



Taller Público de Vivienda Accesoría (ADU)

Richmond, California

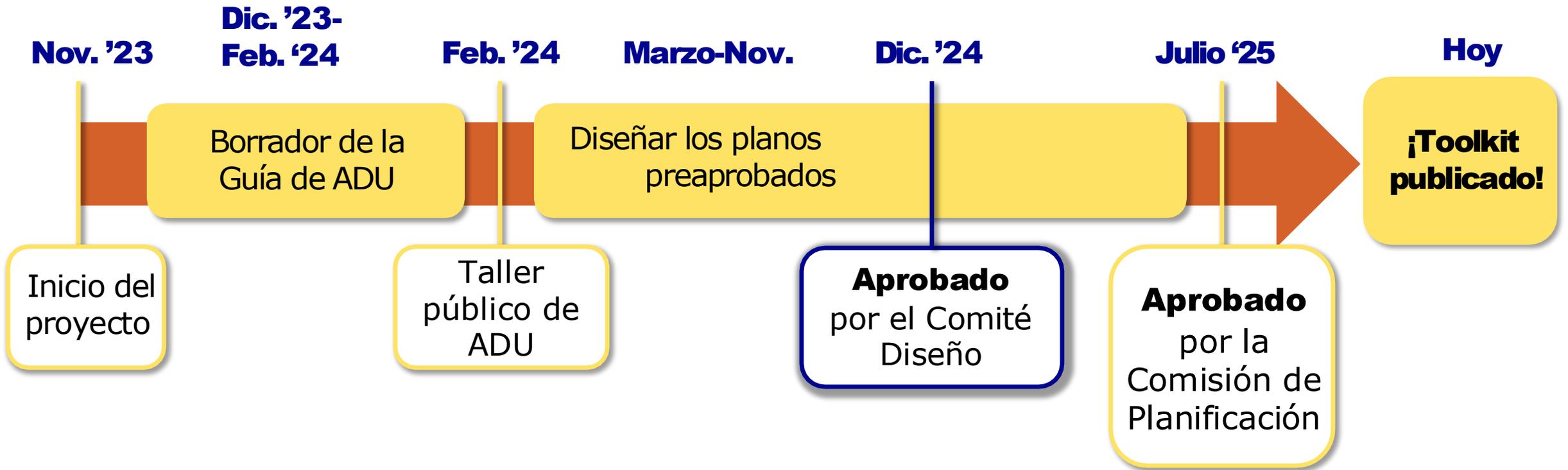
Taller Público
3 de Septiembre de 2025



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Proyecto de ADU Toolkit





Resumen del Toolkit de ADU

SECCIÓN

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¿Cuál es el propósito del Toolkit de ADU?

Proporcionar recursos para que los residentes de Richmond aprendan sobre las ADU, que incluyen:

- **Guía de ADU (solo en inglés)**
- **Planos Preaprobado de ADU**





Introducción a las ADUs

SECCIÓN

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¿Qué es una Vivienda Accesorio (ADU)?

Una **Vivienda Accesorio**, conocida como **Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)** en inglés, es una **unidad residencial de vivienda** que proporciona **instalaciones de vida independientes** ubicadas en un terreno con una **residencia principal o edificio multifamiliar**. Estas unidades a veces se conocen como “In-Law Unit” o “Casitas”

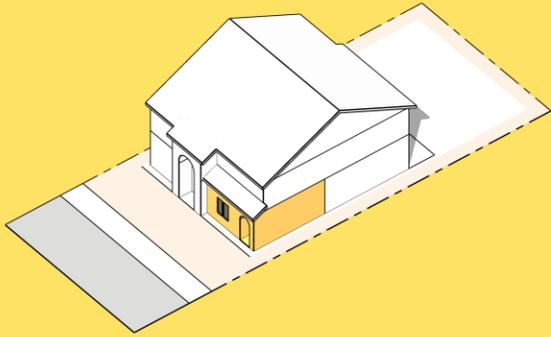


¿Cómo pueden las ADU ayudar a Richmond?

La producción actual de viviendas en California no es suficiente. **Viviendas Accesorias pueden ayudar a abordar la necesidad de vivienda económicas** al proporcionar **unidades habitables** en contextos transitables que se pueden **desarrollar de manera fácil, rápida y asequible**. Pueden ofrecer los siguientes beneficios:

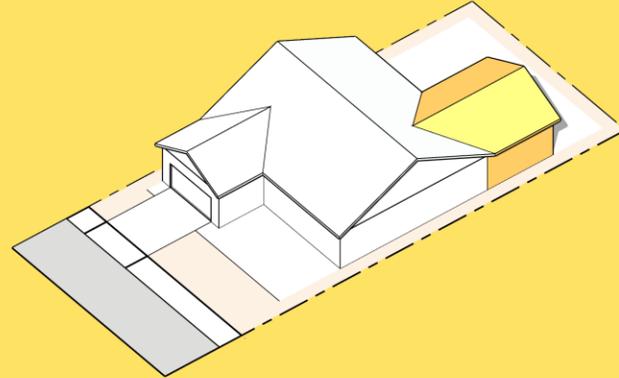
- **Opciones de vivienda.** Agrega una variedad de opciones de apertura de viviendas disponibles para la vida independiente y el envejecimiento en el lugar.
- **Compatibilidad con vecindarios.** Viviendas adicionales en forma de edificio que sea compatible con vecindarios unifamiliares.
- **Habitabilidad.** Puede proporcionar una mayor privacidad para hogares multigeneracionales.
- **Beneficios financieros.** No requiere la compra de nuevos terrenos. Oportunidad de obtener ingresos suplementarios para propietarios de viviendas a través de acuerdos/programas de alquiler a largo plazo.

