

*Learn how an Accessory Dwelling Unit can benefit you and your loved ones*



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## What is an Accessory Dwelling Unit?

An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is a secondary residential dwelling contained within the limits of an existing residential lot. ADUs are sometimes called “mother-in-law flats” or “granny flats.”

Accessory Dwelling Units can be an attractive housing option for older adults and their families. People’s needs change as they age, and older adults often find themselves facing difficult choices regarding what type of housing will best meet their needs while allowing them independence, flexibility, and the opportunity to stay close to their families. ADUs can provide these benefits for some older adults. One option is for the older adult to remain in their home and rent out the ADU for additional income to a renter or to a caregiver. Another option is for the older adult to move into the ADU and rent out their main home. Figure 1 shows the types of ADUs.

Each city in Dakota County develops their own policies regarding land use zoning and ADUs – including whether to allow them at all. This guide is intended to inform Dakota County residents of which cities allow for ADUs, and what basic requirements those cities have for various elements of the property. The Communities for a Lifetime Initiative is committed to building healthy, accessible communities for residents of all ages.



Figure 1 -- Types of ADUs<sup>1</sup>.

Cities that do allow for ADUs	Cities that do not currently allow for ADUs
<b>Apple Valley</b> (see page 4)	<b>Mendota Heights</b>
<b>Burnsville</b> (see page 5)	<b>Rosemount</b>
<b>Eagan</b> (see page 6)	<b>South Saint Paul</b>
<b>Farmington</b> (see page 7)	<b>West Saint Paul</b>
<b>Hastings</b> (see page 8)	
<b>Inver Grove Heights</b> (see page 9)	
<b>Lakeville</b> (see page 10)	

1. American Planning Association. Accessory Dwelling Units. Accessed July 2, 2022. <https://www.planning.org/knowledgebase/accessorydwellings/>

## What if my city doesn't allow Accessory Dwelling Units?

Accessory Dwelling Units can be an option for some older adults to meet their housing, financial, and health needs. Unfortunately, some cities do not allow for ADUs. Oftentimes, cities that have adopted ADU policies have done so at the request of local residents interested in building an ADU or converting their home to include an ADU. **Contacting your local officials to promote the adoption of an ADU policy can help push your city towards such policies.** People you can consider contacting include:

- Your local city planning (zoning) office
- Your mayor or city council member
- Organizations that promote accessibility or improved housing policies.
- The Communities for a Lifetime Initiative.

## Other frequently asked questions

### What are the benefits of ADUs?

- ADUs can allow a person to age in place, help provide housing to a family member, or help bring in additional income by renting out the ADU or primary dwelling. Allowing ADUs also helps communities by creating more dense and flexible housing options that can meet the needs of some community members.

### How expensive are ADUs?

- Rising labor costs and inflation have driven prices up. The average cost of constructing or converting an attached ADU can be \$100,000 to \$200,000. The average cost for a detached ADU can be over \$300,000. These costs may be paid for by refinancing an existing mortgage, taking out a second mortgage, or using a home equity line of credit. Oftentimes ADUs can generate income by being rented out. ADUs may also significantly raise the re-sale value of the home.

### Can any building be an ADU?

- Not every building is the right fit for an ADU. Various regulations, such as zoning, govern the size, design, and features of ADUs. The next several pages will help you decide if an ADU is currently allowed in your city and if your property can accommodate one.



# Communities for a Lifetime Accessory Dwelling Unit Guide

## Apple Valley

Apple Valley **does** allow for Accessory Dwelling Units as of 2003.

