildings shall not exceed the lesser of 800 square feet or 25 percent of the back yard. The back yard is determined by multiplying the lot width by the distance from the rear lot line to the rear most wall of the house.
- Regardless of the 25 percent maximum above, a property may construct a detached garage that does not exceed 576 square feet. If this exception is used, then additional accessory buildings will not be permitted, and existing accessory buildings must be removed.
- Total cumulative ground floor area of all accessory buildings shall be less than the ground floor area of the house.

Height

The height of an accessory building is the distance from the first story elevation, as defined by building code, to the highest point of the structure.

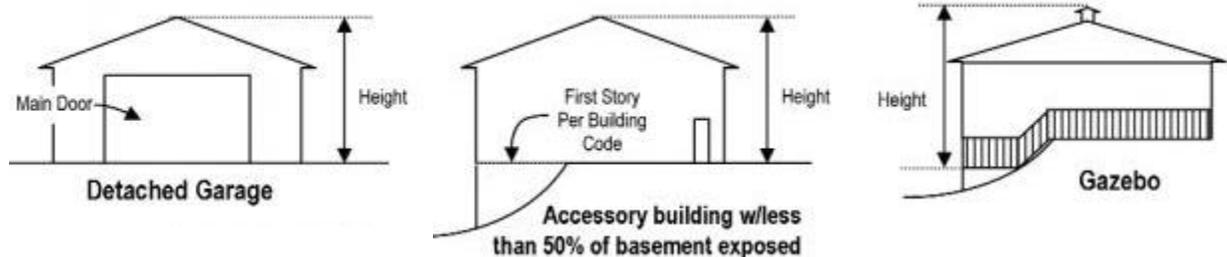
See Figure A below for an illustration of accessory building height definitions.

The maximum height allowed for accessory buildings is summarized below:

- Accessory buildings up to 15 feet in height are permitted without having to meet the conditions required for accessory buildings over 15 feet in height.
- Accessory buildings over 15 feet in height are permitted with the following conditions:
 - Maximum allowed height is 24 feet.
 - Sidewall height cannot exceed 9 feet.
 - Siding must match the house (brick house = brick garage).
 - Slope of the garage must match the primary roof pitch of the house.
 - Windows, doors or similar openings above the ground floor are allowed with the following conditions:
 - They face street or alley.
 - They are at least 15 feet from a property line shared with a neighbor zoned residential and used for a residential purpose.
- The height of all accessory buildings must be lower than the highest point of the house.

Height definitions (Figure A)

Accessory buildings



Design requirements

All accessory buildings must adhere to the following:

- The new building or structure must be compatible in design and material with the home.
- Accessory buildings may not have kitchen or bathroom facilities. However, hose bibs and utility sinks are allowed.
- All drains, including floor drains must be connected to the sanitary sewer.
- Window, door, skylight or similar openings can be located in the second story if they face a road, alley or owner's backyard.
- Accessory buildings may not be used for dwelling purposes or home occupations.

A permit is required

Before any demolition or construction begins, you must obtain a building permit. To apply for a permit, complete the online application on the city's website. If you have questions about what to submit, please call the community development department at 952.924.2575. The cost of the permit is based on the valuation of the construction, including materials and labor.

Accessory buildings less than 200 square feet in area do not require a building permit. Instead, the city requires a zoning permit. The accessory building permit is available for downloading on the city website, or you can stop at city hall to fill it out.

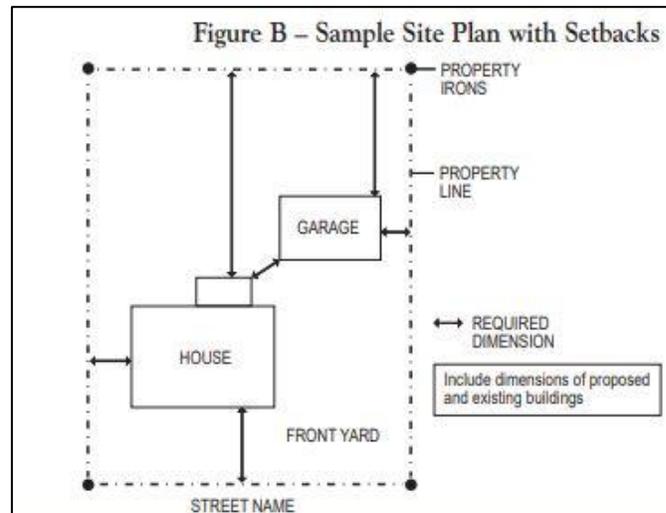
The site plan must clearly show

Permits require a site plan that show the following:

- All easements
- Lot size dimensions
- Distances to the property lines from the existing house and existing and proposed accessory buildings and structures
- Power lines

Building plans must clearly show

- Plan view of the building or structure (overhead view)
- Cross section of a wall showing size of footing, anchor bolt/strap, distance from grade to sill plate, size and height of framing members and type of roof system used (if hand framed, then size of lumber), and roof pitch.
- Elevation drawings of two sides of the building or structure.
- For accessory buildings, show one view of the gable side, including the total proposed height (to peak of the building), and the other view showing the eave side with all exterior materials labeled.



Driveways

- Driveways must be paved with asphalt, concrete or driveway quality pavers.
- If you are constructing a new curb cut onto a public road for a driveway or are planning to alter the existing driveway curb cut, a right of way permit is required from the city Engineering Department.

NOTE: This handout summarizes the zoning requirements for residential garages and accessory buildings. Please contact the inspections department at 952.924.2588 for information regarding building code requirements.