¿Cuáles son los diferentes tipos de ADU?



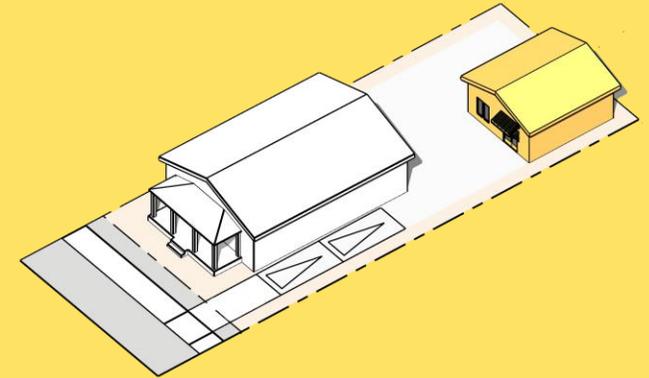
1. Junior ADU

- 500 pies cuadrados o menos
- Totalmente contenido dentro de una residencia unifamiliar
- Puede tener una conexión interior y compartir un baño con la residencia principal



2. ADU Adjunta

- Físicamente adjunta al edificio principal
- Accesible desde una entrada separada y dedicada
- Puede estar en el primer o segundo piso



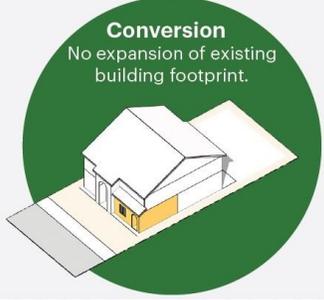
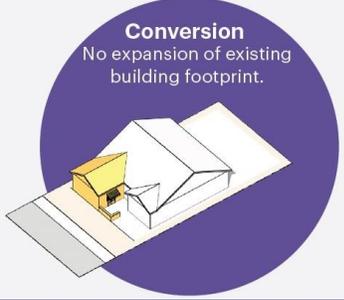
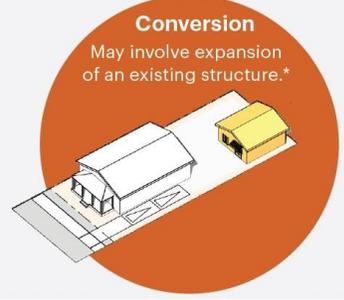
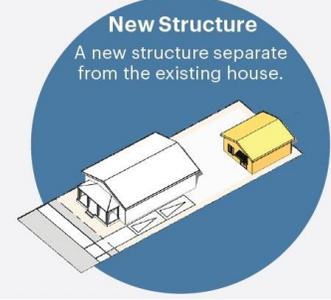
3. ADU Separada

- Físicamente separado del edificio principal
- Puede tener uno o dos pisos

¿Cómo puedo agregar una ADU a mi propiedad?

Puede elegir entre varios enfoques de construcción para construir su ADU, que incluyen:

- **La conversión** de un espacio existente como un dormitorio principal existente, garaje adjunto, área de almacenamiento, o una estructura accesoria existente. (Las conversiones ilegalmente también pueden ser elegible para legalización)
- **Adición** a su vivienda principal
- La construcción de **una nueva estructura**

ADU Type	Construction Options	
1 JADU	Conversion No expansion of existing building footprint. 	
2 Attached ADU	Conversion No expansion of existing building footprint. 	Addition Expansion of existing building footprint. 
	Conversion May involve expansion of an existing structure.* 	New Structure A new structure separate from the existing house. 

*Expansions may have square footage limitations if the existing structure is nonconforming. See California State Law for details.

¿Puedo convertir mi garaje en una ADU?

¡SÍ, SE PUEDE!

Para convertir su garaje en una ADU, debe solicitar un permiso. Como resultado de este proceso, es posible que deba actualizar aspectos de la estructura para actualizarla al código de edificación.

Para obtener más información, consulte Design Resources B en la Guía de ADU.

Design Resource B Garage Conversions

Getting your garage conversion permitted

You are required to obtain a building permit to change the use of your garage to ADU. The permitting process follows the same development timeline as listed on pages 15-16 and is contingent on bringing the structure up to building code for the new residential use. No pre-construction inspections are required. Floor plans need to show existing and proposed configuration as well as how the proposed portion will conform to the applicable code requirements. However, you will not have to provide any replacement parking and can build the ADU to the existing footprint regardless of floor area maximums and setbacks.

Bringing your garage up to code

Building codes make sure structures are safe for their intended use. Changing uses from vehicle storage to residence might involve significant changes. See below a table of applicable buildings codes organized by topic and a list of commonly required upgrades to help inform what you will need.

Applicable Building Codes	
Topic	Code
General construction standards (structure, fire safety, electrical systems, plumbing, ventilation)	RMC Article 8 Building Regulations - Building Code of the City of Richmond
Health and safety	RMC Article 8 Building Regulations - Housing Code
Building envelope energy performance	California Building Energy Efficiency Standards - Title 24
Fire safety	RMC Article 8 Fire - Fire Prevention Code
Zoning, program and design standards	RMC Article 15 Zoning and Subdivision - ADU Ordinance

Note that the recommendations on this spread apply to converting a **permitted** garage into an ADU. An unpermitted structure converted to an ADU is treated as a new build and must comply with state and local standards rather than conversion standards.