<b>Zones and lot size</b>	Zone R-1, with a minimum lot size of 40,000 square feet. Also allowed in Zone 1 of Planned Development No. 703.
<b>Regulation</b>	Conditional use permit; only if no adverse impact on adjacent properties.
<b>Occupancy</b>	Maximum of 3 in Zone R-1, maximum of 1 in Zone 1 of Planned Development No. 703.
<b>Property owner occupancy</b>	Must be owner's legal residence; owner may live in primary residence or ADU; must reside in the property no less than 180 consecutive days per year.
<b>Development conditions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Only 1 ADU per lot; in most cases, must be within or attached to the primary residence.</li> <li>- Garage conversions are allowed only if lot space is available for two-car garage without variance.</li> <li>- The ADU must be owned by the owner of the primary residence.</li> <li>- Not permitted if 3 ADUs are within 1/2-mile radius.</li> <li>- Home-based businesses are allowed in the primary residence or ADU, but not both.</li> <li>- ADU must comply with all building codes and city ordinances</li> </ul>
<b>Building Area Ratio</b>	A maximum of 35% of lot, for primary residence, ADU and paved surfaces.
<b>ADU size</b>	No more than 40% of the primary residence’s footprint or 900 sq. ft, but no less than 300 sq. ft.
<b>Design and exterior features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consistent with primary residence design, style, and appearance.</li> <li>- If exceeds primary residence height, must be consistent with the roof pitch, building exterior.</li> <li>- Entrance must not be visible as you view the entrance to the primary residence.</li> <li>- Exterior finish must be of same materials as primary building.</li> </ul>
<b>Design and interior features</b>	Maximum of 2 bedrooms; reasonable deviation from city code to install accessibility features is allowed.
<b>Parking</b>	2 off-street spaces for ADU, plus 2 for primary residence.
<b>Utilities</b>	Primary residence and ADU must be connected to city sewer and water.
<b>Number of current ADUs in city</b>	3

For more information, contact the Communities for a Lifetime Initiative at [Jess.Luce@CO.DAKOTA.MN.US](mailto:Jess.Luce@CO.DAKOTA.MN.US) or 651-554-6104

**UPDATED: 12/20/23**



# Communities for a Lifetime Accessory Dwelling Unit Guide

## Burnsville

Burnsville **does** allow for Accessory Dwelling Units as of 2018.

<b>Zones and lot size</b>	Allowed in R1 and R1A zones. Minimum 10,000 square foot lot.
<b>Regulation</b>	Building permit for new construction or remodel of space to create ADU. Rental license required if rented.
<b>Occupancy</b>	Up to 4-6 depending on relationship.
<b>Property owner occupancy</b>	Must be owner's legal residence; owner may live in primary residence or ADU; must reside in the property no less than 185 consecutive days per year.
<b>Development conditions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Only 1 ADU per lot; must be within or attached to the primary residence.</li> <li>- Garage conversions are allowed only if lot space is available for two-car garage without variance.</li> <li>- The ADU must be owned by the owner of the primary residence.</li> <li>- Home-based businesses are allowed.</li> <li>- ADU must comply with all building codes and city ordinances.</li> </ul>
<b>Building Area Ratio</b>	Required to meet setbacks for the applicable zoning district. No maximum/minimum Building Area Ratio or Floor Area Ratio.
<b>ADU size</b>	No more than 50% of the primary residence’s footprint, but no less than 300 sq. ft.
<b>Design and exterior features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consistent with primary residence design, style, and appearance.</li> <li>- If exceeds primary residence height, must be consistent with the roof pitch, building exterior.</li> <li>- Entrance must not be visible as you view the entrance to the primary residence.</li> </ul>
<b>Design and interior features</b>	Maximum of 2 bedrooms; reasonable deviation from city code to install accessibility features is allowed.
<b>Parking</b>	2 off-street spaces for ADU, plus 2 for primary residence.
<b>Utilities</b>	Primary residence and ADU must be connected to city sewer and water.
<b>Number of current ADUs in city</b>	3



# Communities for a Lifetime Accessory Dwelling Unit Guide

## Eagan

Eagan **does** allow for Accessory Dwelling Units as of 2014.

<b>Zones and lot size</b>	Zone R-1 or Estate Zoning.
<b>Regulation</b>	Owners must file an ADU registration with the city, the registration is for a 12-month period and must be renewed annually.
<b>Occupancy</b>	Maximum of 2.
<b>Property owner occupancy</b>	Property owner must reside in primary residence or ADU as their permanent legal address.
<b>Development conditions</b>	ADU must be contained within or directly attached to the primary residence.
<b>Building Area Ratio</b>	No less than 300 square feet and no more than 960 square feet or 33% of the primary residence footprint size.
<b>ADU size</b>	See above.
<b>Design and exterior features</b>	ADU must be attached to the primary residence and must be designed and maintained consistent with the architectural design, style, appearance, and character of the primary residence, and cannot be taller than the primary residence. An ADU cannot have its exterior entry door on the same building façade as that of the primary residence.
<b>Design and interior features</b>	None specified.
<b>Parking</b>	Minimum 2 off street spots for ADU and minimum 2 for primary residence.
<b>Utilities</b>	ADU must be connected to municipal sewer and water and shall be served by only one service line from the street to the primary residence.
<b>Number of current ADUs in city</b>	Unknown.



## Farmington

Farmington **does** allow for Accessory Apartments as of early 2000s.

<b>Zones and lot size</b>	A-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-D
<b>Regulation</b>	Accessory Apartment is defined as “A dwelling unit which is subordinate to a permitted principal one-family residence in terms of size, location and appearance and located on the same lot therewith.”
<b>Occupancy</b>	N/A
<b>Property owner occupancy</b>	N/A
<b>Development conditions</b>	Single family lots only. Must be located behind principal structure in side or rear yard. Must have the same appearance of principal structure.
<b>Building Area Ratio</b>	N/A
<b>ADU size</b>	1,800 square-foot maximum
<b>Design and exterior features</b>	Same as principal structure
<b>Design and interior features</b>	N/A
<b>Parking</b>	N/A
<b>Utilities</b>	N/A
<b>Number of current ADUs in city</b>	Unknown



## Hastings

Hastings **does** allow for second dwelling units.

<b>Zones and lot size</b>	R-2 with a minimum lot size of 9,700 square feet.
<b>Regulation</b>	N/A
<b>Occupancy</b>	N/A
<b>Property owner occupancy</b>	N/A
<b>Development conditions</b>	Must conform to principal structure development standards
<b>Building Area Ratio</b>	N/A
<b>ADU size</b>	N/A
<b>Design and exterior features</b>	Must conform to principal structure development standards
<b>Design and interior features</b>	N/A
<b>Parking</b>	Two off-street parking spaces for each of the two units
<b>Utilities</b>	Separate utilities if the units are not interconnected
<b>Number of current ADUs in city</b>	Unknown





## Inver Grove Heights

Inver Grove Heights **does** allow for Accessory Dwelling Units as of 2015.

<b>Zones and lot size</b>	A, E-1, E-2, R-1A, R-1B and R-1C Zoning Districts.
<b>Regulation</b>	Each accessory dwelling unit shall require a City registration. Any detached units shall require a separate address from the main structure.
<b>Occupancy</b>	The total number of occupants in the accessory dwelling unit shall not exceed three (3) persons.
<b>Property owner occupancy</b>	The property owner must reside in either the primary residence or the ADU as their permanent residence.
<b>Development conditions</b>	ADU's are allowed in detached accessory structures on lots larger than one acre.
<b>Building Area Ratio</b>	An accessory dwelling unit shall be clearly a subordinate part of the single-family dwelling.
<b>ADU size</b>	In no case shall the ADU be more than one thousand (1,000) square feet, nor less than two hundred fifty (250) square feet.
<b>Design and exterior features</b>	The exterior design of an accessory dwelling unit shall incorporate a similar architectural style, roof pitch, colors, and materials as the principal building on the lot, and shall be compatible with the character of the surrounding residential buildings.
<b>Design and interior features</b>	None specified.
<b>Parking</b>	Lots with accessory dwelling units shall provide at least two (2) off-street parking spaces in addition to the one off-street parking space required for the primary residence.
<b>Utilities</b>	ADU must use the same well and septic system if the primary residence uses a well or septic system.
<b>Number of current ADUs in city</b>	11



## Lakeville

Lakeville **does** allow for Accessory Dwelling Units.

<b>Zones and lot size</b>	All single-family homes in low-and medium-density areas are allowed to implement an ADU.
<b>Regulation</b>	Requires city administrative zoning permit.
<b>Occupancy</b>	No more than 2 bedrooms allowed in ADU and no more than 4 unrelated persons allowed.
<b>Property owner occupancy</b>	None specified.
<b>Development conditions</b>	Building must not be a two-family dwelling as defined by the zoning ordinance. The ADU shall be within the principal building on the property.
<b>Building Area Ratio</b>	Not more than 30% of the gross floor area of the principal building.
<b>ADU size</b>	None specified.
<b>Design and exterior features</b>	Maximum height for a single-family home (with or without an accessory dwelling unit) is three stories or 35 feet.
<b>Design and interior features</b>	There must be an interior connection between the primary and accessory units that is unlockable from each side.
<b>Parking</b>	A minimum of three garage stalls each with direct exterior access are required.
<b>Utilities</b>	Shall be served by single municipal water, sanitary sewer, gas and/or electric utility service lines each with a single meter for the respective utility where applicable. The property shall have one heating and air conditioning system.
<b>Number of current ADUs in city</b>	12