Commonly required upgrades

- 1 Foundations and Floor**
 - If slab has insufficient concrete strength and thickness, **underpin the foundation**
 - If insufficient moisture barrier between slab and flooring, **add waterproofing membrane to slab**
- 2 Walls**
 - If structural integrity is compromised (especially in earthquake-prone zones), **reinforce studs or add wall bracing**
 - If wall R-value, capacity of insulation within the walls to resist heat flow, does not meet energy code, **add insulation**
- 3 Roof**
 - If additional loads from new mechanical equipment, lighting and finishes compromise structural integrity, **add more structure**
 - If roof R-value does not meet energy code, **add insulation and make sure to ventilate**
- 4 Openings**
 - If any planned bedrooms do not have direct access to the exterior, **add a window with a minimum clear opening of 5.7 sq. ft. to meet egress code requirements**
 - If habitable spaces are not meeting lighting and ventilation requirements, **add openings as needed with consideration of privacy and sun orientation**
- 5 HVAC**
 - JADUs are not considered separate dwellings and are exempt from HVAC requirements.
 - If structure lacks heating and cooling, **add HVAC system (many use a minisplit system separate from primary residence)**
- 6 Utilities**
 - JADUs are not considered separate dwellings and are exempt from separate utility requirements.
 - ADU conversions are exempt from separate utility connection requirements however depending on increased loads, you might **consider upgrading water, sewer and electrical lines to a service with greater capacity**

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¿Puedo agregar una ADU a mi terreno multifamiliar?

¡SÍ! Tanto las ADU adjuntas como las ADU separadas se pueden construir en terrenos multifamiliares.

CUÁNTOS?

Hasta el 25% de las unidades de vivienda existentes (pero al menos una) para ADU adjuntas y hasta dos ADU separadas.

Para obtener más información, consulte Design Resources C en la Guía de ADU.

Design Resource C
ADUs on Multifamily lots

Can I have ADUs on a multifamily lot?
Yes! State law SB807 allows both attached ADUs and detached ADUs to be built on multifamily lots.

How many?

- If you have a duplex, triplex, or fourplex you can build one attached ADU and up to two detached ADUs.
- If you have a multifamily unit with 5 or more units you can build up to 25% of existing dwelling units and two detached ADUs.

Where?

- Detached ADUs can be built in available rear yard so long as they have 4 feet of setbacks from property lines and 5 feet from primary structure, and meet height requirements.
- An attached ADU can be an addition or conversion but it cannot be built in any space assigned to existing residential dwelling units in the multifamily structure. This means impact on multifamily dwelling units is minimal since ADUs cannot be built within existing habitable area. Spaces typically converted to ADUs are underutilized storage or garages within the multifamily structure.

Are there any multifamily specific standards?
Yes, here are some things to keep in mind:

- ADUs added to your property, so long as they follow ADU standards, do not count towards your lot's density total.
- A **multistory** multifamily dwelling is allowed a height increase to 18 feet for detached ADUs
- If adding an attached ADU to a multifamily structure that has setbacks less than 4 feet, you are not required to update the building to meet code.
- Adding an ADU to your multifamily lot cannot trigger a requirement for fire sprinklers to be installed in existing multifamily dwelling.

Standards listed previously in this document and in Richmond Municipal Code that are not affected by items mentioned in this section also apply to developing ADUs on multifamily lots.

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¿Qué debo hacer con mi ADU no permitida?

Puede (y debe) legalizar su ADU no permitida. ¿Por qué?

- Salud y seguridad
 - Mayor valor de la propiedad
 - Cobertura de seguro
 - Sin riesgo de acción del inquilino
- El proceso para legalizar es similar al de solicitar un permiso de ADU. **Consulte Design Resources D en la Guía de ADU.**

Design Resource D
Legalizing Unpermitted ADUs

Why legalize your unpermitted ADU?

Health and safety: Unpermitted structures are often not built to safety standards in the building code which puts both the ADU and primary dwelling residents at higher risk of fire, collapse, poor living conditions, etc. Not having record or legal address for unpermitted ADUs also makes them harder to locate for emergency services.

Higher property value: An unpermitted ADU may diminish the value of a property.

Insurance coverage: Insurance companies may deny a claim when an unpermitted ADU is damaged from fire, floods or earthquakes.

No risk of tenant action: Tenants may choose to sue if they are renting an unsafe, unpermitted ADU. Legalizing makes it a safer and smoother process to lease and earn income from your ADU.

Process to legalize

1 Step 1: Pre-application (8 weeks)

- **Learn about the local process.** Explore [Richmond's ADU resources](#).
- **Determine feasibility.** Does the accessory structure meet the minimum features to be considered a safe, legal unit? See [zoning and program requirements](#) earlier in this guidebook.
- **Evaluate the project.** Get professional advice from a contractor, private building inspector or architect to get a sense of what might be required to legalize the unit. This would include them creating as-built plans for the unit including Title 24 (energy code) and structural calculations.

Decision time: Apply for permit? If moving forward with the application know that there is a chance you may not be able to permit your ADU and will have to stop using it as living space.

2 Step 2: Permit Review (8+ weeks)

- **Submit permit application.** Include the as-built plans and proposed plan plus any other documents required as part of the permitting process described in page 16.
- **Review.** Expect 3-5 rounds of staff comments and feedback review before the decision to issue a building permit.
- **Cost estimate.** At this stage, you will have a more accurate cost estimate of the changes required to decide whether it is feasible to move forward with the project.

Decision Time: Proceed with project? Here are your options:

- Proceed with work to get permit, pay fees and connection charges.
- Negotiate list of modifications required to lower costs.
- If the unit cannot be remediated, demolish or shut down as residential use.
- If the unit can be legalized but it is not within your budget, you may request to delay code enforcement for up to five years as long as the noncompliance of the unit is not a health and safety issue.

3 Step 3: Construction (1-12+ months)

- **Start construction.** If you move forward with the project and acquire a building permit, you may start the construction process. If there are any tenants in the unit, they will have to find other accommodations during this time.
- **Ongoing inspections.** Expect inspectors to visit the construction site to ensure it is complying with the approved permit.
- **Utilities.** Local jurisdiction will approve connections for utilities on behalf of the companies.

4 Step 4: Final inspection: Ready for occupancy

- **Move in.** After the inspector has ensured all requirements have been met, they will issue a Certificate of Occupancy for the ADU.

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Guía de ADU

SECCIÓN

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¿Qué se incluye en la Guía de ADU?

Parte A: Resumen

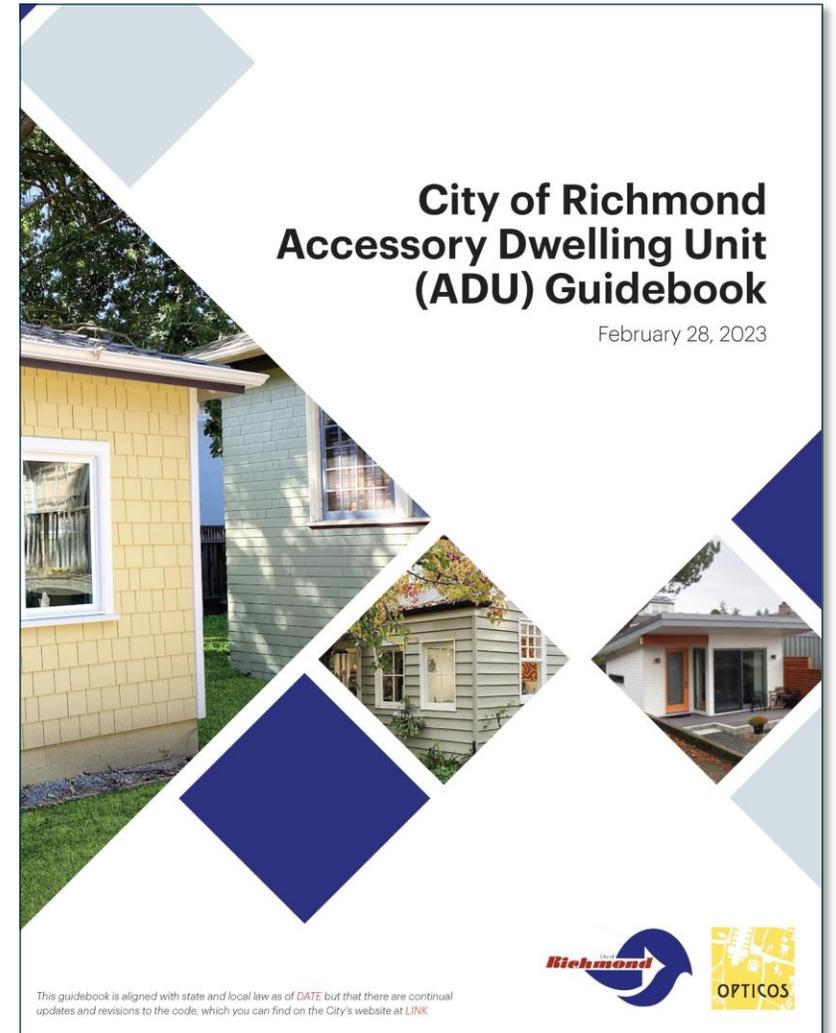
- Introducción
- Opción
- Regulaciones
- Beneficios comunitarios

Parte B: Paso a paso

- Guía paso a paso para el diseño y obtener los permisos de ADU en Richmond

Parte C: Recursos

- Planos preaprobados de ADU
- Recursos de diseño de ADU que incluyen conversiones de garaje, legalización de ADU y ADU en terrenos multifamiliares
- Preguntas frecuentes
- Recursos adicionales



Comparación de tipos de ADU

Options Comparison of ADU Types				Detached ADU (Conversion)		Detached ADU (New Construction)	
Key	JADU	Attached ADU (Conversion)	Attached ADU (Addition)	Key	Detached ADU (Conversion)	Detached ADU (New Construction)	Key
	Negligible Impact	Lower Impact	Medium Impact	Negligible Impact	Lower Impact	Medium Impact	Higher Impact
Impact on Cost	Costs may be lower than other types since new foundation, roof, and exterior walls are not needed. JADUs are exempt from requirement to install new or separate utilities and any associated fees.	Costs may be lower than other types since new foundation, roof and exterior walls are not needed. New plumbing may be required for separate bathroom. Conversions are exempt from requirement to install new or separate utilities and any associated fees.	Costs may be higher than a conversion since new foundation, roof and exterior walls are needed. You may need to install new or separate utilities and pay associated fees.	Impact on Cost	Assuming the structure was built with permits and it is legally in existence, costs may be lower than other types if new foundation, roof and exterior walls are not needed. Costs may exceed expectations if there is a need to upgrade existing walls, electrical, plumbing, or other Building Code requirement. Conversions are exempt from requirement to install new or separate utilities and any associated fees.	Costs may be higher than other types since the ADU will be built from scratch and you may need to install new or separate utilities and pay associated fees.	
Impact on Primary Dwelling or Multi-Family Unit	The JADU will occupy space within the primary dwelling and an existing bathroom may be shared with the JADU.	The ADU will occupy space within the building footprint of the primary dwelling, but will be physically separate from the interior space within the primary dwelling.	Some space within the primary dwelling may be occupied by the ADU and modification to the primary dwelling may be necessary.	Impact on Primary Dwelling or Multi-Family Unit	The ADU is completely separate from the primary dwelling.	The ADU is completely separate from the primary dwelling.	
Impact on Yard Space	No yard space will be used for the JADU, since it is contained entirely within the footprint of the primary dwelling.	No yard space will be used for the ADU, since it is contained entirely within the footprint of the primary dwelling.	Some yard space may be used for the addition to the primary dwelling where the ADU will be located.	Impact on Yard Space	No yard space will be used for the ADU, since it is repurposing an existing accessory structure.	Yard space will be reduced since a detached ADU will be constructed within the existing yard.	
Impact on Parking	If an existing garage is converted to a JADU, parking will be eliminated or will be located elsewhere on the lot.	If an existing garage is converted to a ADU, parking will be eliminated or will be located elsewhere on the lot.	Existing parking is not likely to be impacted.	Impact on Parking	If an existing detached garage is converted to an ADU, parking will be eliminated or will be located elsewhere on the lot.	Existing parking is not likely to be impacted.	
Impact on Privacy	Shared interior walls and the option to share a bathroom will impact privacy between JADU and primary dwelling.	Shared interior walls may impact privacy between the ADU and the primary dwelling.	Shared interior walls may impact privacy between ADU and primary dwelling.	Impact on Privacy	Since the ADU is completely separate from the primary dwelling, visual privacy will be the primary impact depending on location of building openings (e.g. window, door, etc.).	Since the ADU is completely separate from the primary dwelling, visual privacy will be the primary impact depending on location of building openings (e.g. window, door, etc.).	

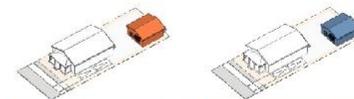
Resumen de los estándares de zonificación

Regulations

Summary of Zoning Standards for ADUs



	JADU	Attached ADU (Conversion)	Attached ADU (Addition)
Zoning	Zoning districts where single-family dwellings are permitted.	Zoning districts where single-family or multifamily dwellings are permitted.	Zoning districts where single-family or multifamily dwellings are permitted.
Location of ADU	Entirely within a proposed or existing single-family dwelling structure.	Within a proposed or existing single-family or multi-family structure.	Attached to a proposed or existing single-family or multi-family structure.
Max. # ADUs per Lot	1 JADU per lot ¹	On a lot with a single-family structure: 1 ADU per lot. ¹ On a lot in a multi-family zone, multiple attached ADUs up to 25% of the number of dwelling units create, but at least 1, per lot. Only spaces that were not previously used as livable area may be converted as ADUs.	On a lot with a single-family structure: 1 ADU per lot. ¹ On a lot in a multi-family zone, multiple attached ADUs are allowed up to 25% of the number of dwelling units on-site, but at least 1.
Min. Lot Size	None (ability to satisfy setbacks may be impacted by lot size)	None (ability to satisfy setbacks may be impacted by lot size)	None (ability to satisfy setbacks may be impacted by lot size)
Max. Floor Area (sq. ft.)	600	No square footage limit unless the conversion includes an expansion over 150 sq ft (for egress or ingress), then same as Attached ADU (Addition)	850 for studio/1 bed and 1000 for 2+ bed
Min. Floor Area (sq. ft.)	150, including bathroom	n/a	n/a
Max. Height (ft)	n/a	n/a	25 or height limit in zoning ordinance applied to primary dwelling (whichever is lower). Cannot exceed 2 stories.
Max. # Stories for Unit	n/a	n/a	n/a
Min. Front Setback (ft)	Same as zone ²	Same as zone ²	Same as zone ²
Min. Side Setback (ft)	Same as existing structure	Same as existing structure	4
Min. Rear Setback (ft)	Same as existing structure	Same as existing structure	4
Max. Total Lot Coverage	Exempt from max. lot coverage	Exempt from max. lot coverage	Exempt from max. lot coverage
Unit Entrance	Separate Unit Entrance Required	Separate Unit Entrance Required	Separate Unit Entrance Required
Parking	None	None	0 or 1 space ⁴
Kitchen	Efficiency Kitchen ⁵	Full Kitchen	Full kitchen
Bathroom	Full Bathroom or Access to Existing Full Bathroom in Primary Dwelling	Full Bathroom	Full Bathroom
Facilities	Living, Sleeping, Eating, Cooking	Living, Sleeping, Eating, Cooking, Sanitation	Living, Sleeping, Eating, Cooking, Sanitation
Design Standards	n/a	n/a	Exterior design must be consistent with primary dwelling's architectural design including materials, colors, roof slope, doors and windows. ⁶



	Detached ADU (Conversion)	Detached ADU (New)
Zoning	Zoning districts where single-family or multifamily dwellings are permitted.	Zoning districts where single-family or multifamily dwellings are permitted.
Location of ADU	Within an existing accessory structure on the same lot as an existing or proposed single-family or multi-family dwelling.	With a new accessory structure on the same lot as an existing or proposed single-family or multi-family dwelling.
Max. # ADUs per Lot	On a lot with a single-family structure: 1 ADU per lot. ¹ On a lot in a multi-family zone: 2 ADUs per lot.	On a lot with a single-family structure: 1 ADU per lot. ¹ On a lot in a multi-family zone: 2 ADUs per lot.
Min. Lot Size	None (ability to satisfy setbacks may be impacted by lot size)	None (ability to satisfy setbacks may be impacted by lot size)
Max. Floor Area (sq. ft.)	850 for studio/1 bed and 1000 for 2+ bed	850 for studio/1 bed and 1000 for 2+ bed
Min. Floor Area (sq. ft.)	n/a	n/a
Max. Height (ft)	16 ²	16 ²
Max. # Stories for Unit	n/a	n/a
Min. Front Setback (ft)	Same as zone ²	Same as zone ²
Min. Side Setback (ft)	Same as existing structure	4
Min. Rear Setback (ft)	Same as existing structure	4
Min. Setback From Primary Structure (ft)	Same as existing structure	5 (no min. setback required for Statewide Exemption ADU)
Max. Total Lot Coverage	Exempt from max. lot coverage	Exempt from max. lot coverage
Unit Entrance	Separate Unit Entrance Required	Separate Unit Entrance Required
Parking	None	0 or 1 space ⁴
Kitchen	Full Kitchen	Full Kitchen
Bathroom	Full Bathroom	Full Bathroom
Facilities	Living, Sleeping, Eating, Cooking, Sanitation	Living, Sleeping, Eating, Cooking, Sanitation
Design Standards	Exterior design must be consistent with primary dwelling's architectural design including materials, colors, roof slope, doors and windows. ⁶	Exterior design must be consistent with primary dwelling's architectural design including materials, colors, roof slope, doors and windows. ⁶

Footnotes

¹JADU and 1 ADU allowed if ADU is a Statewide Exemption ADU (refer to definition on p. 154) or ADU is constructed within existing primary residence (up to 1500 sq. ft. expansion)

²Up to 18 feet for a lot within 1/2 mile of a major transit stop or a high quality transit corridor or for a lot with an existing or proposed multi-family residential dwelling. Two additional feet allowed to accommodate a roof deck that aligns with the roof pitch of the primary dwelling unit.

³Not permitted within any portion of an established front yard, as defined by 189C15.04 SRADU. Except front yard setbacks cannot exceed 15 feet wide. Exemption ADU (up to 600 square feet) and must not unduly constrain the creation of all types of ADUs.

⁴No parking spaces required if the ADU is located within 1/2 mile of a public transit stop, within an historic district or within one block of a car share vehicle or on-site within a proposed or existing primary dwelling or accessory structure with a net loss area increase, or where on-street parking permits are available but not offered to the ADU occupant, or when an ADU permit application is submitted with an application for a new primary dwelling on the same lot and satisfies any other criteria above. Also, when a garage, carport, or covered parking structure is demarcated in conjunction with the construction of an ADU constructed from ADU, no replacement of off-street parking is required.

⁵Efficiency kitchen as defined by California Building Code.

⁶Exception for Statewide Exemption ADUs (Refer to definition on p. 159)

Guía paso a paso de las ADU

Process + Timeline A Step-by-Step Guide

Development Timeline for ADUs in Richmond

ADUs need time for design, city review and permitting, and construction. The design phase typically requires two months, but can take up to four months. The city review and permitting phase typically requires two months, but can take up to eight months. The construction phase typically requires six months, but can take up to eight months.

Months	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Design Phase	Typical		Longer									
City Review + Permitting	Typical		Longer									
Construction Phase	Typical		Longer									

ESTIMATED TIMELINE (for planning purposes, individual projects may take more or less time)

Months	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Design Phase	Typical		Longer									
City Review + Permitting	Typical		Longer									
Construction Phase	Typical		Longer									

ESTIMATED TIMELINE FOR PROJECTS USING CITY'S PRE-APPROVED PLANS (for planning purposes, individual projects may take more or less time)

Months	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Design Phase	Typical		Longer									
City Review + Permitting	Typical		Longer									
Construction Phase	Typical		Longer									

DESIGN PHASE (2-4 Months)

Step 1: Possibilities and Goals

- ADUs are allowed in all of Richmond's zoning districts where single-family and multi-family dwellings are permitted. [Use the City's online interactive zoning map](#) or speak to a city planner to determine your zoning district.
- Familiarize yourself with the different types of ADUs (See ["What are the different types of ADUs?"](#))
- Brainstorm and write down project goals**
 - Will the ADU generate income? What are your financial goals (return on investment)?
 - Will the ADU be used for "aging in place"?
 - What will the accessibility needs be?
 - How many people will live in the ADU? Will you live there or will it be rental?
- Determine who you will need on your **project team**, which could include an architect, designer, design/build contractor or pre-fabricated ADU vendor.
- Determine your budget (how much can you afford to spend to build the ADU) and consider how you are funding the ADU (cash, loans, grants, or other financial assistance). See ["Helpful Resources for ADUs"](#) for links to resources that can help with funding, or contact contractors to help estimate what your ADU would cost.

OR

Use one of the City of Richmond's free-to-use pre-approved ADU designs. See page 18 in this guidebook for more information on the pre-approved design, and visit the City's website to download the plan set.

DESIGN PHASE (CONTINUED) (2-4 Months)

Step 2: Design Your ADU

- See the ["ADU Brainstorming Checklist"](#) to identify what type of ADU can fit on your lot.
- Decide what type of ADU you want to build.
- See ["Summary of Zoning Standards for ADUs"](#) to review the development standards for ADUs.
- Work with an architect, designer, design/build contractor or pre-fabricated ADU vendor as needed to **develop and finalize ADU design**. Contact: 518.04.510.070 - Accessory Dwelling Units and Junior Accessory Dwelling Units in the Richmond Municipal Code and applicable City, State and Federal building codes.
- If **additional modifications** need to be made to the site to accommodate the ADU, such as grading and/or construction of retaining walls to provide flat space for the ADU, you must submit these plans to the Building Division for review and approval. This review is subject to Building permit fees.
- Determine whether the **existing sewer and/or water** has the capacity to support the ADU. If you decide to connect your ADU sewer and/or water directly into public infrastructure, then you will be subject to impact fees.
- See the City's [ADU Info Sheet](#) for information and tools and consult with the city staff in the Planning, Building, and Engineering Divisions as needed. Contact information:
 - Planning:** planning@richmond.ca.us (510) 670-4536
 - Building:** permits@richmond.ca.us (510) 670-6866
 - Engineering:** engineering@richmond.ca.us (510) 307-8091

Step 3: Evaluate Budget

- Develop a **cost estimate**, working with your architect, designer, design/build contractor or pre-fabricated ADU vendor as needed.
- Note that constructing an ADU may increase your property taxes due to a higher assessed property value.
- Utility bills such as electricity, gas, water, sewer, and trash may increase as a result of an ADU.
- It may be necessary to **refine the ADU design** created in Step 2 based on available budget.
- Secure funding** to fund the development of the desired ADU(s).

Continue to Step 4

CITY REVIEW + PERMITTING PHASE (2-8 Months)

Step 4: Prepare and Submit Permit Application

- Finalize building design and **prepare construction plans** for review by the City's Community Development Department.
- Obtain a building permit.** Submit your permit application through the City's online permitting portal, [eTrack](#) or in person at the permit center.
 - Scan the QR code or click the link above and select Apply for New Application under Permit Application
 - Register for a free account under Public Login
 - Submit all required documents and pay online via credit or debit card
- Pay fees. See ["Accessory Dwelling Unit Fees"](#) to determine fee amounts owed.
 - Pay Building Permit Fee upon permit issuance
 - Pay Impact and/or Engineering fees w/ permit issuance.
- Plan check comments will be sent to you or whoever you have designated as your agent within **30 days** of receiving a complete application. You will need to revise your plans to address all your plan check comments before the City issues a building permit for your ADU.

CONSTRUCTION PHASE (6-8 Months)

Step 5: Construction + Inspections

- With your building permits issued, you can **start construction of your ADU!**
- Your contractor or pre-fabricated ADU vendor will need to schedule **inspections** as required.
- Final Inspection and Occupancy Permit** is required to move in and use the space.
- Pay **Impact Fees** if not paid at permit issuance in Step 4.

Step 6: Move into Your ADU!

- Building occupancy is allowed only after final inspection is complete.
- If renting the ADU, fulfill landlord obligations for habitable premises per California Civil Code §1941.
- Perform regular maintenance of ADU as needed.

Recursos de Diseño

- A. Lista de ideas de ADU
- B. Conversiones de Garaje
- C. ADU en terrenos multifamiliares
- D. Legalización de ADU no permitidas

Design Resource A
ADU Brainstorming Checklist

1 Determine number and type of ADUs allowed

What is the primary structure on your lot?

- Single-family house:** You may have a Statewide Exemption ADU. See [link].
- Multi-family structure:** You may have up to two ADUs on a lot, one of which can be attached to each structure.

2 Measure backyard

If you're building an attached ADU or a detached ADU, you'll need to know your yard width and depth.

Yard width = _____
Yard depth = _____

3 Determine ADU location

An ADU cannot be located within a setback unless it is through the corner of a recent fire report or reach out to the fire department to get a fire report or reach out to the fire department to get a fire report or reach out to the fire department to get a fire report.

Approximate locations of any public utility setbacks are 4 ft and a detached ADU structure, to determine buildable areas your backyard dimensions.

Buildable width: _____ 8 ft _____
Buildable depth: _____ 9 ft _____

Design Resource B
Garage Conversions

Getting your garage conversion permitted

You are required to obtain a building permit to change the use of your property. The permit process follows the same development timeline as listed on the permit application. Pre-construction inspections are required. Floor plans need to show the configuration as well as how the proposed portion will conform to the requirements. However, you will not have to provide any replacement of the ADU to the existing footprint regardless of floor area maximums.

Bringing your garage up to code

Building codes make sure structures are safe for their intended use. Changing uses from vehicle storage to residence might involve significant changes. See below a table of applicable building codes organized by topic and a list of commonly required upgrades to help inform what you will need.

Topic	Code	Services
General construction standards (structure, fire safety, electrical systems, plumbing, ventilation)	RMC Article 9 Building Regulations Building Code of the City of Richmond	
Health and safety	RMC Article 8 Building Regulations Housing Code	
Building envelope/energy performance	California Building Energy Efficiency Standards - Title 24	
Fire safety	RMC Article 11 Fire - Fire Prevention Code	
Zoning, program and design standards	RMC Article 16 Zoning and Subdivision ADU Ordinance	
Utility Requirements	IRC 2021 Regulations	PG&E Requirements

Note that the recommendations on this spread apply to converting a **permitted** garage into an ADU. An unpermitted structure converted to an ADU is treated as a new build and must comply with state and local standards rather than conversion standards.

Design Resource C
ADUs on Multifamily lots

Can I have ADUs on a multifamily lot?

Yes! State law SB889 allows both attached ADUs and detached ADUs on multifamily lots.

How many?

- If you have a duplex, triplex, or fourplex you can build one attached and one detached ADU.
- If you have a multifamily unit with 4 or more units you can build up to 4 dwelling units and two detached ADUs.

Where?

- Detached ADUs can be built in available rear yard so long as they are 5 feet from property lines and 5 feet from primary structure, and meet height requirements.
- An attached ADU can be an addition or conversion but it cannot be assigned to existing residential dwelling units in the multifamily structure. Multifamily ADUs are typically converted to ADUs on unoccupied storage or utility multifamily structures.

Are there any multifamily specific standards?

Yes, here are some things to keep in mind:

- ADUs added to your property, so long as they follow ADU standards, are not required to update the building to meet code.
- A **multistory**, multifamily dwelling is allowed a height increase to 75 feet.
- If adding an attached ADU to a multifamily structure that has outdoor stairs, the stairs are not required to update the building to meet code.
- Adding an ADU to your multifamily lot cannot trigger a requirement to install fire alarm systems in existing multifamily dwelling.

Standards listed previously in this document and in Richmond Municipal Code are not mentioned in this section also apply to developing ADUs on multifamily lots.

Design Resource D
Legalizing Unpermitted ADUs

Why legalize your unpermitted ADU?

Health and safety: Unpermitted structures are often not built to safety standards in the building code which puts both the ADU and primary dwelling residents at higher risk of fire, collapse, poor living conditions, etc. Not having record or legal address for unpermitted ADUs also makes them harder to locate for emergency services.

Higher property value: An unpermitted ADU may diminish the value of a property.

Insurance coverage: Insurance companies may deny a claim when an unpermitted ADU is damaged from fire, floods or earthquakes.

No risk of tenant action: Tenants may choose to sue if they are renting an unsafe, unpermitted ADU. Legalizing makes it a safer and smoother process to lease and earn income from your ADU.

Process to legalize

1 Step 1: Pre-application (8 weeks)

- **Learn about the local process.** Explore Richmond's ADU resources.
- **Determine feasibility.** Does the accessory structure meet the minimum requirements to be considered a safe, legal unit? See zoning and program requirements earlier in this guidebook.
- **Evaluate the project.** Get professional advice from a contractor, private building inspector or architect to get a sense of what might be required to legalize the unit. This would include them creating as-built plans for the unit including Title 24 (energy code) and structural calculations.

Decision time: Apply for permit? If moving forward with the application know that there is a chance you may not be able to permit your ADU and will have to stop using it as living space.



Planos Preaprobados de ADU

SECCIÓN

4

Qué son Planos Preaprobados de ADU?

- **Diseños de construcción completados ya aprobados** por los departamentos de planificación y construcción para su uso en sitios adecuados
- **Ahorra dinero y tiempo**
- Los planos son **disponible de forma gratuita** para los residentes de Richmond, **ahorrando costos de diseño**
- Ahorra tiempo con un **proceso de permisos acelerado**
- **Si su lote es adecuado, complete un plan de sitio** para mostrar dónde encaja el ADU en su sitio



¿Qué tipos de planos están disponibles?

Se han desarrollado cuatro estilos para ADU separadas. El programa (tamaño y número de recamaras) se basa en los tipos más comunes de ADU separadas construidas recientemente en Richmond.

- **1-recámara, 1 baño; 400-450 pies cuadrados**
- **2-recamaras, 1 baño; 700-750 pies cuadrados**



¿Qué tipos de planos están disponibles?

Si su casa se pareciera así:



Estilo Recomendado - Contemporary



¿Qué tipos de planos están disponibles?

Si su casa se parezca así:



Estilo Recomendado - Bungalow



¿Qué tipos de planos están disponibles?

Si su casa se parezca así:



Estilo Recomendado – Spanish Revival



¿Qué tipos de planos están disponibles?

Si su casa se parezca así:



Estilo Recomendado – Tudor



¿Dónde se pueda encontrar el ADU Toolkit?

¡La Guía de ADU y los Planos Preaprobados ya están disponibles en el sitio web de la Ciudad!
ci.richmond.ca.us/2098/Planning-Division



CITY GOVERNMENT

DEPARTMENTS

BUSINESS

COMMUNITY



Search...



- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)
- ADU Preapproved Plans
- Boards & Commissions +
- Cannabis Information
- Tobacco Retailers License
- City Fact Sheet
- Fees & Checklists
- Frequently Asked Questions

[Home](#) > [Departments](#) > [Community Development](#) > Planning Division

⌵ A ⌵

Planning Division

The City of Richmond Planning Division now accepts all planning applications through our online permitting system, [IMS](#). Applicants can submit new applications, upload documents, track review status, and communicate with staff—all in one place.

- [Access the IMS Portal](#)
- [Need help? View our IMS User Guide](#)

Please ensure you have all required documents ready before starting your application.

Neighborhood Council Contact

Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact their neighborhood council before submitting an application to be reviewed or heard by the Design Review Board or the Planning Commission. [Neighborhood council contact information](#).

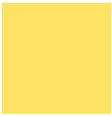


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¡GRACIAS!

¿Hay Preguntas?

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